



2017 Community Meeting Recap for Miles City

This document is a summary of the 2017 CEDS community meetings. These meetings were designed to discuss local findings and incorporate them into a 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).

This year was especially important to host a community meeting because of the impacts from the decline in natural resource development has had on the community. There will be many impacts on communities in southeastern Montana, and the goal is to maximize positive impacts and mitigate negative ones. The decrease in Bakken activity over the last two years as well as the impending threat to coal have drawn some negative impacts recently. The more communities understand the impacts, proactively plan, and communicate within the community and region, the better the outcomes will be.

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

Miles City CEDS Meeting 2017

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

Medical Hub	Economic Diversity
Financial Hub/Banking Community	Food / Restaurant options
County Seat	Education Hub
Transportation (rail / hwy /crossroads)	WAPA
Schools: Community College (education offered pre-k through – college)	Clean air / Attractive / Healthy Living
Strong Ag economy, ag clusters, and Natural Resource Base	Good quality of Life
Fort Keogh	Rivers and plenty of outdoor recreation
Good paying jobs through Gov't	Some Land growth potential
Largest Hospital from between Billings and Dickinson	Culture / symphony / art center / range riders
Events – Bucking horse sale/car show	Farmers Market
Good, caring, hardworking people	Great telecommunications – IT and fiber are great
Strong volunteerism	Active Leadership community
Strong Historical / Pre. Community	Strong Sports supports
Grain terminal	Economic Development Center
Good roads and access	Increase in Truck Traffic
Auto parts / Ag Support	3 car dealerships – more variety
Hotel that can host small conventions	VA Facility
Improved City/County relations	Improved relations between Miles City and Custer County
Strong Church Community	Events Facility/Agri Sports Complex
Strong Chamber of Commerce, established popular events	Trucking services expanded
Government Service Center	Legislative representation
Additional retail stores/specialty stores	Critical Care Facility/Air Transport Service for emergency situations
Eastern Montana Industries	Business Diversity
Food Bank/Soup Kitchen	Council on Aging/Aging Hub
Law Enforcement/Fire Protection	New generation of business professionals
Potential and promise in our region	Upgrade of Broadus Interchange in works

Retail Development Growth	Potential Opportunity For Downtown Development
Quantity/Quality of Non Profits	Leadership Miles City Program
State Employees Medical Clinic Added	Airport Improvements – Runway, Hangars
Community Health Center	VA Facility
Housing Diversity	Community Vision and Proactive Attitude
Professional Services	Town and Country Club
CCMC Flood Control Project	Strong Western Cultural Heritage
Daily Newspaper – Radio Stations	Good working relationships between groups and businesses
New Detention Center	New Construction Group in Town
Hospital – offer services from birth to hospice	Access to National Corporations in community
Water/Sewer Capacity study completed	Strategically located between Wright, WY and Sidney, MT for locating oil service industry businesses
Growing retail hub	Rocks Program
Affordable housing projects	MCC Heavy Equipment program
MCC workforce training programs	Historic buildings and funding to maintain them
Stockman Bank Hub	Low crime rate
Cell Phone coverage	Active service groups (civic groups)
Livestock Sales Barn - New	Lodging – just the right amount of rooms
Tourism into community	Interstate Proximity
New Community Foundation	Regional Employers (Private and Public)
Active Youth Groups	Malt Festival
Shoe Store	Livestock Pavilion Complex at Fairgrounds
City adopted Long Range Transportation Plan	Ag Advancement Center built
Milestown Group and Improvements they have done	AHEC Center
West End Improvement Efforts	Live Music Events
Parks	

Concerns

Labor Pool Limited – All Sectors	Parking concerns downtown
Lack of Cell Phone service outside of town	Water/sewer infrastructure needs upgrade, difficult to meet regulations /mandates
Lack of activities for the entire family when they are not at work or school	Need for downtown development and diversity
Downtown Development	Lack of available rail offloading
Lack of measure of success tool	Lack of clinical site to accommodate MCC
Concern with annexation	Workforce development not funded by the University system at present yet is in high demand.

