

# **RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT REPORT**

**for**

## **DEER LODGE, MONTANA**

**APRIL 24 – 25, 2006**

**In Partnership with your Certified Regional Development Corporation:  
Headwaters RC& D; Montana Department of Commerce; Jefferson Local  
Development Corporation; Big Sky Economic Development Authority; USDA  
Forest Service/ Custer National Forest; Montana Economic Developers Association;  
USDA/Rural Development; Pondera Regional Port Authority  
and the People of Deer Lodge.**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

It was a privilege for the Deer Lodge Resource Team to spend two days in your community. Thank you for your hospitality, your time, and for sharing with the team the vision you have for Deer Lodge.

Before digging in to the report itself, I would like to give recognition to the Certified Regional Development Corporation program that is funded through Montana Department of Commerce (MDOC). Headwaters RC& D, under the direction of Judie Tilman, is the Certified Regional Development Corporation for the community of Deer Lodge which made this assessment possible. In addition, support and training for the process is provided by Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA). These three partnerships make Resource Team's possible.

Special thanks are due the Powell County Planning Office. Ron Hanson and Peggy Kerr served as the champions behind this entire project and will continue to be involved with the project through activities detailed in this report. Ron and Peggy had help from a host of other people, agencies and businesses, but without their "Let's do it" energy, the assessment would not have taken place.

In addition, I applaud each and every team member that dedicated hours of work and travel in order to participate on the team: Tom Harrington, Jefferson Local Development Corporation; Casey Joyce, Big Sky Economic Development Authority; Leisa Lester, USDA Forest Service/Custer National Forest; Michelle Shoquist, USDA Rural Development; Neal Ullman, MT Dept. of Commerce, CDBG; Elaina Zempel, Pondera Regional Port Authority. Special thanks to Gloria O'Rourke, of MEDA, who provided recording and facilitation support. Each team member's contact information is provided in the following report. Please feel free to call on any of us for additional information or support. It would be our pleasure!

The stage is now set for the future of Deer Lodge. There are a number of short term and long term accomplishable recommendations that the resource team has provided in this report. Each of you individually must decide what it is that you want to do—what kind of project you want to tackle. It is also important for the entire community and/or county to be involved in finding ways to accomplish its goals. A few celebrations at the successful conclusion of an activity that has involved a large number of citizens will lead to a feeling of accomplishment that will carry over into other activities. Look through the suggestions, pick out one, and get started. It can be done. It is your choice, your decision; you can do it!

Connie Ternes- Daniels, Team Leader, Headwaters RC&D

## **PROCESS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THIS REPORT**

According to Montana Department of Commerce program requirements, Resource Team Assessments are to be coordinated through the community's Certified Regional Development Corporation. Headwaters RC&D fills this role for Deer Lodge, Powell County and six other counties in the region. Headwaters RC&D served as the Resource Team Leader for the project. Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA) provided staff support for the coordination of a resource team to assist Deer Lodge in evaluating its assets and challenges and in developing suggestions for improving the environment, social and economic future of the area.

Peggy Kerr, Powell County Planning Office Assistant, served as the local contact and local team leader for the project. Under Peggy's direction, a host of people took the lead in agenda development, logistics, budgeting and publicity for the assessment. Resource team members were selected to visit, interview citizens, businesses and community leaders to develop options for projects for Deer Lodge. The team members were carefully selected based on their fields of expertise that Deer Lodge officials indicated would be needed to respond to the problem areas identified.

The Resource Team interviewed over 250 people during April 24 – 25, 2006. In order to receive input from as many people as possible, people of all ages submitted written comments as well. All notes from all listening sessions as well as those submitted via email or handwritten are included in this report. The team was available for listening to the following groups: Eighth Grade Students at E.F. Duval Jr. High; Teachers at E.F. Duval Jr. High; Teachers at Powell County High School; No Host Community Dinner; Hospital, Emergency Services, Law Enforcement; Business, Financial Institutions, Chamber, Civic Groups; Churches, Non-Profits, Foundations, Social Services; Prison, Boot Camp, Industries; City, County and Federal Government; Senior Citizens; Agriculture, Farming, Ranching; Employees: Sawmill, Contractors, Construction, Retail, Office Workers, and those Self-Employed.

Each participant was asked to respond to three questions designed to begin communication and discussion and to serve as a basis for developing recommendations in this report. The three questions were:

- What do you think are the major strengths and assets in Deer Lodge?
- What do you think are the major problems and challenges in Deer Lodge?
- What projects would you like to see completed in two, five, ten and twenty years in Deer Lodge?

Upon completion of the interviews, the team met in a work session to compare notes and share comments. The team then agreed that each team member would carefully analyze the things said, synthesize what they heard with their knowledge of programs and resources, prepare their notes and suggestions, and forward these items to be combined into this final report to the community of Deer Lodge.

A preliminary oral report and a summary of group recommendations was presented to the people of Deer Lodge the evening of April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2006.

Following the oral report, this formal written report was prepared and is presented to the people of Deer Lodge. Copies will be made available in print and electronically. The report is available on the MEDA website at <http://www.medamembers.org/resourceteams.php> A Town Hall Meeting is planned for Wednesday, May 24<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm at the PEN (925 Main Street, Deer Lodge) to review the report with the people of Deer Lodge and to identify projects and set priorities for action.

**DEER LODGE, MONTANA  
RESOURCE TEAM  
APRIL 24-25, 2006**

**Team Leader: Connie Ternes-Daniels  
Title: Economic Development Planner  
Agency: Headwaters RC&D  
Address: 305 W. Mercury  
City/State/Zip: Butte, MT 59701  
Phone: 406.782.7333 Fax: 406.782.9675  
Email: ctdaniels@bigskyhsd.com**

**Team Member: Tom Harrington  
Title: Assistant Manager  
Agency: Jefferson Local Development Corp.  
Address: P.O. Box 1079  
City/State/Zip: Whitehall, MT 59759  
Phone: 406.287.3282 Fax: 406.287.3287  
Email: harrington@montana.edu**

**Team Member: Casey Joyce  
Title: Community Development Specialist  
Agency: Big Sky Economic Development Authority  
Address: 222 N. 32<sup>nd</sup> St.; Suite 200  
City/State/Zip: Billings, MT 59101-1948  
Phone: 406.256.6871 Fax: 406.256.6877  
Email: joyce@bigskyeda.org**

**Team Member: Leisa Lester  
Title: Grants and Agreements Specialist  
Agency: USDA Forest Service/Custer Nat'l  
Forest  
Address: 1310 Main Street  
City/State/Zip: Billings, MT 59105  
Phone: 406.657.6205 x 203 Fax: 406.657.6225  
Email: llester@fs.fed.us**

**Team Member: Michelle Shoquist  
Title: Area Specialist  
Agency: USDA Rural Development  
Address: 790 Colleen Street  
City/State/Zip: Helena, MT 59601  
Phone: 406.449.5000 xt 121 Fax: 406.449.5008  
Email: Michelle.Shoquist@mt.usda.gov**

**Team Member: Neal Ullman  
Title: CDBG Program Specialist  
Agency: MT Dept. of Commerce  
Address: P.O. Box 200505  
City/State/Zip: Helena, MT 59620-0505  
Phone: 406.841.2773 Fax: 406.841.2771  
Email: nullman@mt.gov**

**Team Member: Elaina Zempel  
Title: Executive Director  
Agency: Pondera Regional Port Authority  
Address: 702 South Main, Suite #1  
City/State/Zip: Conrad, MT 59425  
Phone: 406.271.7237 Fax:  
Email: zempel@3rivers.net**

Recorder/Facilitator: Gloria O'Rourke, MEDA, 118 E. Seventh St.; Suite 2A, Anaconda, MT 59711  
Ph: 406.563.5259 Fax: 406.563.5476 email: gloria@medamembers.org

## Deer Lodge Community Assessment

The following is the community assessment schedule. All meetings that are held in **The Pen** (925 Main St., Deer Lodge) are open to the public. The other locations are closed due to space limitations.

### Monday, April 24, 2006

#### Arrival and Tour

- |                |   |
|----------------|---|
| 11:00am        | Team arrives – gather at the Court House in the Planning Office; address: 409 Missouri Ave. |
| 11:05 – 12:30  | Tour – depart from Court House via bus  |
| 12:30: 1:00ish | Walking Tour – end up for lunch at the Shack  |
| 1:00ish – 1:45 | Lunch at the Shack – team orientation, prep for listening sessions                          |
| 1:55           | Here we go! Off to E.F. Duvall Jr. High.  |

#### Listening Sessions begin:

- |                |                            |   |
|----------------|----------------------------|---|
| 2:15-3:08 p.m. | E.F. Duvall Jr. High       | Eighth-grade students   |
| 3:08-4 p.m.    | EF Duvall Jr. High<br>PCHS | Jr. High and elementary teachers (split team)<br>High school teachers |
| 5:30-7:30 p.m. | <b>Shack</b>               | No-Host Dinner – Working Dinner for Team                              |

### Tuesday, April 25, 2006

- |                 |                     |   |
|-----------------|---------------------|---|
| 7-7:45 a.m.     | PCMH                | Working Breakfast: Hospital, Emergency Services, Law Enforcement                                |
| 8-8:45 a.m.     | <b>The Pen</b>      | Business, Financial Institutions, Chamber, Civic Groups   |
| 9-9:45 a.m.     | <b>The Pen</b>      | Churches, Non-profits, Foundations, Social Services   |
| 10-10:45 a.m.   | Armory              | Prison, Boot Camp, Industries   |
| 11-11:45 a.m.   | City Hall           | City, County and Federal Government   |
| Noon-12:45 p.m. | Sr. Citizens Center | Senior Citizens – Working lunch   |
| 1-1:45 p.m.     | <b>The Pen</b>      | Agriculture, Farming, Ranching  |
| 2-2:45 p.m.     | <b>The Pen</b>      | Employees in general: Sawmill, Contractors, Construction, Retail, Office Workers, Self-employed |
| 3-6:30 p.m.     | <b>The Pen</b>      | Team Work Session – Working Supper  |
| 7-8:30 p.m.     | <b>The Pen</b>      | Resource Team Town Meeting  |

### Wednesday, May 24, 2006

- |             |                |  |
|-------------|----------------|--|
| 7-8:30 p.m. | <b>The Pen</b> | Resource Team Return Visit – Project and Prioritizing Town Meeting |
|-------------|----------------|--|

# MAIN ISSUES

## DEER LODGE RESOURCE TEAM

April 24 – 25, 2006

These topics are a summary of the comments, ideas and suggestions provided during the Deer Lodge Listening Sessions. These topics and issues form the outline for the Deer Lodge Resource Team report.

### MAIN TOPIC: HOUSING

#### ISSUES:

- Adequate Housing- safe, decent, affordable
- Availability – rentals and/or for sale
- Limited land availability
- Planning for various types of housing developments – great start with housing survey
- Senior housing and assisted living

### MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

#### ISSUES:

- Comprehensive Plan and Growth Policy
- Infrastructure
  - Streets - potholes
  - Water/Sewer
  - Sidewalks
  - Tourism
    - Walking Trail
- “Define Deer Lodge”
  - All pulling in same direction based on that definition.

### MAIN TOPIC: BEAUTIFICATION

#### ISSUES:

- Enforcement of codes and ordinances on the books
  - Junk vehicles, trailers, abandoned homes, yards, weeds, exterior home neglect
- Additional clean up days – more than twice per year
- Motivation: Community pride

### MAIN TOPIC: SOCIAL CHALLENGES

#### ISSUES:

- Drugs and Alcohol and other “at risk” behaviors
- Drop out rate
- Physical and/or verbal abuse
- Parental supervision
- Expand on Life Line
- More non-school activities
- Non-traditional families

## **MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES**

### **ISSUES:**

- **Drug Coalition, Skateboard Ramps, Teen Center,**
- **Downtown empty, downtown full...polar opposites.**
- **Impact of prison operation and industries**
- **Schools - different perceptions**
- **Schools and city role in recreational programs**
- **Rock Creek community investments**
- **Between county and city, i.e., law enforcement, services**
- **Community Resource Guide**

## **MAIN TOPIC: ACTIVITIES**

### **ISSUES:**

- **Youth**
  - **Youth Center**
  - **Skateboard, Paintball, Recreation Station, Soccer**
- **Family activities**
- **Funding assistance**
  - **The Arts, Elks, Fairgrounds, etc.**
- **Young adult activities**
- **Seniors**
  - **Transportation – hours and service extended**
  - **Senior Citizen Center hours extended**

## **MAIN TOPIC: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **ISSUES:**

- **Workforce**
- **Need for new businesses**
- **Support local businesses**
- **Value added ag**
- **Marketing of attractions**
- **Need for lodging**
- **Strong focus organization**
- **Historic Preservation**
  - **Deer Lodge Hotel**
  - **Trask Hall**
- **Define Chamber's role and Economic Development organization's role**
- **"Define Deer Lodge"**
  - **All pulling in same direction based on that definition.**

## DEER LODGE RESOURCE TEAM REPORTS

**Report by: Neal Ullman**

**Program Specialist, Community Development Block Grant Program**

**Montana Department of Commerce**

**301 South Park Avenue**

**PO Box 200523**

**Helena, MT 59620-0523**

**Office: 406-841-2773**

**Fax: 406-841-2771**

**E-mail: [nnullman@mt.gov](mailto:nnullman@mt.gov)**

**Web: [http://comdev.mt.gov/CDD\\_cdbg.asp](http://comdev.mt.gov/CDD_cdbg.asp)**

### INTRODUCTION

It was a pleasure to be a part of the Resource Team for the City of Deer Lodge. I enjoyed meeting members of the community as well as dedicated individuals who invited us to visit and are working hard to improve their town. I look forward to spending time in Deer Lodge in the future to explore its beauty even more.

