



2020 Community Survey Recap for Miles City

This document is a summary of the 2020 CEDS community surveys. These surveys were designed to ascertain local findings for the five-year CEDS document being 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 it was especially important to seek community feedback because of the COVID impacts on our region. SEMDC is working with citizens and communities to find ways to maximize positive impacts and mitigate negative ones. The more individuals in each community understand economic change and 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.

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Miles City CEDS Survey 2020

Group Discussion

Rather than perform a typical Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats assessment, 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 through survey responses.

Strengths

Medical Hub	MCC Heavy Equipment program
Critical Care Facility/Air Transport Service for emergency situations	Rocks Program
Largest Hospital between Billings and Dickinson	MCC Collaborations with CDKC and Power \$\$
Hospital – offer services from birth to hospice	Events Center Opportunity at Fairgrounds
Dialysis Care	HS Softball Field Improvements
Oncology Services HRH	Town and Country Club
State Employees Medical Clinic Added	Hockey Building
EMS/Ambulance/Equipment	Events – Bucking horse sale/car show
City adopted Long Range Transportation Plan	Parks/Trails
Ortho Montana at HRH	Improved Signage and Trail System
Community Health Center	West End Improvement Efforts
Law Enforcement/Fire Protection	Food Bank/Soup Kitchen
Dog on Drug Task Force	Live Music Events
Low crime rate	Rivers and plenty of outdoor recreation
Education Hub	Culture / Art Center / Range Riders
Strong Sports support	Farmers Market
New Detention Center	Strong Western Cultural Heritage
Fort Keogh	Livestock Pavilion Complex at Fairgrounds
MCC workforce training programs	Hotel that can host small conventions
New MCC Programs/MCC Certificate Programs/Enrollment Up/Meat Processing	Food / Restaurant options
Active Youth Groups	Livestock Sales Barn - New
Government Service Center	Malt Festival
Good, caring, hardworking people	Airport and Upcoming Improvements
Schools: Community College (education offered pre-k through college)	Events Facility/ Agri Sports Complex
Pathways Program at High School	Lodging – just the right amount of rooms
Good roads and access	Retail Development Growth

Potential and promise in our region	Some Land growth potential
Strong volunteerism	New generation of business professionals
Quantity/Quality of Non-Profits	Water/Sewer Capacity study completed
Strong Chamber of Commerce, established	Affordable housing projects
Strong Historical / Pre. Community	Housing Diversity
Active Leadership community	Financial Hub/Banking Community
Clean air / Attractive / Healthy Living	Stockman Bank Hub
Good quality of Life	New Community Foundation
MCC Community Service/Athletes	Improvements to West End Lease Situation
Good working relationships between groups	New Construction Group in Town
Leadership Miles City Program	Access to National Corporations in community
Job Services Office in Miles City	Strategically located between Wright, WY and Sidney, MT for locating oil service industry businesses
Legislative representation	Pipeline Activity
County Seat	Proposed Wind Energy Development
Strong Church Community	Historic buildings and funding to maintain them
Improved City/County relations	
Food Support	Potential for Transco Expansion
Stable Economic Base	Eastern Montana Industries
Volunteer and Service Groups	Cell Phone coverage
Tourism into community	Regional Employers (Private and Public)
Custer County Transit Service	SBDC Office in Miles City at MCC
Transportation (rail / Hwy /crossroads)	AHEC Center
Interstate Proximity	Ag Advancement Center built
Trucking services expanded	National Guard Armory
Increase in Truck Traffic	Economic Development Center
Roundabout	Good paying jobs through Gov't
TIF District/Opportunity Zone	Council on Aging/Aging Hub
CCMC Flood Control Project	Diversified Ag economy and ag clusters
Potential Opportunity for Downtown	Auto parts / Ag Support
WAPA	Daily Newspaper – Radio Stations
Professional Services	Great telecommunications – IT and fiber are great
Economic and Business Diversity	Car dealerships - variety
BLM Office in Miles City	County Fire
Pet Store in Miles City	Variety of Meat Processing facilities
Custer County Fire Hall construction in process	Fairgrounds Multi Use Building being constructed

Concerns

Low Income Housing availability	EPA/Water Quality mandates
Single Family moderately priced homes in limited supply	Water/sewer infrastructure needs upgrade, difficult to meet regulations /mandates
Southgate Subdivision has only one exit in and out with numerous homes located there. May be safety issue.	DNRC/water rights
Low pay base affects recruitment for jobs	Flooding in underpass
Doctor/Healthcare recruitment difficult	Lack of public/commercial air service
School Special Education Staff recruitment difficult	MDU Electric rates increasing
Difficult to attract/recruit new people and hard to retain them	Money generated in eastern MT going to western MT
Labor Pool Limited – All Sectors	Concern that the money will leave as older generation leaves
Lack of workforce – unemployment low - cannibalize each other for labor	Workforce development not funded by the University system at present yet is in high demand.
More and more potential employees unable to pass drug tests	Seeing drugs in community we have never seen before
Demand on Emergency services and security would increase with more population	Lack of drug and alcohol rehabilitation centers
EMS Service Regulations/Avail Personnel	Lacking Entertainment for Young People
Federal government budgets are decreasing	Childcare Availability
Prevailing wage rates have increased to compete with oil jobs	Website Updates County/City
Lack Mental Health Services to serve all needs	No person assigned to address blighted areas.
Rural Broadband and Cell Service Reliability	Lack of measure of success tool
Isolated (Rural/Winter)	Industry Growth impacting infrastructure
Flood insurance cost increase and regulations associated with floodplain	Concern with annexation
Tax base limited	lack of economic/community development funding
Statewide tax structure- future??	MCC/State Funding Concerns
MC Taxes	No engineering firm in town

