

## 2018 Community Meeting Recap for Ashland

This document is a summary of the 2018 CEDS community meetings. This meeting was designed to discuss local findings for 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).

Ashland is an unincorporated community within Rosebud County but is about 80 miles from the County Seat at Forsyth.

This year was especially important to host a community meeting because of the many changes in natural resource development projects. There will be many impacts on communities in southeastern Montana, and the goal is to maximize positive impacts and mitigate negative ones. 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.



# Ashland CEDS Meeting 2018

## 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

Public and private forest land	St. Labre School
Tourism & Educational opportunities	Heritage Living Center
Health Clinic and mental health services	Improved Cell Phone Service
Current Demographics and income levels help in getting grants	Relatively diverse, stable business community although limited in types of services
TRECO	EMS Service
Transportation corridor	Lodging, fuel, food
Food Service	Agriculture
Natural Resources	Very Basic Services Offered
Hunting Opportunities	Saw Mill Business Operating
Biomass Opportunities	Saw Mill Site
US Forest Service Complex	Health Fairs sponsored by clinic
Law Enforcement Satellite Site	Very diverse cultures represented
Vacant Convenience Store re-opened	Outdoor recreation

## Concerns

Housing (all types)	Need for SPED \$\$ at school
Emergency services current/Need physician at medical clinic	Employment Opportunities slim now and concerned with more people moving in
Land and buildings for new businesses/development is limited	Costs associated with upkeep of roads and infrastructure development
Limited Services/Supplies	Condition of Ashland Public School – repairs!!!
Radical Environmental Groups	Basic services – limited
Cell Service reliability/Broadband	Limited air transportation/Medical Evac
Workforce availability/hard to attract law enforcement	Competition for current jobs with higher pay jobs
Clearance to log on Federal Land	Floodplain issues – Otter Creek/Tongue River
Impact of recent fires on forest	Environmental Rules/Regulations
Lack of sidewalks	Infrastructure - water/electricity/sewer
Child Care	Lack of Public High School in the Community
Limited EMS Staffing/Major Highway	Labor Force competition/lack of workers
Youth Center	Lack of Chamber of Commerce
Lack of Fitness Center	Clinic needs physical therapist/Rehab services
Clinic has a lot of professional staff	Lack of Tourism Draw or Focus
Lack of Emergency Space at Clinic	Lack of EMT's to transport
Grocery Store .... possible loss??	Traffic Speed/Law Enforcement thru town

## 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.

## Housing, Quality of Life, Economy, Services, Infrastructure

### ***Ashland Public School Repairs/Remodel***

The school was constructed over 40 years ago. There are items in need of repair and update. This is the only public school in Ashland and this region of Rosebud County. Stable student population.

### ***SPED \$\$***

School personnel are maxed out on the number of students they can handle in their SPED program. There is a need for more resources in this region to address special education needs for students at Ashland Public.

### ***Speed Limit Signs***

The west end of town continues to have difficulty with Hwy 212 traffic being too fast and the dangerous curve near Rabbit Town. Need more emphasis on speed reduction through Ashland to encourage safety.

### ***Sidewalk Project***

There are few sidewalks through Ashland and also a need for a walking trail to Rabbit Town. This is a major traffic corridor and safety for residents is key. Many residents walk to their destinations in this community and don't have vehicles to drive.

### ***Public Transport Study***

Residents have to go to Lame Deer or Forsyth. Review availability of public transport to see if the need in Ashland warrants providing the service.

### ***Community Center***

Establish Community Center that could be utilized by Seniors or Youth. Perhaps a fitness center could combine some forms of fitness machines along with a meals program and activities in the evening for youth.

### **Projects Receiving Votes**

Community Center – 5

SPED \$\$ - 3

Ashland Public – 2

Public Transport Study - 2

Speed Signage - 1