By attending the Resource Team's public hearings, the people of Deer Lodge showed that they are invested in their hometown and dedicated to making it an even better place to live. They brought up a plethora of issues that face their city, all of which are concerns that deserve serious thought.

I was struck by how many issues Deer Lodge faces. During the course of the public hearings, I realized that to address all of these issues, **the city must update its comprehensive plan and growth policy. The plan is a strategy for identifying what issues the city faces, how it will address them, and in what order.** This need applies to all of the main topics of discussion in this report and while it will not be addressed under each recommendation, **the city should consider updating its plan the first priority. Once it is updated, everything else for the city will follow suit.**

### MAIN TOPIC: HOUSING

#### ISSUE: ADEQUATE HOUSING – SAFE, DECENT, AFFORDABLE

Many members of the community cited adequate housing as a major problem facing Deer Lodge. From teachers to workers at the prison, people we spoke with had a difficult time when they first moved to the city due to lack of affordable and decent housing. Some homes have been on sale for a significant period of time and are within the price range for many households but the state of these homes are either not safe, attractive, or will cost too much to fix up in the long run. Homes that are safe and decent are too expensive for the salaries available to most Deer Lodge residents.

#### RECOMMENDATION:

Deer Lodge should consider working with government agencies and developers to bring adequate housing to the city. With the expansion of the prison, possible jobs as a result of the Rock Creek development, and other growth, the city is in dire need of adequate housing. To plan where and how the housing might enter the city, **Deer Lodge must update its growth policy. A growth policy is the**

**blueprint for how a community plans to manage growth and expansion and the Deer Lodge plan has not been updated in over 30 years.**

**The city should also apply for housing funds through government agencies that help rehabilitate, demolish, and build homes. These funds can also serve as seed money for a revolving loan fund (RLF) that the city could use as an on going revenue source for homebuyer assistance or rehabilitation projects.** By loaning funds to households and asking them to pay back what they can afford, families will be able to afford a home without burdensome loan interest rates. Bankers who participated in the public hearings also generally acknowledged housing problems. Banks could also be used to fund an RLF, as could the chamber of commerce.

**Another opportunity would be a homebuyer assistance program.** Typically, such a program helps buyers with down payments, filing fees, and closing costs as well as homebuyer classes. Communities such as Whitefish, Kalispell, and Gallatin County currently are using CDBG funds for homebuyer assistance. While growth, housing costs, and income levels in these communities are much different than in Deer Lodge, there remains a need in Deer Lodge for help finding and purchasing a home.

#### **RESOURCES:**

See Housing Resources list below.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### **MAIN TOPIC: HOUSING**

##### **ISSUE: AVAILABILITY – RENTALS AND/OR FOR SALE**

Affordability was not the only reason people couldn't find housing in Deer Lodge, availability was another major concern. People told stories of searching for homes for months and even over a year. One prison worker told a story of a guard he hired who lived in a local hotel for weeks without finding a place to live and ended up quitting the job. A school councilor looked for months for an apartment before finding something available.

If the city is to grow at all or even maintain housing for its current needs, more housing must be available for renters or buyers. The expansion of the prison, the scenic location of the city, and Rock Creek development will create a more pressing need for housing.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

There is a real opportunity for the city to expand its housing stock. **Through demolitions, creation of housing developments, and rehabilitation of existing homes the city could easily expand housing available to current or new residents.** The city should contact other community who are experiencing similar growth with limits on existing housing including Shelby and Miles City. Both have too few homes and apartments to meet the need of current and new residents. Shelby is similar in that it also has a prison ready for expansion and other assets encouraging growth.

#### **RESOURCES:**

See Housing Resources list below.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **MAIN TOPIC: HOUSING**

### **ISSUE: SENIOR HOUSING AND ASSISTED LIVING**

Some residents, including at the luncheon at the senior center, indicated that senior citizen issues are something that need to be addressed. One resident brought up the specific need for a long-term care facility for Alzheimer and other similarly affected residents. More assisted living space was also mentioned as a concern.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

**Potential organizers of either an assisted or long-term living center should read a draft of the Senior Assisted Living Needs Assessment compiled for the Housing Division of the Montana Department of Commerce.** While the assessment is still only in draft form, it provides useful information on issues to take into account when planning for such a facility including long-term demographic trends of the community as well as the availability of local doctors, nurses, or health care providers to provide the care necessary for a facility. Some assisted living homes have difficulty providing services due to the lack of local health care workers and a dwindling population to fill beds at such a facility. A long-term feasibility study should be done for the possibility of either an assisted living center or long-term care facility to determine if the community can support such a project, what kind of services would be provided, and what income level of clientele would be served

### **RESOURCES:**

Senior Housing--

DRAFT of Senior Assisted Living Needs Assessment

Prepared by D. Blake Chambliss for the Montana Department of Commerce

Available through the Housing Division of the Department of Commerce

Office: 406-841-2840

Charlie Rehbein

Senior & Long Term Care Division

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services

111 North Sanders, Room 210

Helena, MT 59620

Office: 406-444-7788

Fax: 406-444-7743

E-mail: [crehbein@mt.gov](mailto:crehbein@mt.gov)

### **Housing Resources:**

Gus Byrom

CDBG Program Manager

Montana Department of Commerce

301 South Park Avenue

PO Box 200523

Helena, MT 59620-0523  
Office: 406-841-2777  
Fax: 406-841-2771  
E-mail: [gbyrom@mt.gov](mailto:gbyrom@mt.gov)

Ethan Stapp  
HOME Program Manager  
Montana Department of Commerce  
301 South Park Avenue  
PO Box 200523  
Helena, MT 59620-0523  
Office: 406-841-2818  
Fax: 406-841-2821  
E-mail: [estapp@mt.gov](mailto:estapp@mt.gov)

Mayor Larry Bonderud  
City of Shelby  
112 1<sup>st</sup> Street South  
Shelby, MT 59474  
Office: 406-434-5222  
Fax: 406-434-2039  
E-mail: [shbfin@3rivers.net](mailto:shbfin@3rivers.net)

Melissa Hartman  
Miles City Housing Authority  
210 South Winchester  
Miles City, MT 59301  
Office: 406-234-3433  
Fax: 406-234-9516  
E-mail: [mhartman@midrivers.com](mailto:mhartman@midrivers.com)

Sheila Rice  
Neighborhood Housing Services Executive Director  
509 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, South  
Great Falls, MT 59401  
Office: 406-761-5861  
Fax: 406-761-5852  
E-mail: [srice@nhsgf.org](mailto:srice@nhsgf.org)

Deborah Chorlton  
USDA-RD Housing Program Director  
PO Box 850  
Bozeman, MT 59771  
Office: 406-585-2580  
Fax: 406-585-2565  
E-mail: [Deborah.Chorlton@mt.usda.gov](mailto:Deborah.Chorlton@mt.usda.gov)

\*\*\*\*\*

## **MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ISSUES**

### **ISSUE: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND GROWTH POLICY**

Many suggestions of needs for the community were mentioned during the course of the Resource Team's meeting with the people of Deer Lodge. There seemed to be no consensus on what was the highest-ranking specific issue that faces the community. Certainly, there were broad issues such as housing and economic development that were repeated more often than others but within those issues were many suggested sub-issues.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

As mentioned above, the community needs a plan on how to prioritize all of these needs and how each need will be addressed. **A comprehensive plan and growth policy will allow members of the community see how the city plans to deal with each need, and in what level of priority.** Some people may think that a certain need should have a higher priority but if they are able to see that it is a priority nonetheless they should be encouraged that their local government and planners are addressing their issue.

Deer Lodge's growth policy plan has not been updated in over 30 years. **Over that time Deer Lodge has experienced significant changes and to meet those changes the city should adapt its plan to match today's community.**

### **RESOURCES:**

Dave Cole  
Community Development Division Administrator  
Montana Department of Commerce  
301 South Park Avenue  
PO Box 200523  
Helena, MT 59620-0523  
Office: 406-841-2776  
Fax: 406-841-2771  
E-mail: [dacole@mt.gov](mailto:dacole@mt.gov)

Gus Byrom  
CDBG Program Manager  
Montana Department of Commerce  
301 South Park Avenue  
PO Box 200523  
Helena, MT 59620-0523  
Office: 406-841-2777  
Fax: 406-841-2771  
E-mail: [gbyrom@mt.gov](mailto:gbyrom@mt.gov)

Tim Davis  
Montana Smart Growth Coalition Executive Director

PO Box 543  
Helena, MT 59624  
Office: 406-449-6086  
E-mail: [smartgrowth@mcn.net](mailto:smartgrowth@mcn.net)

Andrew Finch  
Montana Association of Planners  
Great Falls, MT  
Office: 406-455-8434

\*\*\*\*\*

## **MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ISSUES**

### **ISSUE: INFRASTRUCTURE**

Most often brought up as an infrastructure concern were the potholes in streets across the city. Also mentioned were the water and sewer systems, the deterioration of sidewalks, and the state of the walking trail as it relates to tourism.

The state of streets and sidewalks in Deer Lodge was dismal at best. Most streets had significant potholes including chunks of pavement missing. Sidewalks, including those close to the senior center, were extremely worn down and uneven. Members of the city government said that the water and sewer mains needed replacement. The walking trail is currently only on one side of town with a planned expansion to stretch through the community. Residents now have to drive to the trail to walk on it and believe that having a trail going through town would increase community and tourist use and encourage visitors to shop in the downtown area.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

There are funding agencies that can provide grants or low interest loans to the city to address these infrastructure problems. **Once the city is ready to address one of these issues, it should look at what funding the project is eligible for and apply for those grants or loans.**

### **RESOURCES:**

See the link below for a list of public facility funding agencies:

<http://dnrc.mt.gov/cardd/ResDevBureau/wasact/docs/SUMMARY%20OF%20FINANCIAL%20OPTIONS%20Expanded.pdf>

Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks – Recreational Trails Program  
<http://fwp.mt.gov/parks/grants/rtp/default.html>

\*\*\*\*\*

## **MAIN TOPIC: BEAUTIFICATION**

### **ISSUE: ENFORCEMENT OF CODES AND ORDINANCES ON THE BOOKS**

As residents talked about abandoned vehicles or junk vehicles on streets throughout the community, someone mentioned that there are already local laws dealing with this issue.

There was also concern expressed about abandoned and dilapidated homes. These concerns included neglect of the yards, tall weeds, and the exterior appearance. Some of these homes were also mentioned under housing issues. When talking about availability of adequate housing, people said that there were affordable homes for sale but these homes were severely neglected and in poor repair. Homes that were in good condition were usually too expensive for most potential buyers.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**The city should consider, as some residents suggested, expanding its community clean up day to more than just one day a year.** Getting neighborhood leaders involved and active in participating and organizing more clean up days will help residents take pride in their area and make sure to keep it clean.

**The volunteer program could also be extended to include enforcement of the city’s junk vehicle ordinances.** Because law enforcement is stretched thin for the city and Powell County, **volunteers could be trained by the city for what type of junk vehicles can be removed.** If this option is not feasible, the city should consider hiring an employee, either full or part-time, to manage this issue.

**The city should also consider a neighborhood rehabilitation project.** Butte currently has two projects, **funded in part by CDBG,** that are replacing sidewalks, curbs, and gutters as well as demolishing deteriorated homes and rehabilitating others. Butte plans to expand these projects to other parts of town as they work to get rid of unlivable homes and improving infrastructure.

