

## Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) 2022



### 2022 Community Meeting Recap for the Community of Miles City

Annually, Southeastern Montana Development Corporation (SEMDC) initiates public input throughout a four-county region to assist in developing a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). In the past, we have held community meetings to gain insight into trends, strengths, and concerns in various communities. This year we held in-person meetings but also designed surveys to invite conversation about the current state of each community, to discuss how things have changed from last year, and to note what projects are priorities to be completed for the following year(s). These conversations are incorporated into a five-year CEDS planning document created by SEMDC to be utilized in the process to assist the communities in Southeastern Montana.

This year it was especially important to host community meetings because of the economic impacts on our region recently. 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 its impacts, proactively plan, and communicate within the community and region, the better the outcomes will be.

Developed by:

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## Miles City CEDS Meeting 2022

### 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 year's meeting and then adding or modifying the information already developed. The lists below are what the group developed through meeting responses.

### Strengths

911 Dispatch Improvements	Largest Hospital between Billings and Dickinson
Access to National Corporations in the community	Law Enforcement/Fire Protection
Active Leadership Community	Leadership Miles City Program
Active Senior Group	Legislative representation
Active Youth Groups	Live Music Events
Affordable housing projects	Livestock Pavilion Complex at Fairgrounds
Ag Advancement Center	Livestock Sales Barn - New
AHEC Center	Low crime rate
Airport and Upcoming Improvements	MC Dispatch City-Prevailing Wages
ARPA funding 7th St. Sewer	MC Head start
Auto parts / Ag Support	MCC Community Service/Athletes
BLM Office in Miles City	MCC Heavy Equipment program
Car dealerships - variety	MCC Nursing Program Fully Accredited
CCMC Flood Control Project	MCC Workforce Training Programs
Cell Phone coverage	MSU Extension- Community Development Position
Childcare Centers Added	MT Theater Upgrades
City adopted Long Range Transportation	National Guard Armory
Clean air / Attractive / Healthy Living	New generation of business professionals
Coal Seam Fire Mitigation	New MCC Programs/MCC Certificate Programs/Enrollment Up/Meat Processing
Community Foundation	Oncology Services HRH and Billings Clinic
Community Health Center – Integrated Health Program	One Health Expansion
Council on Aging/Aging Hub	Ortho Montana at HRH
County Fire Department New building	Pathways Program at High School
County Seat	Pet Store in Miles City
Critical Care Facility/Air Transport Service for emergency situations	Pipeline Activity
Culture / Art Center / Range Riders	Police Department – Moved
Custer County Fund for Animals	Possible new Senior Center
Custer County Event Center	Potential for Transco Expansion
Custer County Transit Service	Potential Opportunity for Downtown
Daily Newspaper – Radio Stations	Professional Services
Detention Center	Proximity to Colstrip
Dialysis Care	Quantity/Quality of Non-Profits
Diversified Ag economy and ag clusters	Regional Employers (Private and Public)
DNRC Eastern Land Office	Retail Development Growth

Eastern Montana Industries	Revamped Main Street
Economic and Business Diversity	Rivers and plenty of outdoor recreation
Economic Development Center	Rocks Program
Education Hub	Roundabout
EMS/Ambulance/Equipment	SBDC Office in Miles City at MCC
Events – Bucking horse sale/car show	Schools: Community College (education offered pre-k through college)
Events Facility/ Agri Sports Complex / Hockey	Splash Pad Wibaux Park
Extension of Firehall/Transit Center	Stable Economic Base
Farmers Market	Stockman Bank Hub
Financial Hub/Banking Community	Strategically located between Wright, WY and Sidney, MT for locating oil service industry businesses
Food / Restaurant options	Strong Chamber of Commerce, established
Food Bank/Soup Kitchen	Strong Church Community
Fort Keogh	Strong Historical / Pre. Community
GIS Upgrades – County-Funded Position	Strong Sports support
Good-paying jobs through Gov't	Strong volunteerism
Good quality of Life	Strong Western Cultural Heritage
Good roads and access	TIF District/Opportunity Zone
Good, caring, hardworking people	Tourism into community
Government Service Center	Town and Country Club
Grid United – Transmission Line Project	Trail System and parks with Improved Signage
Great telecommunications – IT and fiber are great	Transportation (rail / Hwy /crossroads)
Heart Grant-Mental Health Mobile Response Team	Truck Traffic Re-routed
Historic buildings and funding to maintain them	Trucking services expanded
Hospital – offer services from birth to hospice	Tussler Bridge Improvements
Hotels that can host small conventions	VA moving Clinic to old Rue 21 Building
HS Softball Field Improvements	Variety of Meat Processing Facilities
Improvements to West End Lease Situation	Woodruff Park Possible Improvements
Increase in Food Trucks	Wind Energy Development
Interstate Proximity	Youth Hockey \$\$
Job Services Office in Miles City- Training \$\$	

## Concerns

Ag Economy is under pressure - expenses	Lack of Public/Commercial Air Service
Animal control issues	Lack of workforce – unemployment low - cannibalize each other for labor
Bakken Traffic Decreasing	Lacking Entertainment for Young People
Bathroom Denton Field	Low Income Housing availability
Bender Park needs upgrades	Low pay base affects recruitment for jobs
Childcare Availability	Mainline 95% Capacity
City Firehall	Marijuana Tax, loss of income
City Hall Building	Maintenance of the Public Library Building
Codes not enforced- town looks blighted	MC Taxes