Increased rail traffic creates need for additional overpass, quiet zones and safe crossings.	Money generated in eastern MT going to western MT
Southgate Subdivision has only one exit in and out with numerous homes located there. May be safety issue.	Lack of workforce – unemployment low - cannibalize each other for labor
Concern that the money will leave as older generation leaves	Single Family moderately priced homes in limited supply
Low Income Housing availability	Demand on Emergency services and security would increase with more population
DNRC/water rights	EPA/Water Quality mandates
Bakken economic traffic decreasing; employment opportunities also down	Lack air service
Flood plain insurance costs	Increase in truck Traffic, impacts on roads
Doctor/Healthcare recruitment difficult	Increase rail traffic
FEMA flood insurance increase	Lack of marketing effort to bring back younger generation
Ag commodity prices low for grain crops	Industry Growth impacting infrastructure
Lack of Public Transportation	Flooding in underpass
No Grocery Store on North Side	School Special Education Staff recruitment difficult
No taxi cabs after 9pm	Transportation for disabled limited
More and more potential employees unable to pass drug tests	Loss of Colstrip
Prevailing wage rates have increased to compete with oil jobs	Website updates – County
MDU Electric rates increasing	Federal government budgets are decreasing
Proximity to Interstate	Difficult to attract/recruit new people and hard to retain them
low wages	not much entertainment for younger children
no public transportation service	lack of economic/community development funding

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

West End Development/Annexation

Consider selling lots owned by City to business owners in West end area and pursue developing an improved appearance for that exit.

Gavilon

Assist Gavilon with any needed information to evaluate the possibility of putting in a new grain elevator in Miles City.

Proposed Economic Projects (Those receiving votes)

Gavilon - 3 Votes

Housing

Assisted Living Housing

Potential to expand assisted living services offered by Holy Rosary.

Proposed Housing Projects (Those receiving votes)

Quality of Life

Success Measuring Tool

Establish a mechanism to measure success rate of community and economic development actions

Market Miles City as Destination for Outdoor Sports

Miles City has many types of outdoor sports to offer year round. Market the area to outdoor sportsman as a destination.

Marketing of Miles City (Tourism, Entrepreneurs, Businesses, potential young residents)

More effort to market Miles City to potential businesses, entrepreneurs and potential young residents. Continue to market tourism.

Proposed Quality of Life Projects (Those receiving votes)

Marketing of Miles City – 11 Votes

Market Miles City as Outdoor Sports Destination – 5 Votes

Services and Infrastructure

CCMC Flood Control Project

Miles City continues to struggle with matters associated with the existing levee which is not certified, and the floodplain. Section 205 funding has been obtained and a steering committee with sub committees continues to pursue this project with the first phase being a feasibility study to be conducted by the Corp of Engineers.

Public Transportation

Currently no public transportation options exist. Taxis are available for transportation options. Commissioners looking at applying for a public transportation grant to establish this option.

VA Study

Custer County has the opportunity to take over the VA Facility and utilize it or liquidate it. They would like to conduct a feasibility study to evaluate the options this may provide them.

Sewer extension to west end industrial park and north side, Increase capacity in sewer main

Extend sewer services to the existing lots in the industrial park on the west end of Miles City, extend sewer to the north side and increase the capacity in a sewer main in a specific area of town.

Airport Improvement Project

Phase I has been completed and a Preliminary Engineering Report needs to be completed for the next Phase of the project.

Agri Energy Innovation Center

MCC seeks to investigate establishing a Agri Energy Innovation Center which will be able to offer increase education possibilities in renewable energy as well as agriculture.

School Buildings Upkeep and Maintenance

The public schools are old structures and many components as well as the physical structures are in need of upgrades and repairs. Includes MCC infrastructure also.

Tussler Bridge

Tussler bridge is in need of significant repair. Commissioners are seeking funding to accomplish this project.

Capital Improvement Plans – Miles City/Custer County

Capital improvement plans are needed for both governmental entities. This will identify infrastructure items owned by each entity, assist with planning, budgeting, and maintenance schedules.

Obtain increased funding for community and economic development to increase capacity

Funding for community and economic development is scarce. Increase available funds to allow or additional capacity to provide services for community and economic development

Proposed Services and Infrastructure Projects (Those receiving votes)

School Buildings – 4 Votes

Public Transportation – 1 Vote

Agri Energy Innovation Center – 2 Votes

Funding for Community/Economic Development – 4 Votes

CCMC Flood Control – 7 Votes

VA Study – 6 Votes

CIP – 2 Votes

Tussler Bridge – 3 Votes