**RESOURCES:**

Gus Byrom  
CDBG Program Manager  
Montana Department of Commerce  
301 South Park Avenue  
PO Box 200523  
Helena, MT 59620-0523  
Office: 406-841-2777  
Fax: 406-841-2771  
E-mail: [gbyrom@mt.gov](mailto:gbyrom@mt.gov)

Mike Wherley  
Community Transportation Enhancement Program Section Supervisor  
Montana Department of Transportation  
2701 Prospect Avenue  
PO Box 201001  
Helena, MT 59620-1001  
Office: 406-444-4221  
Fax: 406-444-9451  
E-mail: [mwherley@mt.gov](mailto:mwherley@mt.gov)

Karen Byrnes

Community Development Director  
Butte-Silver Bow Local Government  
155 West Granite Street, Room 115  
Office: 406-497-6465  
Fax: 406-497-6224

\*\*\*\*\*

## **MAIN TOPIC: SOCIAL CHALLENGES**

### **ISSUE: DRUGS, ALCOHOL AND OTHER “AT RISK” BEHAVIORS**

Many members of the community, including the 8<sup>th</sup> grade students the Resource Team met with as well as comments from Juniors at the high school, cited drugs, specifically methamphetamine, as a problem. **Both students and adults said that meth is easy to obtain and is the root of much of the crime and school dropout in the city.** Some adults pointed to Hepatitis C as a problem resulting from sharing needles during meth use.

Students also said that alcohol was a problem for a number of reasons. One is that some of their peers drink which also leads to crime and school dropouts. Another is the perception presented to students that drinking is acceptable. Some students complained of the number of bars in town and that when adults go out, they go to the bars.

Teen sex was also brought up as a concern. Some of the 8<sup>th</sup> graders said it was a problem but more juniors at the high school thought it was a problem as well as pregnancies. The teachers at the junior high said teen pregnancy is a problem and teachers at the high school said sexual abuse is something that needs to be addressed.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

The 8<sup>th</sup> grade students recently discussed meth in their class. Further education on the dangers of meth use may lower the risk to teens. Possibilities on further education could include the Montana Meth Project, the attorney general’s office, or the prison. The attorney general could also be helpful in discussing alcohol and teen crime.

Students, and some adults, said that there is not enough to do outside of school and that is why there is such a problem with drugs and sex. **Creating more after school activities, either through the school or separately, would provide opportunities for students.** Some activities mentioned were a skate park, paintball course, soccer program, motocross track, and a ski area.

**Right now, students are frustrated that ideas aren’t followed through with action. Adults should help students organize a project and mentor them to follow through with their project. A number of students in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade class raised their hands to express interest to volunteer. Teachers, parents, or other volunteers should follow up and offer to help the students get what they want.**

### **RESOURCES:**

Montana Meth Project: <http://www.montanameth.org/>

Attorney General Mike McGrath – Meth in Montana:  
<http://www.doj.mt.gov/enforcement/methinmontana.asp>

Paintcheck – The online paintball source  
<http://www.paintcheck.com/fieldowner/>

Grindline Skate Parks

- Grindline claims Great Falls and Missoula as skate parks they have constructed and Dillon and Wolf Point as design projects.

<http://grindline.com/cgi-bin/view.pl>

Dirt Wurx U.S.A.

[http://www.dirtwurx.com/main.cfm?mc=track\\_build.cfm&article=track\\_building\\_1.html](http://www.dirtwurx.com/main.cfm?mc=track_build.cfm&article=track_building_1.html)

Gary Pfister

Education Program Manager, Health Enhancement & Safety Division

Office of Public Instruction

1300 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor

Helena, MT 59620

Office: 444-3000

Fax: 444-1373

E-mail: [gpfister@mt.gov](mailto:gpfister@mt.gov)

- Gary works on after school programs for students

\*\*\*\*\*

## **MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES**

### **ISSUE: MIXED MESSAGES AND MISINFORMATION**

During the course of the public hearings, residents provided information that contradicted each other. Some people had different information regarding the Rock Creek project as well as the skateboard park, youth center, drug coalition, impact of the prison on the city, and law enforcement.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Better communication between the city, schools, community groups, and the public would help clear up some of these misunderstandings. **Periodic newsletters or articles in the local newspaper would help with this issue. Also, taking the discussion directly to residents through meetings or a door-to-door campaign would help.** Use a hook to bring people to a community meeting such as a potluck dinner or picnic or a raffle to support a local effort and the winner gets a fun prize. Make people want to come and participate.

### **RESOURCE:**

The citizens of Deer Lodge

\*\*\*\*\*

## **MAIN TOPIC: ACTIVITIES**

### **ISSUE: YOUTH, FAMILY AND ARTS ACTIVITIES**

Some residents, especially students, said there was nothing to do in town. This subject was also brought up in the employee housing survey conducted by the Montana State Prison.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

I have already provided links to the internet for paintball, skate parks, and motocross above. **Below are more links on activity ideas or grants available for activities including for the arts, education programs, and outdoor ideas.**

### **RESOURCES:**

National Endowment for the Arts: <http://www.nea.gov/grants/apply/index.html>

Montana Arts Council: <http://www.art.mt.gov/>

Montana Office of Public Instruction: <http://www.opi.mt.gov/>

- Under the “Ed News” tab is a link to educational grants available

Montana Kids, Montana Department of Commerce: <http://www.montanakids.com/>

Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks:  
<http://fwp.mt.gov/education/schoolprograms/default.html>

Office of Commissioner of Higher Education: [http://mus.montana.edu/distance\\_learning.htm](http://mus.montana.edu/distance_learning.htm)

\*\*\*\*\*

## **MAIN TOPIC: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ISSUES**

### **ISSUE: MARKETING OF ATTRACTIONS, DEFINE DEER LODGE, HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

A number of participants in the public hearings expressed concern that Deer Lodge is only known as a prison town. While the prison is certainly a major part of the community, the city also has other things to offer in the way of tourist attractions and activities.

People also mentioned the Deer Lodge Hotel and Trask Hall as historic buildings of significance. The general feeling at the public hearings was that if they could not be preserved, they should be demolished. The community would prefer, however, that they be preserved but to do so will take a lot of commitment and work from the community, especially considering the state of decay these buildings are in.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

**The city should work on an aggressive marketing campaign to let people know what Deer Lodge has to offer.** Through brochures, billboards, a better website, and other efforts, the city can increase its

name identification as a place to visit. **Key in this marketing program, however, will be the city's efforts on other issues discussed in this report such as beautification and activities.** The community can work with the Department of Commerce and Travel Montana on this campaign.

Addressing either the Deer Lodge Hotel or Trask Hall is a major undertaking. **The community should focus on one before tackling the other. Below is contact information to the Montana Historical Society who works with communities to preserve buildings such as the hotel or Trask Hall.** Within the webpage below is also a number of funding opportunities for rehabilitation projects, both government and non-profit. Deer Lodge should pursue a number of these funding sources to reopen these historic buildings

**RESOURCES:**

Karyl Tobel  
CDBG Economic Development Program Manager  
Montana Department of Commerce  
301 South Park Avenue  
PO Box 200523  
Helena, MT 59620-0523  
Office: 406-841-2733  
Fax: 406-841-2731  
E-mail: [ktobel@mt.gov](mailto:ktobel@mt.gov)

Ann Desch  
Small Business Development Center Bureau Chief  
Montana Department of Commerce  
301 South Park Avenue  
PO Box 200523  
Helena, MT 59620-0523  
Office: 406-841-2746  
E-mail: [adesch@mt.gov](mailto:adesch@mt.gov)

Terry Dimock  
Southwest Regional Development Officer  
Montana Department of Commerce  
201 South Park Ave  
PO Box 200523  
Helena, MT 59620-0523  
Office: 406-841-2737  
Fax: 406-841-2731  
E-mail: [tdimock@mt.gov](mailto:tdimock@mt.gov)

Mel Walters  
Main Street Montana Program  
Montana Department of Commerce  
301 South Park Avenue  
PO Box 200523

Helena, MT 59620-0523  
Office: 406-841-2756  
Fax: 406-841-2728  
E-mail: [mwalters@mt.gov](mailto:mwalters@mt.gov)

Pete Brown  
Historic Preservation Architect  
Montana Historical Society  
1410 Eighth Avenue  
PO Box 201202  
Helena, MT 59620-1202  
Office: 406-444-7718  
Fax: 406-444-6575  
E-mail: [pebrown@mt.gov](mailto:pebrown@mt.gov)

- Montana State Historic Preservation Office: <http://www.his.state.mt.us/shpo/>

Judy Tilman  
Headwaters RC&D Area, Inc.  
305 West Mercury, Suite 211  
Butte, MT 59701  
Office: 406-782-7333  
Fax: 406-782-9675

Travel Montana: <http://visitmt.com/>

\*\*\*\*\*

## **MAIN TOPIC: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **ISSUE: VALUE ADDED AGRICULTURE**

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Not knowing many specifics about the agricultural community surrounding Deer Lodge, I can't offer much advice. However, knowing that Governor Schweitzer and Agriculture Director Nancy K. Peterson both have strong backgrounds and a firm emphasis on agriculture, **I'd suggest that a Deer Lodge agricultural committee contact the Department of Agriculture and also use the link I included below to find ways of helping local farmers and ranchers.**

#### **RESOURCES:**

Growth Through Agriculture Program, Montana Department of Agriculture:  
<http://agr.mt.gov/business/GTA.asp>

**REPORT BY: MICHELLE SHOQUIST**  
**USDA Rural Development, Area Specialist**  
**790 Colleen Street**  
**Helena, MT 59601**  
**Phone: 406.449.5000 xt 121 Fax: 406.449.5008**  
**Email: Michelle.Shoquist@mt.usda.gov**

**MAIN TOPIC: ACTIVITIES**

**ISSUE: YOUTH**

We heard a lot of talk about the apparent lack of after school and youth activities. The teens mentioned that they would like to have somewhere to go where they can gather with their friends and have fun. The adults mentioned that they would like to see the youth in the community have some activities to keep them occupied, safe and supervised, especially while parents may be working.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

- Check out the After School Alliance website for great ideas on establishing after school activities in your community. **There is a downloadable kit to help identify program needs and which resources to tap.**
- **Organize activities or classes that can be lead by the numerous talented people in the community.** Perhaps the people involved in the art and theater groups could volunteer their time and teach painting, photography or acting classes.
- **Check out the Insane Paintball website for ideas on how to help establish a paintball club.**
- Establish a youth soccer league.
- Hold fundraisers to raise the remaining monies needed for installing the skateboard ramps that have already been purchased.

**RECOMMENDED RESOURCES:**

After School Alliance websites:

<http://afterschoolalliance.org/>  
[http://afterschoolalliance.org/start\\_a\\_program.cfm](http://afterschoolalliance.org/start_a_program.cfm)

**For tips on organizing and coaching youth soccer:**

<http://www.brucebrownlee.com/coaching/coaching.htm>

Insane Paintball:

[http://www.ip8ball.com/ip\\_aboutus.html](http://www.ip8ball.com/ip_aboutus.html)

General:

<http://www.helpingamericasyouth.gov/>  
<http://pubs.cas.psu.edu/freepubs/pdfs/ui350.pdf>

\*\*\*\*\*

## MAIN TOPIC: BEAUTIFICATION

### ISSUE: ADDITIONAL CLEAN UP DAYS

#### RECOMMENDATION:

- Pick up garbage on your street, or downtown whenever you see it. Don't wait until the once-per-year community based clean up.
- Schedule your community clean up for more than once time per year. **Make a fun community day out of it by celebrating with a picnic/barbeque in the park or a street dance. The Keep America Beautiful Organization has great ideas for motivating and organizing a clean up, as well as keeping citizens involved on a long term basis.**
- **Organize something similar to the "adopt a highway" program within your city.** Have different businesses, civic organizations, your local volunteer list, etc. commit to keeping a section of your city clean on a scheduled basis.

#### RESOURCE(S):

<http://www.kab.org/>

MICHELLE SHOQUIST  
AREA SPECIALIST  
USDA, RURAL DEVELOPMENT  
790 COLLEEN STREET  
HELENA, MT 59601  
(406) 449-5000, EXT. 4  
(406) 449-5008  
[michelle.shoquist@mt.usda.gov](mailto:michelle.shoquist@mt.usda.gov)

\*\*\*\*\*

## MAIN TOPIC: HOUSING

### ISSUE: ADEQUATE HOUSING

Many comments were received regarding the lack of safe, decent, and affordable housing in the Deer Lodge area. Numerous residents felt that local wages were not enough to support a home payment.

#### RECOMMENDATION:

There are various loan programs available to assist very-low to moderate income families in purchasing a home.

