

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

2011 - 2015 Update

CEDS Planning Resource: For Ashland, Montana

Facts from the CEDS *Rosebud County*

Rosebud County had an Ageing Population (65+) of **11.6%** in 2010, and estimated **17.1%** in 2025

-5.3% decrease in the number of business establishments between 2000-2008

Vacationers spend on average **\$183.37** per day for 6.02 days per Montana visit. Antelope, Deer and Elk hunters alone brought in about **\$4,341,761** in 2008 in this region.

Rosebud County's per capita income, adjusted for inflation increased **30.3 %** between 1995 and 2005 compared to **26.8%** in Montana

What is the CEDS?

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is a planning document created in 2010 by SEMDC for the counties of Custer, Powder River, Rosebud, and Treasure.

What is the importance of the CEDS document?

The CEDS document highlights some of the most current data for your county and helps to develop an economic roadmap for the region. This data is public and you or your organization can use it for studies, research, grant proposals, or just common knowledge. It helps us keep up to date and on course with new, current, and long-running issues or concerns.

The CEDS can help to:

- Enhance Community Awareness of an Issue or Issues
- Gather and Analyse Regional Statistics
- Stimulate Discussion, Motivation, and Support from Within the Region
- Work Towards Consensus Building and Cooperation
- Engage Communication

How can **YOU** use this Accompanying CEDS document?

SEMDC held public meetings in each community in this region, and did an analysis on the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT Analysis), as well as identified key projects that community members proposed. Those were important ideas and interesting projects. Lets work on them!

This document will:

- HIGHLIGHT** results from those meetings
- FOCUS** on projects and opportunities presented
- OFFER** some suggestions for resources.

OPPORTUNITIES | STRENGTHS | WEAKNESSES | THREATS | PROJECTS

Strengths

Farming, ranching and irrigation

Co-ops

- Range Telephone
- Tongue River Electric

Weaknesses

Low income

Relatively high poverty rate

Lack of diversity/availability of jobs

Lack of skilled workforce training

Lack of development/Community re-investment

High insurance rates

Lack of tourism group

Limited commercial space availability

High cost of living

- Groceries
- Utilities

Opportunities

Community marketing and branding

- Warrior Trail
- History
- Webpage

Otter Creek Coal Development

Diverse businesses

Create opportunities for traffic to stop

- Recreation/commercial
- Truck stop
- Public restrooms/visitors center

Threats

Difficulty getting funding for projects

Proposed PROJECTS

to enhance ECONOMY

- **Create a Community Website**
- **Develop a Chamber of Commerce**
Create Chamber 'Bucks'
- **Start a Coffee Shop**
- **Work on Biomass Project**
- **Open a New Eating Establishment**

Thoughts on Projects

- The need for trades are high, do you have people to help organize, train, and promote?
- Timelines?
- What are the priorities of these projects?
- Who could take charge of these projects?
- What resources do you have/will you need?
- Funding?
- Do you have an online space to promote fundraising and donations?
- How would the funds be used?

RESOURCES

Develop a blog or website for your project/company: wordpress.com

Rural Entrepreneurial Case Studies: www.cvcia.org

National Development Council: <http://nationaldevelopmentcouncil.com>

Rural Entrepreneurial Case Studies: www.cvcia.org

HOW SEMDC CAN HELP

SEMDC works to secure funding for various projects for grants—we could work with people to help set up a fundraising group for the city

With SEMDC's Small Business Development Director, we can help anyone get a small business started or work with people on business succession planning

OPPORTUNITIES | STRENGTHS | WEAKNESSES | THREATS | PROJECTS

Strengths

Main Travel Routes - Hwy 212

Cellular Service

Weaknesses

Limited lodging
- Lack of quality housing

Long distance to other major communities

Lack of available land

Highway safety issues
- Parking for business too close to the highway
- Speed of trucks coming through town

Lack of paved roads

Limited cell and internet service

No landing strip/airport

Flood plain issues

Limited infrastructure for growth

Limited water district access to some areas

Opportunities

Pave Tongue River Road

Improve Traffic Safety
- "Rabbit-Town" curve on 212
- Add rumble strips

Improve cell service

Otter Creek Coal/railroad

Hydroelectric dam

Increase access to public land

Improve signage on roads

Upgrade/make accessible historic buildings

Create an inter-county/regional public transit system

Develop better housing

Create a 'halfway house' Low-income housing

Community beautification projects

Utility/Infrastructure improvements
- Water
- Sewer

Threats

Flood plain issues

Land availability

Too many people to support with limited infrastructure

Proposed PROJECTS

to enhance INFRASTRUCTURE

Road Infrastructure and Safety

Address Safety Issues on Hwy 212
Signage
Rumble Strips
Pave Tongue River Road

Improve IT and Cell Services

Open up a 'modern' motel

Address Housing Issues

Needs for low income housing
'Halfway house'
Create a Committee

Thoughts on Projects

- Which projects have the highest priority?
- If these projects have been worked on, has there been an evaluation of the current progress made?
- Who are other entities you can reach out to for help?
- Who could take charge of these projects?
- What resources do you have/will you need?
- What are some similar case-studies or successful examples?

