



2015 Community Meeting Recap for the Town of Lame Deer

Photo: Jen Price

This document is a summary of the 2015 CEDS community meetings. These meetings were designed to discuss local findings from the five-year CEDS document created by SEMDC, and to get community feedback as to what the current state of the community is, how things have changed from last year, and what projects are priorities to be completed for the following year(s).

The reviews this year continued to discuss the many natural resource development projects currently going on, expanding, and those that are proposed to begin in the next few years. There will be many impacts on communities in southeastern Montana, and the goal is to maximize positive impacts and mitigate negative ones. The more that communities understand the impacts, proactively plan, and communicate within the community and region, the better the outcome will be.

This document summarizes the thoughts, ideas, and projects discussed at the community meeting.

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Lame Deer CEDS Meeting 2015

Group Discussion

Rather than perform a typical Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats assessments, SEMDC led the group through the exercise by having them first examine the results of last years' meeting and then adding or modifying the information already developed. The lists below are what the group as a whole developed.

Strengths

Chief Dull Knife College	Improved Sidewalks and street names / signs/Beautification project
Street Lights	UCC Codes (financing, liens) established/Court Law & Order Codes
Beauty	Rodeo Grounds
Local Artists	July 4th Pow-Wow
Tourism Coordinator	Tourism
Family Culture	Timber and Coal Resources
Financial Institution	Community Pride
Transit system for all – Rez Runner	Improved infrastructure (water line) Lame Deer to Muddy Cluster
Northern Cheyenne Tribal Housing Authority	People are interested in seeing change and improvements
Craft center	Casino and Restaurant (provides jobs and community \$\$\$)
Blooming entrepreneurial spirit (Various Funding and CDL College)	Boys and girls club
Thirty five nursing home units for seniors	Newspaper (A Cheyenne Voice)
Non Profits/Community and Youth	Young community (demographics)
Elder Commission	Sawmill operating at site in Ashland
Natural Resources – Water Rights and Mineral Rights	New leadership interested in planning and development
Northern Cheyenne Development Corporation	Land Resources (445,000 acres trust land) Bear Butte, Thunder Child
Land Use planning completed	Business Opportunities/Cheyenne Depot in Ashland opening
Tongue River water rights	Train youth at CDKC
Pizza Shop	Transfer Station Completed
Curbside Garbage Pick Up	Energy Committee Established
Mini Mall Site Being Developed	History/Archeology
Cell Towers Added/Near Completion	Market Tongue River
Fish and Game Wardens	New Auto Repair business

Concerns

Vacant houses and land (blight)	Lack of proactive groups/actions
Livestock in the roads (Legislation is working on this)	Lack of preventative health care
Lack of housing	Obstacles in getting a loan on the reservation
Lack of available spaces to rent for businesses	With a small close knit community, it is difficult to bounce back when tragedy / deaths occur
Bully culture in schools	High dropout rate
High suicide rate	Drug and alcoholism problem (especially prescription drugs)
Shortage of Police/Inconsistent Funding	Lack of suicide prevention
Laundromat	Lack of services
Lack of communication	Lack of money in budget for econ. dev.
Lack of Lodging	Inability to attract private capital
Lack of marketing of water rights	Lack of marketing mineral rights
Proximity to Billings – hard for businesses	Water quality
Lack of Council Involvement	Isolation adds to transportation expense
Labor training/ready workforce, life skills	Train young people and they leave
Storage is an issue (Distribution)	Negative Outside Business Perceptions
Challenges for establishing additional water systems	Lack of jobs for all ages of persons
True private sector lacking jobs	Dependent on Federal \$\$
Lack of Public Safety	No way to fund road maintenance
Lack of Follow Through on Projects	Lack of Community Center or place for Public Meetings

Working Groups

In this second activity, the group was asked to discuss projects that would assist in addressing some of the weaknesses or needs in the community. At the end of the identification of meaningful projects, the group was given three stickers and asked to vote for specific projects. They were allowed to place their stickers as they chose with one sticker by three various projects or all their stickers by a particular project.

Economy, Housing, Quality of Life, Services and Infrastructure

Community Center

Having a community center or “meeting place” was brought out by residents. It was noted that most available buildings have been utilized for offices of some type and that there is no place for meetings in the community.

Market Natural Resources

More fully utilize natural resource assets of water, coal and agricultural. Market water rights, develop mineral reserves and promote agricultural production on the tribal land.

MEDA Town Assessment

There was substantial enthusiasm to hold a town meeting assessment for Lame Deer. This would involve outside experts to assess and offer information on strategies and projects to address critical projects to the residents of Lame Deer.

Business

Establish a Small Business Management class and Intro to Leadership Class at CDKC to encourage and assist individuals to begin small businesses and grow them.

Infrastructure

Continue to repair water lines that are very old. Upgrades needed for Sewer Lagoon at Birney and Ashland. Seems to be inflow/infiltration problem in Lame Deer sewer system.

Coal Seam Fires

Establish an inventory of burning coal seam fires and assess if any are posing immediate danger to livestock, humans or could potentially start additional fires. If necessary, seek funding to eliminate burning coal seam fires.

TIF District

Explore options for establishing a TIF district in Ashland in the area of the sawmill.

Hydro Project – Tongue River - DELAYED

Establish a hydro project that could generate electricity at the Tongue River Dam.

Projects (that received votes)

Community Center – 3 Votes

Natural Resources – 3 Votes

Business – 1 Vote

Coal Seam Fire Inventory – 1 Vote