- **Encourage your lending institution to participate in the Federal Home Loan Bank of Seattle's Home\$tart program.** You can sign up with a participating lender to start a savings account that is matched \$3 for every \$1 that is contributed by the potential homeowner. Home\$tart will match up to \$5,000 to you to use for down payment, closing costs, and repairs of a home to be purchased. Participants must participate in homebuyer education.
- **USDA – Rural Development (RD) offers two loan programs for purchasing property in rural communities – the Guaranteed Loan Program and the Direct/Leveraged Loan Program.** No

down payment is necessary and loans can be made for up to the appraised value plus some closing costs. The Direct Loan program offers monthly payment assistance to make the payments more affordable. Applicants must meet income and credit requirements and must occupy the property. Funds can be used to purchase an existing home, to construct a home or to purchase a new manufactured home. Both of the programs can be combined with other programs including, but not limited to, Montana Board of Housing (MBOH), National Affordable Housing Network (NAHN), Montana Homeownership Network and Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS), HUD/FHA, and Habitat for Humanity.

- **Montana Homeownership Network, Inc., an affiliate of the Neighborhood Housing Services, offers an array of loan products to make purchasing a home more affordable.** Programs include a deferred second mortgage, as well as low interest rate second mortgages to make a new home purchases more affordable. Loans must be used in conjunction with a FHA, RD, VA, MBOH, or conventional loan.
- **The Department of Housing and Urban Development offers the 203K and Streamlined K programs for rehabilitating a residence at the time of purchase or refinance.**
- **Remove dilapidated houses and trailer parks and infill with self help housing.** The use of water and sewer already in place would reduce some of the costs associated with new construction. **Rural Development’s Self Help Housing Program provides technical assistance grants to non-profit organizations to help groups of very-low and low income families finance and build their own homes.** Public bodies and public or private non-profit corporations with the legal, administrative and technical capacity to provide supervisory assistance to help low-income families build homes in rural areas by the self-help method may qualify for technical assistance grants. Habitat for Humanity also offers sweat equity housing opportunities for very-low income families. Assistance is offered directly to the homebuyer rather than the grantee. Though separate, both programs are administered by Barbara Miller of the National Affordable Housing Network (NAHN) in Butte.

**RESOURCE(S):**

Federal Home Loan Bank of Seattle

1501 4<sup>th</sup> Ave., Ste. 1800

Seattle, WA 98101

Kimberly Strahm, Community Programs Administrator

(206) 340-8741

<http://www.fhldbsea.com/fhldbsea/main/comminvest/programs/homestart/index.cfm>

USDA – Rural Development

790 Colleen Street

Helena, MT 59601

(406) 449-5000, ext. 4

Cindy Donnell, Area Director

[cindy.donnell@mt.usda.gov](mailto:cindy.donnell@mt.usda.gov)

Montana Homeownership Network, Inc. *and* Neighborhood Housing Services

509 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue South

Great Falls, MT 59401  
(406) 761-5861  
1-800-318-0268  
<http://www.nwgreatfalls.org/>  
<http://www.nwmt.org/aboutmhn.htm>

HUD, Helena Field Office  
7 W 6<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Helena, MT 59601  
Tom Friesen, Director  
(406) 449-5050

Habitat for Humanity of Southwest Montana  
PO Box 632  
66 W. Park, Ste. 214  
Butte, MT 59703-0632  
Barbara Miller  
(406) 782-8579  
<http://www.habitatswmt.org>  
[info@habitatswmt.org](mailto:info@habitatswmt.org)

\*\*\*\*\*

## **MAIN TOPIC: SOCIAL CHALLENGES**

### **ISSUE: DROP OUT RATE**

We heard some alarming figures regarding the drop out rate for local teens. Some figured that the rate may be as high as 40%.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

- **Use your volunteer list to determine if there are people available to tutor high school students** that may be struggling with subject matter.
- **Explore alternative teaching methods such as teaming students throughout middle school and high school.**
- **Introduce more vocational subjects to keep students interested and provided with job skills.** If a self help housing project were introduced, students could get involved with the construction. Habitat for Humanity has utilized students in past projects in neighboring cities.

### **RESOURCE(S):**

Habitat for Humanity of Southwest Montana  
PO Box 632  
66 W. Park, Ste. 214  
Butte, MT 59703-0632  
Barbara Miller  
(406) 782-8579  
<http://www.habitatswmt.org>

\*\*\*\*\*

## MAIN TOPIC: ACTIVITIES

### ISSUE: FAMILY ACTIVITIES

We heard from the community that they would like more activities for families and sports for adults.

#### RECOMMENDATION:

- **Find other adults with interest in the same sports as yourself and form teams and a schedule.**
- Organize or coach a team for the youth in your community.
- **Organize clubs for indoor activities like playing cards, painting, acting, and cooking.** Utilize your volunteer list for instructors.
- **Plan for family themed movie nights at the local theater.**
- **Organize a “party in the park” once a week or a couple times a month. Host a band, hire a food and drink vendor, sell crafts, and have a Farmer’s Market.**

#### RESOURCE(S):

T-Ball:

<http://www.teeballusa.org/>

World Association of Adult Recreation:

<http://www.teamwaar.com>

For tips on organizing and coaching youth soccer:

<http://www.brucebrownlee.com/coaching/coaching.htm>

\*\*\*\*\*

## MAIN TOPIC: BEAUTIFICATION

### ISSUE: MOTIVATION--COMMUNITY PRIDE

#### RECOMMENDATION:

- **Set a good example and clean up your own yard, home and business front.** Make improvements if you can afford them. Your actions can spur your neighbors into action.
- **Acknowledge and thank the people that actually do keep up their property.** Try a monthly write up in a newsletter or newspaper to acknowledge the new paint job, addition, reseeded lawn, tearing down of an old shed, removal of junk, etc. Again, the positive reinforcement can keep others motivated to maintain and improve their property.
- **Organize your neighbors, or use your community volunteer list, to help elderly and disabled homeowners plant flowers, mow lawns, paint and do light maintenance on their property.**

- Buy more banners for the downtown area celebrating Deer Lodge and Deer Lodge events/history/scenery. Put them on light posts in the entire downtown area.
- **Establish a community “tool library” where locals can borrow the necessary tools to do home and yard maintenance.** Missoula has had a great success with this resource.

**RECOMMENDED RESOURCE(S):**

<http://www.kab.org/>

<http://www.sustainablebusinesscouncil.org/members/missoulaurbanproject.html>

\*\*\*\*\*

**MAIN TOPIC: HOUSING**

**ISSUE: SENIOR HOUSING AND ASSISTED LIVING**

Many seniors live in homes that no longer meet their needs or capabilities.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Some homes can be modified for senior living by the installation of ramps, locating laundry rooms on the main floor, installing a walk in shower, installation of handrails, changing doorknobs to levers, etc. **There are many programs available that are geared towards senior homeowners.** There are reverse mortgages to help seniors use the equity in their homes for additional income.

- Reversible mortgages are available through some local lenders.
- Dept. of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) offers the Home Equity Conversion Mortgage (HECM) program.
- Montana Board of Housing (MBOH) offers the Reverse Annuity Mortgage (RAM) program.

**There are loans and grants available to help seniors rehabilitate their property - for general repairs such as a roof, new windows, furnace, etc., as well as for making a property handicap accessible.** There are also programs geared toward weatherization projects.

- USDA - Rural Development offers the 504 Home Improvement Loan & Grant program. Applicants must be very low income. Grant recipients must be at least 62 years of age.
- HUD offers the 203K and the Streamline K rehabilitation programs for purchase and refinance loans.
- MT Dept. of Health and Human Services (DPHHS) offers the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) and weatherization services.

**Some seniors expressed the need for an assisted living facility.**

- USDA – Rural Development’s Community Facility Program can financially assist non-profit organizations and public bodies in building an assisted living center.
- MT Dept. of Commerce has programs that can assist with financing community facilities.

**RESOURCE(S):**

USDA - Rural Development  
790 Colleen Street  
Helena, MT 59601

Cindy Donnell, Area Director  
(406) 449-5000, ext. 4  
<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt/>

Montana Board Of Housing  
PO Box 200501  
Helena, MT 59620-0501  
Gerald Watne  
(406) 841-2838  
[http://housing.mt.gov/Hous\\_BOH\\_Ed.asp](http://housing.mt.gov/Hous_BOH_Ed.asp)  
[http://housing.state.mt.us/Includes/CP/PDF/CP\\_HRD-Ref-Guide.pdf](http://housing.state.mt.us/Includes/CP/PDF/CP_HRD-Ref-Guide.pdf)

HUD, Helena Field Office  
7 W 6<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Helena, MT 59601  
Tom Friesen, Director  
(406) 449-5050  
<http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/hecm/hecmabou.cfm>  
[Don\\_H\\_Smith@hud.gov](mailto:Don_H_Smith@hud.gov)

MT Dept. of Health and Human Services  
PO Box 4210  
Helena, MT 59604-4210  
Jim Nolan, Chief  
(406) 447-4260  
<http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/programsservices/energyassistance/index.shtml>

Office of Public Assistance  
Mark Beattie, County Director  
409 Missouri  
Deer Lodge MT 59722  
(406) 846-3680

MT Dept. Of Commerce  
PO Box 200523  
Helena, MT 59620-0523  
Dave Cole, Administrator  
(406) 841-2770  
<http://comdev.mt.gov/>

General:  
<http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/contactus/satelliteoffices/counties/pcounties.shtml#Powell>

\*\*\*\*\*

## **MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

### **ISSUE: INFRASTRUCTURE – SIDEWALKS**

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Numerous comments were made regarding the dilapidated and buckled sidewalks, or lack of sidewalks, in the downtown and residential areas of Deer Lodge. Sidewalks in ill repair can certainly be a safety hazard to pedestrians. By not having a sidewalk in place, pedestrians are at risk of walking in traffic, or may present an unwanted foot traffic problem on neighboring lawns. Both situations could be especially problematic to persons that are mobility impaired.

Deteriorated sidewalks leading up to a residence can pose the same problems and can put the homeowner at risk for liability issues. Elderly and disabled occupants may face serious challenges in coming and going from their residence if their sidewalks are in disrepair.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

- The Montana Department of Transportation has a Community Transportation Enhancement Program (CTEP) which can help with installing new, or replacing old, sidewalks on publicly owned property.
- **USDA – Rural Development’s Community Facility program can provide financial assistance to communities for repairing/installing sidewalks.**
- **USDA - Rural Development’s 504 Program can assist very-low income homeowners with replacing deteriorated walkways on their property. Property must be owner occupied.**

#### **RESOURCES:**

Montana Dept. of Transportation  
PO Box 201001  
Helena, MT 59620-1001  
Ross Tervo  
(406) 444-9209  
<http://www.mdt.mt.gov/business/ctep/default.shtml>

USDA – Rural Development  
PO Box 850  
Bozeman, MT 59771-0850  
John Guthmiller, Program Director  
(406) 585-2549  
<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt/>

USDA – Rural Development  
790 Colleen Street  
Helena, MT 59601  
Cindy Donnell, Area Director  
(406) 449-5000, ext. 4

\*\*\*\*\*

## **MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

### **ISSUE: INFRASTRUCTURE – STREETS/POTHOLES**

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

There are State and Federal programs available to assist nonprofit organizations and public bodies improve streets.

- USDA – Rural Development’s Community Facility program can provide loans or guarantee bank loans for **street repair**.

#### **RECOMMENDED RESOURCES:**

USDA – Rural Development  
PO Box 850  
Bozeman, MT 59771-0850  
John Guthmiller, Program Director  
(406) 585-2549  
<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt/>

Montana Dept. of Commerce  
Community Development Division  
PO Box 200523  
Helena, MT 59620-0523  
Dave Cole, Administrator  
(406) 841-2770  
<http://comdev.mt.gov/>

\*\*\*\*\*

## **MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

### **ISSUE: INFRASTRUCTURE - TOURISM**

With the many museums, historic Grant Kohrs Ranch, tri-county fair and rodeo, Big Sky Draft Horse Expo, ample recreational opportunities, and scenic views, Deer Lodge has a lot to offer visitors to their community. The fact that Deer Lodge is located on an interstate system and in between Glacier and Yellowstone National Parks makes it an excellent spot for tourists to explore. Locals seem proud of what their community has to offer, but feel that their **assets could be better publicized**.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

- **Utilize Travel Montana to promote local businesses on a broader scale.** Information provided to the State by local businesses is relayed to prospective Montana visitors via a call center and is listed in the Travel Guide. This service is free and the outreach potential is boundless. For a \$25 fee, a business can link their website with the Travel Montana site.