RESOURCES

Rural Capacity Building Resources:

<http://ruralcommunitybuilding.fb.org>

National Development Council

<http://nationaldevelopmentcouncil.com>

USDA Rural Development-Housing:

www.rurdev.usda.gov/rhs

Montana Home Choice Coalition: www3.aware-inc.org/awareinc/

HOW SEMDC CAN HELP

Support stabilizing funding for initiatives such as housing.
Work with small businesses

OPPORTUNITIES | STRENGTHS | WEAKNESSES | THREATS | PROJECTS

Strengths

Small rural Community
- Close-knit

Schools
K-8 /St Labre High School

Cultural and Heritage Center

Cultural diversity

Churches

Health care
- Clinic
- Tele-Pharmacy
- Mental Health Services

Services
- Volunteer Fire Department
- Other Essential Services

Sheriffs Office- 24 hour

Special Events

Threats

Otter Creek Coal Development
- Worry about quality of life, boom/bust scenario/division of community
- Potential railroad effects

Substance abuse

Lack of cultural acceptance

Opportunities

Create a spiritual retreat

Improve communication with the Amish community

Recreation development

Art gallery/Co-op

Better centralized school system

Expand on mental health services

Need for dental program

Improve emergency services

Update/enhance Fire Department equip and training

Weaknesses

Lacking amenities that would encourage people to move here

Struggling public school system

No library

High rate of substance abuse

Limited services
- Emergency
- Transportation
- Youth and elderly

Few community events

Limited recreational opportunities

Limited gym/exercise facilities

Proposed PROJECTS

to enhance SOCIETY and CULTURE

- Start a library
- Create an Art Gallery/Co-op
- Open a Spiritual Retreat
- Improve Fire Department
- Develop an exercise facility

Thoughts on Projects

- Speak with surrounding community libraries to better understand how they are started and managed
-Would the art gallery and co-op ne founded by an individual or local group? Contact local art galleries and heritage centers for resources on start-up and management.
- Which projects are priorities?
- Funding? Funding for Fire Department updates?
- Could the exercise facility be located in a local building or organized by a local organization? Would it be public or private?

RESOURCES

Rural planning and networking opportunities:
www.planning.org/divisions/smalltown/index.htm

Online Educational resources - free courses/webinars:
<http://ocw.mit.edu/courses/>

Rural Capacity Building Resources:
<http://ruralcommunitybuilding.fb.org>

National Development Council
<http://nationaldevelopmentcouncil.com>

HOW SEMDC CAN HELP

Find funding for certain initiatives
Develop a business plan
Help in small business development

OPPORTUNITIES | STRENGTHS | WEAKNESSES | THREATS | PROJECTS

Strengths

Relatively mild climate

Scenery

Outdoor recreation and hunting

Custer National Forest

Tongue River

Weaknesses

Lack of parks /sports fields/outdoor recreation

Opportunities

Develop bike path

Threats

No threats mentioned

RESOURCES

Ideas for Public Spaces and Recreation:

www.pps.ort (suggestion: search "rural")

Rural Landscape Institute on Agro-tourism:

www.rurallandscapeinstitute.org/projects_farrcc.php

Develop a blog or website for your project/
company: wordpress.com

Market your community:

www.iira.org/pubs/publications/IIRA_RRR_713.pdf

HOW SEMDC CAN HELP

SEMDC may be able to help secure funding for natural resource or tourism projects.

Network with other communities to help in some of these initiatives

Do Tourism studies if funding secured

Proposed PROJECTS

to enhance ENVIRONMENTAL potential

Open up a Park

Enhance Eco-Tourism

Develop increased web-presence

Create a marketing campaign

Work with other communities on Warrior Trail

Develop Bike Trails

Thoughts on Projects

- Who would organize the park?
- How would you determine where it should be located?
- Who would be in charge of eco-tourism and community Marketing? A current person or organization, or would it be a new position/group that would facilitate it?
- Perhaps networking with local "Warrior Trail" communities would help create a more comprehensive starting part and vision for this project.
- Who will be in charge of working on a bike trail?
- Where should it go/connect to?
- Perhaps working with Custer National Forest to develop a bike trail could be helpful

OPPORTUNITIES | STRENGTHS | WEAKNESSES | THREATS | PROJECTS

Strengths

Strong Community Voice

Weaknesses

Lack of civic groups

Difficult to access county services

- County offices are too far away
- Lack of representation

Divided sense of community

Lack of volunteerism

Poor communication within community and within county

Two jurisdictions

- County
- Tribal

Opportunities

Improve community participation

Create a satellite county office

Improve relationships with Tribal Government and other forms of government

Threats

Inability to integrate resources with reservation and non-reservation

Power struggle within community

Lack of representation/ community with county

Proposed PROJECTS

to enhance POLITICS and POPULATION

No suggested projects were discussed specifically regarding Politics and Population.

Some possible projects could be:

Contact County Offices

Look into the potential developing a satellite office

And/or work to increase Ashland's visibility

Evaluate current community groups/ initiatives

Hold a community-wide evaluation

Pool resources and/or develop a community group that meets needs not being met

Develop more incentives for volunteerism and youth participation

RESOURCES

Rural Capacity Building Resources:

<http://ruralcommunitybuilding.fb.org>

Leadership Tools:

http://www.raonline.org/info_guides/leadership/

Online Educational resources - free courses/webinars:

<http://ocw.mit.edu/courses/>

Online planning and community development courses:

www.planetizen.com/courses/index.php

Rural planning and networking opportunities:

www.planning.org/divisions/smalltown/index.htm

Thoughts on Projects

- Who would be in charge of speaking with County officials in regards to getting a county satellite office?
- Find someone to help develop a website to increase local and regional communication and awareness.
- Look into developing a comprehensive evaluation to give to those involved and not involved in commu-

HOW SEMDC CAN HELP

SEMDC can help to network and work with local governments