Proximity to Interstate	City Fire Dept. Building/Needed \$\$ to repair
Bakken Traffic Decreasing	City Police Dept. Building/Needed \$\$
County Roads – Cost, Maintenance, Quality	County Fire Building
Increase in truck Traffic, impacts on roads	Animal control issues
Roundabout project impacts	VA Site
Parking concerns downtown	No Grocery Store on North Side
Lack of Public Transportation	Maintenance of Public Library Building
No taxi cabs after 9pm	Mens clothing store
Increased rail traffic creates need for additional overpass, quiet zones and safe crossings.	No City CIP (Capital Improvement Plan)
Grain Terminal and lack of rail loop	Lack of available rail offloading
Ag Economy under pressure currently	More active adult and adult protective services for elderly
Lack of planned industrial development whether in City or County.	Lack of compliance with COVID health guidelines

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

VA Complex

County continues to work toward a solution on whether to accept ownership of the VA Complex. This could potentially impact businesses and groups currently located there. Additionally, location of current VA services could be impacted in near future.

Event/Convention Center

Work toward establishing an Event/Convention Center at the fairgrounds capable of holding an event for approximately 1000 persons. This would supplement existing tourism efforts as well as create a whole new avenue of events Miles City could host.

MCYHA Improvements

Support the necessary improvements to the Agri Sports Complex so additional hockey events can be hosted during the winter months as this creates additional revenue for Miles City businesses in an off season and further diversifies the overall economy in Miles City by strengthening tourism revenues.

Westend Development

Continue to work with the City of Miles City toward industrial development on the west end of Miles City. Also support tourism efforts and beautification efforts to make that entrance to Miles City more inviting.

TIF/Opportunity Zone

Explore opportunities to utilize TIF or Opportunity Zone more effectively.

GIS Business Recruitment Tools

Continue to develop GIS tools utilizing ArcGIS within the County. Past focus has been Next Gen 911 and Emergency Services. Expand services to include a business recruitment tool for Miles City to market and make available information and statistics about Custer County and Miles City.

Proposed Economic Projects (Those receiving votes)

- VA Complex - 5 Votes
- Event Center – 6 Votes
- West End Development – 6 Votes
- TIF/Opportunity Zone – 1 Vote
- GIS – 1 Vote
- Youth Hockey Improvements – 1 Vote

Housing

MCC Housing Needs

Establish additional housing for MCC as their enrollment is expanding. Needs for married student housing as well.

Affordable Housing

Encourage the development of workforce housing in an effort to expand affordable housing options for new employees.

Proposed Housing Projects (Those receiving votes)

- Affordable Housing – 3 Votes

Quality of Life

Marketing of Miles City (Tourism, Entrepreneurs, Businesses, Potential Young Residents)

Support efforts to market Miles City to potential businesses, entrepreneurs and potential young residents. Continue to market tourism. Work toward improving overall content management of various key organizations such as City, County, Economic Development. Choose one marketing theme and promote Miles City in a united effort.

Centra Expansion

Expand the Centra to create more availability for various activities to the public and make more availability for sports at MCC. This could serve for additional youth type programs and make more times available for public use.

Public Transportation Program

Continue to expand and improve public transportation program by offering transportation to other areas for senior citizens and others in need of public transportation.

Proposed Quality of Life Projects (Those receiving votes)

Marketing of Miles City – 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.

Airport Improvements

Continue to support efforts to improve the airport infrastructure.

City CIP and Growth Policy

Capital Improvement Plans (CIP) are becoming necessary to point competitively for infrastructure type grants. Assist City in obtaining funding to complete a CIP. Growth Policy is now 5 years old as well and needs to be updated

County Growth Policy

Assist County in obtaining funding to complete a Growth Policy as current Growth Policy is now 5 years old and needs to be updated.

School Building Upgrades

All school buildings including the college are in need of continual maintenance and capital improvement projects. Support necessary funding to continue to maintain infrastructure.

City Fire Building/Police Building

The fire department building is facing condemnation of a portion of it and funding to replace it is necessary. The police department is also looking to find a permanent location.

County Fire Building

Support efforts of the County to expand and improve the current Custer County Fire building facility.

Tussler Bridge

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

Proposed Services and Infrastructure Projects (Those receiving votes)

Police/Fire Buildings – 5 Votes

CCMC Flood Control – 7 Votes

Airport Improvements – 1 Vote

City CIP and Growth Policy – 1 Vote

County Growth Policy – 2 Votes

School Building Upgrades – 4 Votes