- Review the Montana Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan for 2003-2007. This plan is a blueprint for individuals and communities interested in expanding upon Montana's tourism and recreation industry. The Plan highlights three main action areas: **Managing Information – includes assistance in creating new tourism and recreation products, Managing Assets – includes guidelines on developing signs and posting them on Interstates and highways, and Creating Teams – includes identifying partnerships between tourism facilities with technical and financial resources.**
- Visit the National Agricultural Library website. There are numerous links in the Tourism Resources section on this site. **The section is specifically designed to provide information on tourism in rural areas.** Many of the links provide information on developing and maintaining Agri-tourism in rural communities, while others offer planning resources, statistics, funding and program assistance, and case studies.
- The Montana Dept. Of Commerce's Tourism Infrastructure Investment Program (TIIP) can assist in building, remodeling, or preserving existing tourism and historic sites.

#### **RESOURCE(S):**

To review the Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan:

<http://travelmontana.mt.gov/faq/FastFacts.asp>

For the National Agricultural Library:

<http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/ruralres/tourism.htm>

General:

<http://travelmontana.mt.gov/faq/links.asp>

<http://travelmontana.mt.gov/faq/addbusiness.asp>

<http://travelmontana.state.mt.us/ourprograms/trsmdevelop/2005faq.shtm>

Travel Montana

301 South Park

PO Box 200533

Helena MT 59620

406-841-2788

Jan Wirak, [jan@visitmt.com](mailto:jan@visitmt.com)

Montana Promotion Division

PO Box 200533

Helena, MT 59620-0501

(406) 841-2870

(406) 841-2871 FAX

[mt-webmaster@visitmt.com](mailto:mt-webmaster@visitmt.com)

## **REPORT BY: ELAINA ZEMPEL**

**Pondera Regional Port Authority Executive Director**

**702 South Main, Suite #1**

**Conrad, MT 59425**

**Phone: 406.271.7237**

**Email: zempel@3rivers.net**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

Many communities in Montana are facing the future with monumental negative obstacles, but not so with the City of Deer Lodge. **The bumps ahead of Deer Lodge are because of 'growth' as the world discovers the beauty of the surroundings and the quality of life in the valley. Holding onto the reasons why people are attracted to Deer Lodge in the first place: the aesthetic beauty of the area and its availability to all; and the quiet, small town atmosphere making Deer Lodge the ideal place to raise a family, will be the main goal.**

### **MAIN TOPIC: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

#### **ISSUE: DOWNTOWN RENEWAL AND REDEVELOPMENT**

Deer Lodge, like most small towns, has an inability of local investor-developers to deal with all of the redevelopment problems found, both public and private, and still realize a reasonable profit on the investment. The private sector cannot provide new water/sewer infrastructure, land may be too expensive or buildings may have to be cleared for development. Streets and parking may be inadequate.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

(The following is recommendations received from Larry Gallagher during the Conrad Assessment in 2002.)

**The Montana Urban Renewal Law provides the power necessary for local government to prepare and implement comprehensive plans for the provision of public improvements, acquisition and reselling of property for private redevelopment, and for exercising of the power of eminent domain, if necessary and in the public interest.** A full description of the Montana Urban Renewal Law can be found in the MCA: Title 7. Local Government, Chapter 15. Housing and Construction, Parts 42 & 43. Urban renewal.

#### **RESOURCES:**

[http://data.opi.state.mt.us/bills/1999/mca\\_toc/7\\_15\\_42.htm](http://data.opi.state.mt.us/bills/1999/mca_toc/7_15_42.htm)

Local government can aid in single and/or multiple purpose project financing through the use of city Special Improvement Districts (SID's) for street and utility improvements, lighting and landscaping, Business Improvement Districts (BID's), and other tools described in MCA Title 7, Chapter 12. Industrial Revenue Bonds (IDRB) and tax increment financed urban renewal (TIF).

Headwaters RC & D can give details regarding the following programs:

CDBG – Community Block Development Grants for Economic Development and Public Facilities

W2ASACT – Water, Wastewater and Solid Waste Action Coordinating Team

## TSEP – Treasure State Endowment Program

Larry Gallagher, U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development, Montana Field Office, Helena:  
406.447.1480 HUD Rural Housing and Economic Development Grant Program (RH/ED)

\*\*\*\*\*

### **MAIN TOPIC: HOUSING**

#### **ISSUE: LACK OF DECENT AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

Deer Lodge has the unique asset of two large employers in their vicinity – the sawmill and the Montana State Prison. MSP is hiring additional workers. Additionally, the Rock Creek Development will impact Deer Lodge’s housing market. Deer Lodge’s aging housing stock is already strained. At every listening session, the housing problem was mentioned and in most sessions, described as the number one problem facing Deer Lodge.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The following are **existing housing programs in the State of Montana that had received federal/state funding**. Contacts are listed following the brief descriptions.

##### **HOME-Funded Local Programs**

- The **City of Laurel** received \$280,000 in HOME funds in 2003 to provide low-interest loans to qualified households within the jurisdictional limits of the city for assistance with housing acquisition costs, down payment or closing costs assistance, and homeowner rehabilitation costs. The maximum amount of assistance per housing unit for both homebuyer assistance and homeowner rehabilitation is \$25,000, depending on the Median Family Income (MFI) of the household. The homebuyer and/or homeowner must have an annual gross income less than 80% of the Area Median Income for Yellowstone County, and must use the HOME-assisted unit as his/her principal residence. Applicants must successfully complete the prescreening process administered by the Project Coordinator, and be approved by a participating mortgage lender for the maximum allowable amount. Homebuyers must complete homebuyer education counseling. Those receiving down payment/closing cost assistance must provide a cash down payment of no less than 3% of the purchase price.  
Contact: Casey Joyce, Project Coordinator (Big Sky Economic Development Authority, Billings) for the City of Laurel: 406.256.6871, ext. 241.
- The **City of Shelby** received \$450,000 in HOME funds in 2003 to undertake a program of housing rehabilitation for existing homeowners, and homebuyer assistance in the form of down payment and closing costs, coupled with modest rehabilitation for code compliance to qualify homes for mortgage financing. The city anticipates assisting approximately ten low-income families in Shelby with homebuyer assistance and modest rehabilitation, and five homeowners with rehabilitation of their current residence. The average assistance for homebuyer assistance/rehabilitation is anticipated to be \$27,300 and the average assistance for homeowner rehabilitation is anticipated to be \$30,000.  
Contact: Kathleen Lumsden, Grant Administrator (Black Coulee Company) for the City of Shelby; 406.434.5222.
- **Glacier Affordable Housing Foundation (GAHF)** received \$500,000 in HOME funds in 2004 to down payment and closing cost assistance, up to \$35,000 per household, to an anticipated 15 to 20 income-qualified first time homebuyers within Flathead County. GAHF will secure the no-interest, shared appreciation, deferred payment loans through a resale restriction agreement. When the assisted homes are sold or refinanced, GAHF will recapture the original amount funds loaned plus the calculated equity share, which will be used to assist additional eligible homebuyers.  
Contact: Lynn Moon, Affordable Housing Consultant, Glacier Affordable Housing Foundation: 406.758.7741.

- The **Town of Bridger** received \$378,875 in HOME funds in 2004 to undertake a program of housing rehabilitation for existing homeowners, and homebuyer assistance in the form of down payment and closing costs, coupled with modest rehabilitation for code compliance to qualify homes for mortgage financing. The town anticipates assisting approximately five low-income families in Bridger with homebuyer assistance and modest rehabilitation, and fifteen homeowners with rehabilitation of their current residence. The average assistance is anticipated to be \$20,000.  
 Contact: Julie Jones, Grant Administrator (Single Tree, Inc.) for the Town of Bridger: 406.662.3438.
- **Ravalli County** received \$400,000 in 2004 to provide homebuyer assistance in the form of down payment and closing cost assistance to an estimated 15 to 20 lower income households in Ravalli County. The average assistance is anticipated to be \$20,000 per household.  
 Contact: Brendan Moles, Grant Administrator (District XI Human Resource Council, Missoula) for Ravalli County: 406.728.3710.
- **Elkhorn Affordable Housing Corporation**, a newly formed CHDO in Helena, received \$333,333 in 2005. They will contract with Rocky Mountain Development Council (RMDC) to complete Phase III of an affordable homeownership program to provide down payment and closing cost assistance to an estimated 12 lower income households in Lewis & Clark County in the greater Helena area, including East Helena and the Helena Valley. The average assistance is anticipated to be \$25,000 per household.  
 Contact: Larry Middagh, Grant Administrator (Rocky Mountain Development Council, Helena) for Elkhorn Affordable Housing Corp: 406.457.7460.
- **HRC District XI**, Missoula, received \$183,667 in 2005 to provide low-interest homeowner rehabilitation loans to an estimated 13-17 low-income homeowners in Missoula, Ravalli and Mineral counties. The terms and conditions of the loans would be tailored to the financial circumstances of the borrower, including deferred payment loans. The average assistance is anticipated to be \$15,000 per household.  
 Contact: Brendan Moles, District XI Human Resource Council, Missoula: 406.728.3710.
- The **City of Kalispell** received \$216,333 in 2005 to provide down payment and closing cost assistance to 7 low-income, first-time homebuyers to purchase homes within the city limits of Kalispell. The City will partner with Glacier Affordable Housing Foundation, which will secure the no-interest, deferred payment loans through a Resale Restrictive Agreement. The average assistance is anticipated to be \$30,000 per household.  
 Contact: Lynn Moon, Affordable Housing Consultant (Glacier Affordable Housing Foundation) for the City of Kalispell: 406.758.7741.
- **Lake County** received \$137,015 in 2005 to provide down payment and closing cost assistance to 10 low-income families within Lake County with a deed restricted, no-interest second mortgage. The average assistance is anticipated to be \$13,000 per household.  
 Contact: Elaine Wood, Grant Administrator (Ronan Housing Authority, Ronan) for Lake County: 406.676.5900.
- The **City of Lewistown's** Affordable Homebuyer Project received \$293,333 in 2005 to provide down payment and closing cost assistance to 17-20 low-income families. With Montana Board of Housing funds, the project will provide funds to finance the gap between increasing home purchase prices and the amount families can afford. The City of Lewistown has a long-term relationship with HRDC VI, who will be managing this grant. The average assistance is anticipated to be \$15,000 per household.  
 Contact: Esther Distad, Grant Administrator (HRDC VI) for the City of Lewistown: 406.535.7488.
- **Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS)** of Great Falls received \$333,333 in 2005 to continue providing its homebuyer assistance program to provide down payment and closing cost assistance to 40 low income, first-time homebuyers deferred mortgages to purchase affordable homes. Funds would be available throughout the state, except in entitlement cities or in other areas where a HOME grantee has homebuyer funds available. The average assistance is anticipated to be \$8,000 per household.  
 Contact: Karen Nebel, NHS, Great Falls: 406.761.5861.
- The **Whitefish Housing Authority (WHA)** received \$310,000 in 2005 to provide down payment and closing cost assistance to 10 low-income families. WHA and Whitefish Housing Development, Inc. (WHDI) would secure a

minimum of 10 homes, either through purchase from developers or construction of homes on land owned by WHDI. These homes would be made available for purchase by qualified low-income first-time homebuyers using an array of funding partners. The application did not specify whether the program is limited to Whitefish city limits or to the WHA jurisdiction, which would be up to 10 miles outside the city limits. The average assistance is anticipated to be \$30,000 per household.

Contact: SueAnn Grogan, Whitefish Housing Authority, Whitefish: 406. 862.4143.