Coal Seam Fires	MCC/State Funding Concerns
Concern that the money will leave as the older generation leaves	MDU Electric rates increasing
Connor Stadium-Baseball Grandstand-needs replaced	Men's clothing store
County Roads – Cost, Maintenance, Quality	MFG-Industry Zone
Demand for Emergency services and security would increase with more population	Money generated in eastern MT going to western MT
Deteriorating Pipes/ Sinkhole	More active adult and adult protective services for elderly
Difficult to attract/recruit new people and hard to retain them	More and more potential employees unable to pass drug tests
DNRC/water rights	No meeting attendance- uninformed residents
Doctor/Healthcare recruitment difficult	No City CIP (Capital Improvement Plan)
Drought-Lack of Feed, High Cost	No engineering firm in town
EMS Service Regulations/Avail Personnel	No Grocery Store on North Side
EPA/Water Quality mandates	No online access to city forms
Federal government budgets are decreasing	No Senior Center
Flood insurance costs increase and	No taxi cabs after 9 pm
Flood Protection/Levee Funding not available	Not Enough Softball Fields
Flooding in underpass	Parking concerns downtown – One Health
Grain Terminal and lack of rail loop	Proximity to Interstate
Hockey Building	Quality of Loan Request Collateral
Housing, and rent prices are high. Lack options	Regulations Associated with Floodplain- impacts
Increase in truck Traffic, impacts on roads	Revamped Mainstreet- Still needs work
Increased Expenses 911-Dispatch	Rural Broadband and Cell Service Reliability
Increased rail traffic creates the need for additional overpasses, quiet zones, and safe crossings.	School Special Education Staff recruitment difficult
Industry Growth impacting infrastructure	Seeing drugs in a community we have never seen before
Kitchen in Event Center -Incomplete	Senior housing options, transition, Eagles Manor
Labor Pool Limited – All Sectors	Single Family moderately priced homes in limited supply
Lack of Mental Health Services to serve all needs	Southgate Subdivision has only one exit in and out with numerous homes located there. Maybe a safety issue.
Lack of available rail offloading	Statewide tax structure- future??
Lack of drug and alcohol rehabilitation centers	Tax base limited
lack of economic/community development	Traffic increase on Truck Route
Lack of Knowledge about MCC	VA Site
Lack of Local Advertising	Water Intake
Lack of measure of success tool	Water/sewer infrastructure needs upgrades, difficult to meet regulations /mandates
Lack of planned industrial development whether in the City or County.	Website Updates County/City
Lack of Public Transportation	Westend Improvements

## **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 asked to vote for specific projects. They were allowed to place 3 checkmarks as they chose on various projects, they felt were the most important.

## **Economy**

### **Event/Convention Center Phase II**

Work toward the completion of the Event Center, adding an amphitheater, stage, hangar door, and complete kitchen and landscaping.

### **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.

### **North Montana and Industrial Park Sewer**

The sewer is at 96% capacity. This disables companies from expanding and for new companies to come in. There are several major employers being negatively impacted by this issue. Need to replace the sewer lines.

### **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 diversify the overall economy in Miles City by strengthening tourism revenues.

### **Milligan Project**

Renovate the downtown Milligan building to be the future and consolidated home One Health Community Health Network.

### **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 the entrance to Miles City more inviting.

### **Proposed Economic Projects receiving votes**

North Montana and Industrial Park Sewer – 9 Votes

Youth Hockey Improvements – 7 Votes

Event Center – 6 Votes

West End Development – 6 Votes

Milligan Building – 3 Votes

## **Housing**

### **Affordable Housing - Subdivision**

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

### **MCC Housing Needs**

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

### **Senior Housing / Assisted Living**

Encourage the development of transition-style housing for seniors and assisted living options other than nursing homes.

### **Proposed Housing Projects receiving votes**

Senior Housing – 14 Votes

Affordable Housing – 4 Votes

## **Quality of Life**

### **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 additional youth-type programs and make more time available for public use.

### **Depot**

City or County to acquire Depot, and allow a private investor to buy it to renovate the property and use it to enhance the economy of Miles City.

### **Elderly In-Home Care Funding Options**

Find funding options to assist seniors with in-home health care.

### **Hydrotherapy Opportunity**

Set up a hydrotherapy option in the basement of the Eagles for Seniors and Veterans.

### **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, and Economic Development. Choose one marketing theme and promote Miles City in a united effort.

### **MCC Expansion and New Roof**

There is a need for a 15,000 SQ FT building for MCC programs to enhance growth, recruitment, and retention. MCC main building needs a new roof.

## **Senior/Community Center**

The current senior center has been condemned and is unusable, a new location is needed for the seniors to gather. There is also a need for a community center, one with a pool.

## **Youth Facilities**

Skate Park, Pool, and places for youth to do activities and stay out of trouble.

## **Proposed Quality of Life Projects receiving votes**

Depot- 9 Votes

Youth Facilities – 9 Votes

Senior Center – 3 Votes

Funding for the Elderly – 3 Votes

MCC Expansion/Roof – 1 Vote

## **Services and Infrastructure**

### **Airport Improvements**

Continue to support efforts to improve the airport infrastructure. There is a new for a new hangar and a new door on the old hangar.

### **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.

### **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 has been relocated to another building that requires many updates and remodeling. Due to the age of the building, it will be an ongoing project.

### **Fairgrounds Sewer/Water**

Improve fairgrounds' water and sewer infrastructure.

### **MCC Sewer Line**

Replace sewer line from MCC to Haynes.

### **School Building Upgrades**

All school buildings including the college need continual maintenance and capital improvement projects. Support necessary funding to continue to maintain infrastructure. Washington Middle school has a sewer issue that is in immediate need of being fixed.

## **Proposed Infrastructure Projects receiving votes**

Police/Fire Buildings – 25 Votes