## **RESOURCES:**

### **HOUSING RESOURCE DIRECTORY**

Information in Support of the Montana Consolidated Plan  
For the Plan Year Beginning April 1, 2006  
JANUARY 2006

\*\*\*\*\*

## **MAIN TOPIC: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **ISSUE: POWELL COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Deer Lodge's Economic Development Organization does not have a consistent point-of-contact. Financially keeping an office sustained is a fund-raising nightmare. Putting the entire financial burden of providing staff on a few individuals, organizations or businesses results in feelings of unfairness. Allowing the efforts to be accomplished by volunteers often results in the 'ball being dropped' as the volunteers return to their real job. Sustained, consistent, efforts are difficult to accomplish.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**Because everyone benefits from economic development efforts, it is reasonable to conclude that everyone could help pay for those efforts. By establishing a Port Authority according to MCA 7-14-1101 through 7-14-1137, a resolution between the county and other incorporated cities/towns in Powell County would allow for a mill levy(s) to be placed on the ballot to sustain a economic development position.**

### **RESOURCES:**

Northern Express Transportation Authority (NETA)  
112 First Street S  
Shelby, MT 59474-  
Phone: 406-434-5203  
Fax: 406-434-2761  
[tcneta@shelvy.mt.us](mailto:tcneta@shelvy.mt.us)

Pondera Regional Port Authority  
702 South Main, Suite #1  
Conrad, MT 59425  
Phone: 406-271-7237  
Fax: 406-271-2924  
[pcpconrad@3rivers.net](mailto:pcpconrad@3rivers.net)

**REPORT BY: Casey Joyce**  
**Community Development Specialist**  
**Big Sky Economic Development Authority**  
**222 North 32<sup>nd</sup> Street, Suite 200**  
**Billings, MT 59105-1948**  
**Phone: 406.256-6871, x#110**  
**Fax: 406.256.6877**  
**Email: [joyce@bigskyeda.org](mailto:joyce@bigskyeda.org)**

#### **INTRODUCTION:**

I would like to start this report by thanking all of the citizens of Deer Lodge for openly discussing their opinions, challenges, and future visions. I enjoyed working with all members of the Deer Lodge Resource Team, Powell County Planning Office, Headwaters RC&D as the Certified Regional Development Corporation, and especially Gloria O'Rourke, Facilitator/Recorder for MEDA. This was truly a very worthwhile experience and should provide local residents of Deer Lodge with project priorities that they can build upon. The "talented" people of Deer Lodge and willingness to "work together" for the good of the community are invaluable assets resulting in past accomplishments, such as, Rialto Community Theater, the Library, and the CPC – Olympic size swimming pool to name a few. **I believe Deer Lodge has the "strength" to meet its "challenges" with a focus on "projects" that lie ahead. Keep your momentum going.**

#### **MAIN TOPIC: HOUSING**

#### **ISSUES:**

- **Adequate Housing- Safe, Decent, Affordable**
- **Availability – Rentals and/or For Sale**
- **Senior Housing and Assisted Living**

The Deer Lodge resource team assessment meetings held April 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> along with results of a Deer Lodge housing survey indicate a very high response from residents that "there is a need to demolish some of the deteriorated residences in Deer Lodge and replace them with new residences." Housing survey results for the Deer Lodge community also indicate a very high percentage of those residents in favor of seeking state or federal funds as well as supporting the use of local funds or resources to make improvements to existing housing or to construct new affordable housing in Deer Lodge, Montana.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

- **Establish some type of Deer Lodge Community Housing/Neighborhood Task Force – to address safe, decent, and affordable housing within the City of Deer Lodge.**
- Conduct a housing inventory assessment along with point detractor to identify housing conditions of the existing housing units within Deer Lodge.
- **Identify some options for development and/or construction** of senior housing, assisted living housing units, or other personal care apartment complexes.
- **Consult and/or partner with the local financial institutions and Deer Lodge banks** in seeking possible funding programs to assist elderly and low income residents in creating more affordable housing.

- **Explore formation of a Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) certified by the Montana HOME program** to perform housing related activities involving home ownership, sponsorship and development.
- **Encourage the concept of developing a Habitat for Humanity or Rebuilding Together organization within the City of Deer Lodge.**

#### **RESOURCES:**

- Designing and Initiating A Small Community Housing Rehabilitation Program or The Housing Rehabilitation Program Workbook both published by the Montana Department of Commerce in May of 1995 would be a good resource guides for the City of Deer Lodge. **Request copies of both resources from Montana Department of Commerce, Community Development Block Grant Program, P.O. Box 200523, Helena, MT 59620-0523 or phone is (406) 841-2791.**

**Other informational resources and helpful web sites that may offer the Deer Lodge residents with sources of funding, technical assistance guides, and other relevant materials for addressing housing issues are as follows:**

- <http://www.housing.mt.gov/>
- <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt/>
- <http://www.hud.gov/offices/adm/grants/fundsavail/cfm>.
- <http://www.ruralhome.org/>
- <http://www.rcac.org/>
- <http://www.habitat.org/>
- <http://www.rebuildingtogether.org/>
- <http://www.hud.gov/local/index.cfm?state=mt>

\*\*\*\*\*

#### **MAIN TOPIC: HOUSING**

##### **ISSUES:**

- **Limited land availability**
- **Planning for various types of housing developments – great start with housing survey**

Again comments at the Deer Lodge resource team assessment meetings indicated that there is limited land available for planning or developing new housing. The Deer Lodge housing survey states “there is a need to demolish some of the deteriorated residences in Deer Lodge and replace them with new residences.” This is a great first step and with collaboration among government, human service organizations, financial institutions, real estate agents, housing developers, and other community groups, **I believe housing problems can be overcome.**

##### **RECOMMENDATION:**

- **Develop a map of Deer Lodge showing areas where possible housing development might take place as well as identify neighborhoods where deteriorated housing may be unsafe and may be considered for replacement.**

- **Explore funding opportunities for low interest loan or grant programs that might assist the elderly and low-income households with home repairs, weatherization, or energy efficiency.**
- **Build partnerships with Deer Lodge banks and other financial institutions** to link up with possible funding programs for developing more affordable housing.

#### **RESOURCES:**

The following resources or web sites may be helpful to Deer Lodge residents in developing maps, gathering demographic information, identifying sources of funding, reviewing technical assistance materials, and/or working together as a community to address housing issues:

- <http://www.ceic.mt.gov/>
- <http://www.69.144.243.26/awareinc/montanahomechoice/main.asp>
- <http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/programsservices/energyassistance/index.shtml>
- <http://www.fhlbsea.com/fhlbsea/main/comminvest/programs/index.cfm>
- <http://www.fanniema.com/index.jhtml>
- <http://www.nwgreatfalls.org/outsideofgf.htm>
- <http://www.nwmt.org/>

\*\*\*\*\*

#### **MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

#### **ISSUES:**

- **Comprehensive Plan and Growth Policy**
- **Infrastructure**
  - **Streets - potholes**
  - **Water/Sewer**
  - **Sidewalks**
  - **Tourism**
    - **Walking Trail**
- **“Define Deer Lodge” - All pulling in same direction based on that definition.**

Deer Lodge definitely has a need to develop some type of community development plan or growth policy according to the comments made during resource team assessment meetings. The public perception of infrastructure is that it needs improvement and that existing trail or museum facilities could be expanded upon.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

- **Begin with preparing “neighborhood renewal” plans for all areas within the City of Deer Lodge to address the critical need of streets, water and/or sewer, sidewalks, and other community infrastructure.**
- Consider a **combination of federal, state, or local funding sources** to make community improvements such as drinking water and wastewater facilities so that low interest loan or grant programs can assist senior citizens and low-income households on fixed incomes.

- Work with local government, Deer Lodge banks, financial institutions, businesses, schools, hospital, library, nursing home, youth organizations, and community groups to identify priorities of community projects.

## RESOURCES:

For additional information on infrastructure planning and funding programs, please go to web sites listed as follows:

- <http://www.comdev.mt.gov/>
- [http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt/RUS/water\\_and\\_environmental\\_program.htm](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt/RUS/water_and_environmental_program.htm)
- <http://www.dnrc.mt.gov/cardd/ResDevBureau/wasact/default.asp>
- <http://www.rcac.org/programs/serv-financial.html>
- <http://www.railstotrails.org/>
- <http://www.mrws.org/home.html>
- <http://www.map-inc.org/Programs&Services.htm>
- <http://www.deq.state.mt.us/wqinfo/index.asp>
- [http://www.epa.gov/region8/community\\_resources/grants/grants.html](http://www.epa.gov/region8/community_resources/grants/grants.html)
- <http://www.doc.gov/eda/html/sitemap.htm>
- <http://www.epa.gov/ow/funding.html>
- <http://www.epa.gov/ogwdw/>
- <http://nris.mt.gov/wi.asp>
- <http://www.fwp.mt.gov/parks/grants/default.html>

\*\*\*\*\*

## MAIN TOPIC: BEAUTIFICATION

### ISSUES:

- **Enforcement of codes and ordinances on the books**
  - **Junk vehicles, trailers, abandoned homes, yards, weeds, exterior home neglect**
- **Additional clean up days – more than twice per year**
- **Motivation: Community pride**

**Comments from elementary school children all the way up to senior citizens, it was stated that Deer Lodge is overdue for cleaning up the community. Some form of policy according to the ordinances currently on the books at the City Hall may have to be revisited.** The general public seems to think that Deer Lodge is a “good” place to live and/or work.

### RECOMMENDATION:

- **Organize neighborhood meetings that focus on community pride and the “renewal” of Deer Lodge.**
- Encourage businesses, school, non-profit organizations, churches, museums, library, hospitals, MSP/Boot Camp employees, elderly, youth, local government, farmers, ranchers, Grant Kohrs Ranch, and neighborhood volunteers **to think about small community improvements or beautification projects that could be made within the next five years.**

- **Develop some short-term goals and a “Beautification Fund”** through the involvement of Deer Lodge businesses, school, non-profit organizations, churches, hospitals, Boot Camp/MSP employees, elderly, youth, library, local government, Grant Kohrs Ranch, farmers, ranchers, and neighborhood volunteers **to enhance community beautification projects as well as home safety initiatives.**

## **RESOURCES:**

During most of meetings held April 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, it was commented over and over that Deer Lodge is made up of very dedicated people that work together well. Some of the informational resources may offer Deer Lodge residents with ideas for creating partnerships to achieve community beautification projects. There may be ways to involve more people in the beautification projects such as planting trees or flowers, creating new green spaces or park areas, as well as teaching friends or neighbors about community garden projects. **It might be helpful for the City of Deer Lodge with its surrounding mountains and river landscape to “Celebrate Spring” by promoting National Youth Service Day, Earth Day, National Arbor Day, National Wetlands Month, or Keep America Beautiful Great American Cleanup Week. Other community events or could be sponsored by specific businesses or the local “Arts Club” that exists in Deer Lodge.**

The following web sites might help provide sources of funding, give technical assistance, and guide community beautification efforts or activities:

- <http://www.creativehomeartsclub.com/>
- <http://www.garden.org/home>
- <http://www.kab.org/programs2.asp?id=799>
- <http://www.discoveret.org/wesley/wesley.htm>
- <http://www.smartgrowth.org/>
- <http://national/unitedway.org/>

\*\*\*\*\*

## **MAIN TOPIC: SOCIAL CHALLENGES ISSUES:**

- **Drugs and Alcohol and other “at risk” behaviors**
- **Drop out rate**
- **Physical and/or verbal abuse**
- **Parental supervision**
- **Expand on Life Line**
- **More non-school activities**
- **Non-traditional families**

There were lots of comments from young people at resource team assessment meetings that Deer Lodge has lots of drug and alcohol problems along with “at risk” behaviors such as teenage sex.

Even though Deer Lodge residents think that the community is safe there may be non-school activities or programs that could be implemented with little or no cost. **Collaboration among government, law enforcement, human service organizations, the school, library, churches, social clubs such as the Elks, the local 4-H, senior citizens, and other community groups could reduce school drop-out**

**rates, promote healthy lifestyles, and reinforce the need for keeping existing programs.** The existing community programs that have positive impact in the Deer Lodge community that were mentioned as strengths include: Rialto Community Theater; the Library; 4-H Clubs; the CPC; Life Lines; Elks educational scholarship programs; American Legion baseball program; Teen Center; and DARE program.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

- **Find ways to involve or engage all residents of Deer Lodge in building a “Recreation Center” or “Skate Park”** through the existing non-profits, churches, hospital, school, youth/senior citizen groups, farmers, ranchers, and other community volunteer organizations.
- **Create a community “safety net” program or develop “safe at home” initiatives** through network of local businesses, non-profit organizations, churches, school, hospitals, Boot Camp/MSP employees, local government, 4-H/youth programs, farmers, ranchers, senior citizens, and other neighborhood volunteers.

**Recommended Resource(s):**

**Informational resources and web sites that Deer Lodge can use to locate sources of funding, helpful technical assistance, or other relevant materials as follows:**

- <http://bccdoj.doj.state.mt.us/>
- <http://www.deq.state.mt.us/Meth/index.asp>
- [http://www.usdoj.gov/05publications/other\\_government\\_resources.html](http://www.usdoj.gov/05publications/other_government_resources.html)
- <http://www.bgca.org/>
- <http://www.bbbsa.org/site/pp.asp?c=iuJgO2F&b=14576>
- <http://www.fourhcouncil.edu/>
- [http://www.campfire.org/all\\_about\\_us/faqs.asp](http://www.campfire.org/all_about_us/faqs.asp)
- <http://www.scouter.com/>
- <http://www.gfwc.org/>
- <http://www.girlsspeakout.org/programs.html>
- [http://www.gbgm-umc.org/umw/BFCY/index\\_eng.cfm](http://www.gbgm-umc.org/umw/BFCY/index_eng.cfm)

\*\*\*\*\*

**MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES**

**ISSUES:**

- **Drug Coalition, Skateboard Ramps, Teen Center**
- **Downtown empty, downtown full...polar opposites.**
- **Impact of prison operation and industries**
- **Schools - different perceptions**
- **Schools and city role in recreational programs**
- **Rock Creek community investments**
- **Between county and city, i.e., law enforcement, services**
- **Community Resource Guide**

**It was very rewarding to hear that a “new” Resource Guide would be compiled for the Deer Lodge community.** The local Ministerial Society volunteered its services to redevelop a guide for community programs and services, civic groups, emergency and medical facilities, law enforcement, fire protection, church organizations, recreation opportunities, drug coalition members, and other public activities or events held in Deer Lodge.

There were comments made during resource team assessment meetings that seemed to communicate two different project ideas for youth – one being a Skateboard Park and another being a “Recreation Center” with paintball, go-cart track, and other outdoor sports equipment or activities. The general public of Deer Lodge seems to think the schools is a “strength” in the community, however, the school drop out rate might indicate the opposite perception. It may be helpful to do an economic and social impact analysis of the Boot Camp/MSP operations as well as the investments of the “new” Rock Creek development and then communicate the information to residents of Deer Lodge.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

- **Begin with publication and disbursement of the “new” Resource Guide** throughout the Deer Lodge community.
- **Development of an informative newsletter or some type of community flyer** that could be easily produced and hand delivered to all neighborhoods by young volunteers or mailed directly to local businesses, non-profits, churches, hospitals, Boot Camp/MSP employees, the library, school, local government, Grant Kohrs Ranch, farmers, and ranchers.
- **Establish a “Deer Lodge Volunteer Network”** by enlisting local government officials, Deer Lodge bankers, local businesses, Elks club members, schools, hospital personnel, library staff, nursing home employees, youth organizations, museums, senior citizen groups, Boot Camp/MSP employees, Grant Kohrs Ranch volunteers or staff and all other community associations.

#### **RESOURCES:**

**More informational resources for Deer Lodge residents can be found at web sites as follows:**

- <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/chc/reinventingaging/volunteer.html>
- [http://www.uwex.edu/li/learner/sites\\_volunteer.htm](http://www.uwex.edu/li/learner/sites_volunteer.htm)
- <http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/newsroom/katrina.asp>
- <http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>
- <http://www.nea.org/readacross/volunteer/youthleaders.html>
- [http://www.aarp.org/about\\_aarp/community\\_service/](http://www.aarp.org/about_aarp/community_service/)
- <http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/angeles/volunteering/>
- [http://www.onestarfoundation.org/onestar/resources/n\\_awards.html](http://www.onestarfoundation.org/onestar/resources/n_awards.html)
- <http://narsvdpd.com/resources.htm>

\*\*\*\*\*

#### **MAIN TOPIC: ACTIVITIES**

##### **ISSUES:**

- **Youth**
  - **Youth Center**

- Skateboard, Paintball, Recreation Station, Soccer
- Family activities
- Funding assistance
  - The Arts, Elks, Fairgrounds, etc.
- Young adult activities
- Seniors
  - Transportation – hours and service extended
  - Senior Citizen Center hours extended

**Again the comments made at the Deer Lodge resource team assessment meetings and written information that was received indicated that there was a difference of opinion on a Skateboard Park or multi-purpose Recreation Center. The Deer Lodge community is in need of collaboration among local businesses, financial institutions, real estate agents, non-profit organizations, churches, library, school, hospitals, the Boot Camp/MSP, local government, 4-H/youth programs, farmers, ranchers, senior citizens, and all community volunteers when planning any type of event in Deer Lodge such as the Draft Horse Show. Deer Lodge must take advantage of what it has and make improvements to some of the existing buildings such as the PEN, Trask Hall, museum facilities, senior citizens center, and other community buildings.**

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- **Begin with preparing plans and make priority** for either a Skateboard Park or the “Recreation Center” with paintball, go-cart track, **and other outdoor sports equipment or activities.**
- **Develop a combination of federal, state, or local funding sources for community buildings** such as the PEN, Trask Hall, a “new” Elks building, the fairgrounds, Deer Lodge museums, and Teen Center.
- Work with local government, Deer Lodge banks, financial institutions, businesses, schools, hospital, library, nursing home, senior citizens, youth organizations, and community groups **to identify priorities of community building projects and funding needed for expansion of the transportation service in Deer Lodge or Powell County.**

#### **RESOURCES:**

**For more information on planning and funding programs, please go to web sites listed as follows:**

- <http://www.skateparkguide.com/Get%20a%20Park.htm>
- <http://www.ngb.army.mil/news/story.asp?id=2222>
- [http://www.tonyhawkfoundation.org/grant\\_recipients02.asp](http://www.tonyhawkfoundation.org/grant_recipients02.asp)
- <http://www.local.com/results.asp>
- [http://www.apta.com/research/info/online/aging\\_options.cfm](http://www.apta.com/research/info/online/aging_options.cfm)
- <http://www.ymca.net/>
- <http://www.families.org/page/page/239604.htm>
- <http://www.aaafoundation.org/home/>
- <http://sites.target.com/site/en/corporate/page.jsp?contentId=PRD03-001819>

\*\*\*\*\*

## MAIN TOPIC: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### ISSUES:

- **Workforce**
- **Need for new businesses**
- **Support local businesses**
- **Value added agriculture**
- **Marketing of attractions**
- **Need for lodging**
- **Strong focus organization**
- **Historic Preservation**
  - **Deer Lodge Hotel**
  - **Trask Hall**
- **Define Chamber's role and Economic Development organization's role**
- **"Define Deer Lodge"**
  - **All pulling in same direction based on that definition.**

The comments from made at the Deer Lodge resource team assessment meetings indicate that there is room for improvement for not only developing the local workforce but also expanding or retaining locally owned and operated businesses located in Deer Lodge. **Some new business might be "grown" locally and local residents of Deer Lodge should be encouraged to support the existing business community. Small business resources should be promoted throughout Deer Lodge and federal, state, or local funding sources could help revitalize or restore community buildings such as Trask Hall or the Deer Lodge Hotel.**

### RECOMMENDATION:

- **Organize/develop or revitalize some type of historic preservation effort for Deer Lodge that would focus on prioritizing building or restoration projects such as Trask Hall or the Deer Lodge Hotel.**
- **Involve businesses, school, non-profit organizations, churches, museums, library, hospitals, MSP/Boot Camp employees, elderly, youth, local government, farmers, ranchers, Grant Kohrs Ranch, and other residents of Deer Lodge in a "Buy Local Campaign" or revitalize the "This Business is Supported by Timber Dollars" program.**
- **Explore short-term goal for a "Jobs & Business for Deer Lodge" with the involvement of Deer Lodge businesses, school, non-profit organizations, churches, hospitals, Boot Camp/MSP employees, elderly, youth, library, local government, Grant Kohrs Ranch, farmers, ranchers, and other community leaders to encourage job creation and business retention.**

### RESOURCES:

**It might be helpful for the City of Deer Lodge to promote business with monthly "Shop Local Day" or "Keep Dollars in Deer Lodge Week." Other community events or could be sponsored by specific businesses or companies such as the "This Business is Supported by Timber Dollars" program currently implemented in Deer Lodge.**

Some informational resources and helpful web sites that may offer the Deer Lodge community with sources of funding, technical assistance guides, and other relevant materials for addressing the economic development issues are as follows:

- <http://agr.mt.gov/dept/agDevDiv.asp>
- <http://travel.mt.gov/>
- <http://www.getty.edu/grants/conservation/>
- [http:// www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/coops/rcdg/rcdg.htm](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/coops/rcdg/rcdg.htm)
- <http://downtownwomensclub.com/dwc/index.php>
- <http://www.rileyguide.com/intern.html>
- <http://www.nemw.org/brownfields.htm>
- [http://www.google.com/Top/Arts/Crafts/Quilting/Clubs\\_and\\_Guilds/](http://www.google.com/Top/Arts/Crafts/Quilting/Clubs_and_Guilds/)
- <http://www.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets/FMPP/FMPPInfo.htm>
- <http://www.headwaterscd.org/>
- <http://business.mt.gov/>
- <http://sba.gov/index.html>
- <http://businessresources.mt.gov>

## **REPORT BY: TOM HARRINGTON**

**Assistant Manager, Jefferson Local Development Corp.**

**P.O. Box 1079**

**Whitehall, MT 59759**

**Phone: 406.287.3282 Fax: 406.287.3287**

**Email: [harrington@montana.edu](mailto:harrington@montana.edu)**

### **MAIN TOPIC: HOUSING**

#### **ISSUE: AVAILABILITY, SENIOR HOUSING, LIMITED RENTALS**

A common theme throughout the listening sessions was a lack of adequate housing. The availability of safe, decent, and affordable housing for sale or rent is very limited in the area. The lack of housing is further compounded by a limited availability of land for development of housing.

- Many people employed at area businesses must commute to/from work due to a lack of available housing in the area.
- Increased employment opportunities at the prison and with the Rock Creek development has placed additional pressure on local housing availability.
- There is a need for additional senior housing.
- Limited rental units are available.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Coordinate with local city and county planners to **identify potential land that is adjacent to the city that could be connected to city services and annexed for the development of additional housing.**

**Work with area realtors to identify potential developers** with the expertise and resources to construct new housing.

Note: Adding additional senior housing would increase the number of existing homes available for sale or rent.

#### **RESOURCES:**

Michelle Shoquist

USDA Rural Development

790 Colleen Street

Helena, MT 59601

Phone: 406.449.5000 xt 121 Fax: 406.449.5008

[Michelle.Shoquist@mt.usda.gov](mailto:Michelle.Shoquist@mt.usda.gov)

Neal Ullman

Program Specialist, Community Development Block Grant Program

Montana Department of Commerce

301 South Park Avenue

PO Box 200523

Helena, MT 59620-0523  
Office: 406-841-2773  
Fax: 406-841-2771  
E-mail: [nulman@mt.gov](mailto:nulman@mt.gov)  
Web: [http://comdev.mt.gov/CDD\\_cdbg.asp](http://comdev.mt.gov/CDD_cdbg.asp)

Headwaters RC&D  
Connie Ternes-Daniels  
Economic Development Planner  
305 W. Mercury  
Butte, MT 59701  
Phone: 406.782.7333 Fax: 406.782.9675  
Email: [ctdaniels@bigskyhsd.com](mailto:ctdaniels@bigskyhsd.com)

\*\*\*\*\*

**MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

**ISSUE: ACTIVITIES, COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, GROWTH POLICY**

A need for community development activities was identified. The basis for community development was in development of a comprehensive plan/growth policy for the community with a key component being to define Deer Lodge with specific goals and objectives.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**Develop a detailed comprehensive plan/growth policy that defines the community needs**

Closer coordination between the city and county on issues like law enforcement, planning, growth, and other mutually beneficial issues.

Hold public meetings to discuss and define what the community of Deer Lodge sees as their focus and priorities – such as with the Resource Team Assessment on May 24<sup>th</sup>, 7:00pm at the PEN.

**RESOURCES:**

Headwaters RC&D  
Connie Ternes-Daniels  
Economic Development Planner  
305 W. Mercury  
Butte, MT 59701  
Phone: 406.782.7333 Fax: 406.782.9675  
Email: [ctdaniels@bigskyhsd.com](mailto:ctdaniels@bigskyhsd.com)

\*\*\*\*\*

## **MAIN TOPIC: BEAUTIFICATION**

### **ISSUE: CLEAN UP AND APPEARANCE**

The appearance of the community and downtown area was addressed as an issue in several listening sessions.

- The appearance of the downtown area and the vacant hotel was a concern
- The poor appearance of junked vehicles in yards, lack of yard maintenance, old trailers, weeds, and homes needing repairs or maintenance was cited as a community detractor
- Improving community pride.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

- **Enforce the existing codes and ordinances that are in place.** Closer coordination between the city and county law enforcement to apply the rules would assist with compliance
- Have additional clean-up days throughout the year – more than just one.
- Get involved with the Main Street Program
- Adopt standards for the construction and materials for the downtown business district
- **Ask the local newspaper to highlight those who exceed the standards.**

### **RESOURCES:**

Your local newspaper

Mel Walters  
Main Street Montana Program  
Montana Department of Commerce  
301 South Park Avenue  
PO Box 200523  
Helena, MT 59620-0523  
Office: 406-841-2756  
Fax: 406-841-2728  
E-mail: [mwalters@mt.gov](mailto:mwalters@mt.gov)

\*\*\*\*\*

## **MAIN TOPIC: SOCIAL CHALLENGES**

### **ISSUES: DRUGS AND ALCOHOL, DROP OUT RATE, PARENTAL SUPERVISION**

There were some social challenges identified that were a common theme in several of the sessions.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- **Do complete the Resource Guide** that lists all the available services with a point of contact that are located in the Deer Lodge area.

- **Look at alternative and vocational school educational opportunities to help those dropping out of school with alternatives to the traditional high school.**
- **Provide the opportunity for getting GED training and testing support to help those who have dropped out of high school.**
- Look at **starting a Big Brothers/Sister program** in the area.
- Identify ways to **expand and maintain the Life Line program**
- Identify the **primary causes for the high drop out rates** and address identified issues.

## **RESOURCES:**

Big Brothers/Sisters program: <http://www.bbbsa.org>

Montana Department of Public Instruction: <http://opi.mt.gov>

\*\*\*\*\*

## **MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNICATIONS CHALLENGE**

### **ISSUE: MIXED MESSAGES AND MISINFORMATION**

There were several sessions where comments and perceptions completely different between individuals. Further discussions indicated there was a lack of information or mis-information that was being circulated:

- Several comments were made about the appearance of the downtown area needing to be improved or have standardized building codes. Then other sessions the comments were that the downtown area has seen considerable improvement over the past few years.
- A perception was the local businesses were struggling and that many vacant spaces existed on the main street and detracted from giving the community a vibrant look. The other side indicated there wasn't any available retail space and local businesses were doing well. The main vacant building was the old hotel on the corner of main street that is very visible.
- Comments about the impact of the prison on the community went from a positive contributor to a detractor for the community.
- The perception of the local schools is they have a quality program with excellent administration and staff. On the other hand there is a concern about the high dropout rate and what is the cause and solution.
- The new Rock Creek development was seen as both a positive and negative for the community. There was a concern about property values rising in an already tight housing market. It became obvious that information about the projects and the benefits it has already brought to the community are not widely understood.
- There was a concern about the city/county law enforcement support for the community. The perception is law enforcement within the community was limited and didn't cover the enforcement of local codes and ordinances.
- There was a difference of understand the responsibilities of the school and the city and their involvement in after school recreational programs. The feeling was divided on who has responsibility to manage and supervise after school programs.
- There was a concern that many services didn't exist in the area when in reality they were available and just not visible or easy to find and contact. An example was the need for a drug coalition was expressed and found to already be in existence. The need for a skateboard park was addressed and then it became evident that new equipment was purchased for a skateboard park and has been in storage unused. These discussions indicated a need for a resource guide of community activities and services.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Do publish the Resource Guide (discussed at the Town Meeting) of community activities and functions
- Look at the Main Street program and the successful implementation in other communities and model a program that fits the needs of the community
- Look at **establishing a community group that meets quarterly with the prison to discuss current operations and community impact.** This working group could be the information conduit between the prison and the community and a way to provide input to prison officials.
- Establish **routine meetings between the city and county law enforcement to discuss any concerns or issues. Identify responsibility for enforcement of local ordinances and codes that currently exist in the community.**
- **Get more information out on a routine basis about the Rock Creek development.** This will help inform the public and minimize misinformation and rumors about the community impact of the development.
- **Get together a group of interested individuals to routinely meet with the school administration to address the concern about the high drop out rate** being experienced. This group could explore alternative education options and vocational training that could assist these individuals with their education; looking at a GED program to assist these individuals could also be another option.
- **Get the local newspaper more involved in community activities and passing information about on-going projects and activities**

#### **RESOURCES:**

Mel Walters

Main Street Montana Program

Montana Department of Commerce

301 South Park Avenue

PO Box 200523

Helena, MT 59620-0523

Office: 406-841-2756

Fax: 406-841-2728

E-mail: [mwalters@mt.gov](mailto:mwalters@mt.gov)

\*\*\*\*\*

#### **MAIN TOPIC: ACTIVITIES**

#### **ISSUE: MORE TO DO FOR YOUTH, ADULTS AND FAMILIES**

The listening sessions identified a need for expanded activities throughout the community.

- There is a concern that the youth don't have enough activities and programs in the area and contributes to some of the social challenges being experienced. Discussion about a youth center, Skateboard Park, Paintball Park, recreation station, soccer program and other ideas followed.
- The lack of family activities was addressed as a concern.
- Lack of funding to develop other activities like the arts program, rebuild the Elks Club, upgrade and repair the fairgrounds and support for several other worthwhile projects.
- Programs and activities for young adults are lacking in the area.

- Seniors discussed the need for expanded transportation service with extended hours. There was also a desire to expand on the hours of operation of the Senior Center to allow for additional activities.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- **Get interested individuals together to develop a strategy for implementation of activities.** An example would be getting those interested in a soccer program together and explore the options for starting a program.
- **Look at the possibility of establishing a recreation district within the community supported by a mill increase that would provide some limited funds for maintenance and upkeep of recreational facilities.**
- Coordinate with the city/county on fair grounds upgrades and repairs.
- **Look for willing volunteers who can research how other communities have met these same challenges.** This could be the basis for developing a plan that fits the local community needs and be a good road map to getting and sustaining worthwhile projects.
- **Meet with Rock Creek development and explore if they might be interested in setting up a local fund that is managed by a volunteer group to improve recreation and community activities.**

#### **RESOURCES:**

- <http://www.recreation-areas.com/state/MT/1>
- Coordinate with other communities with successful programs.
- Rock Creek Development

\*\*\*\*\*

#### **MAIN TOPIC: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**ISSUE: Many discussions identified the need for expanded and diversified economic development opportunities in the area.**

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Agriculture is a big part of the local economy and there is an opportunity to develop value added agricultural products
- There is a lack of temporary motel lodging in the area that limits the ability to retain tourists longer or hold large meetings or activities.
- The role of the local Chamber of Commerce and the economic development group needs to be defined and coordinated.
- The community has many diverse segments that pull in different directions. Need to define what the community is all about and get efforts working in a common direction.
- Support of local business and shopping locally needs more emphasis.

#### **RESOURCES:**

Growth Through Agriculture Program, Montana Department of Agriculture:  
<http://agr.mt.gov/business/GTA.asp>

## **REPORT BY: LEISA LESTER**

**Grants and Agreements Specialist**

**USDA Forest Service/Custer Nat'l Forest**

**1310 Main Street**

**Billings, MT 59105**

**Phone: 406.657.6205 x 203 Fax: 406.657.6225**

**Email: [llester@fs.fed.us](mailto:llester@fs.fed.us)**

### **MAIN TOPIC: SOCIAL CHALLENGES**

#### **ISSUES:**

- **Drugs and Alcohol and other “at risk” behaviors**
- **Drop out rate**
- **Physical and/or verbal abuse**
- **Parental supervision**
- **Expand on Life Line**
- **More non-school activities**
- **Non-traditional families**

Although all of the issues raised by the local citizens were valid, the one that brought me (Leisa) the most concern was the high percentage of school “drop-outs”...40+%. **Our children are the future for any community and thus I feel strongly that this issue needs to be understood and dealt with immediately.**

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

To approach this issue I would suggest the educational community get together and **establish a team** dedicated to finding out why the young people are quitting school. Once the reasons are established, and there is no doubt going to be a multitude of reasons, then **search for solutions based on the problem area.** For example, are most drop out situations due to teen pregnancy? If so, perhaps more information could be made available on increased sex education and more availability of access to Planned Parenthood. If there is no local Planned Parenthood Office (PPO), perhaps a weekly or bi-monthly visit could be performed by a Planned Parenthood representative from a surrounding city (Helena or Missoula).

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESOURCES:**

As PPO receives grant funding for various projects, possible funding sources for the reproduction/distribution of information packets/brochures to students, contact Helena PPO (tele #406-457-2470) or Missoula PPO (tele#406-728-5490).

<http://www.teenpregnancy.org/resources>

<http://www.plannedparenthood.org/pp2/imt/>

**If a drop-out factor appears to as a result of dysfunctional family homes where abuse of some sort is present, perhaps the team could explore opportunities for providing information to suspected abuse offering foster/alternative home sites.**

**Resource:** Department of Family Services telephone (406-846-9613)

Additionally, if not already offered, **perhaps the teaching staff could offer extra credit in classes for activities that focus on city government and community beautification projects.** Build curriculums in relative classes that bring up local issues and encourage the students to get involved and have ownership for the direction their city will take. Come up with a motto like “This is YOUR town” or **have the students participate in a contest to come up with a new motto.**

**Look for/provide mentoring opportunities—perhaps job shadowing city government officials.**

**Build “Task Force” student teams comprised of students that address each of the issues brought up by the concerned citizens (stated in the Deer Lodge Resource Team Assessment).**

Examples :

**1.) HOUSING ISSUES:**

Have student teams look at available housing real estate in Deer Lodge with a realtor. Afterward, have them write a synopsis of what they learned as well as what solutions they can come up with.

**2.) COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ISSUES:**

(Infrastructure): Have the student teams walk and/or drive the streets of Deer Lodge and look around. Afterward, have them write a synopsis of what they learned as well as what solutions they can come up with.

**3.) BEAUTIFICATION ISSUES:**

Again, the student teams could walk and/or drive around Deer Lodge looking for junk vehicles/trailers, trash, etc. and then write a synopsis of what they saw as well as what solutions they can come up with.

**By having the student teams address each of the issues mentioned in the Team Assessment, they will have a clearer idea of what challenges Deer Lodge faces and more importantly, have a role in improving Deer Lodge.**

**I believe that the more we engage the children of communities—in this particular instance, Deer Lodge, the issues will become clear to the children and motivation will come naturally-- with some constructive adult direction/group discussion.** Solutions can be found and “ownership” of the community will be felt.

**The children of Deer Lodge, ARE the future of Deer Lodge.**

**Report by: Connie Ternes Daniels**  
**Regional Economic Development Planner**  
**Headwaters RC&D Area, Inc./Economic Development District**  
**305 W. Mercury, Suite 211**  
**Butte, MT 59701**

**Telephone: (406) 782-7333**  
**Fax: (406) 782-9675**  
**e-mail: ctdaniels@bigskyhsd.com**  
**Web: <http://www.headwatersrcd.org>**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Headwaters RC&D Area Inc., is the Montana Department of Commerce's designated Certified Regional Development Corporation (CRDC) for southwest Montana. Community Assessments must be conducted through the assessment area's CRDC. It has been a pleasure to assist Deer Lodge and its residents with this very worthwhile planning process.

I would like to personally thank everyone involved in the Deer Lodge Resource Team Assessment. Deer Lodge is a wonderful community filled with great people who care deeply about their community. A very special thank you to Peggy Kerr, all the staff, Gloria O'Rourke, and my fellow team members who made this community assessment a great experience.

The people of Deer Lodge are open and willing to share their hopes and desires as well as discuss their problems and challenges. Deer Lodge and the surrounding area are rich in both natural and cultural resources and while all communities are faced with challenges, I believe Deer Lodge's strengths far out way any weaknesses that were discussed during the assessment.

Please note that my report will not focus on all issues discussed during the listening sessions but rather **on the areas that Headwaters may be able to provide some assistance and direction.** Again I would like to thank the people of Deer Lodge and Powell County and everyone involved in the Deer Lodge Community Assessment.

Headwaters RC&D Area Inc. consists of several programs designed to assist the area it serves including Powell County and the City of Deer Lodge

## **MAIN TOPIC: HOUSING**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS/RESOURCES:**

**Headwaters is assisting Powell County and the City of Deer Lodge with a comprehensive housing survey that will ultimately provide much of the information that the community is seeking in addressing its housing needs.**

**Headwaters provides a First Time Home Buyers Class that is designed to assist people with down payment and closing costs.** These classes can be scheduled in Deer Lodge.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS/RESOURCES:**

**Headwaters provides technical assistance and grant writing help for community projects.** Several projects that Headwaters has assisted Deer Lodge with in the past include: Main Street redevelopment project, funding for a new roof on the 1912 cell house, the wastewater line replacement across the Clark Fork River, irrigation project at the Grant Kohr's Ranch, and the Sun Mountain Lumber project.

**If the community desires assistance with a special project, please contact Headwaters and have it placed on the annual plan of work.**

If Deer Lodge is considering infrastructure projects, I would encourage you to **contact Water, Wastewater, and Solid Waste Action Coordination Team (W2ASACT).**

In 1995, the state and federal funding agencies adopted a common preliminary engineering report format that would be acceptable to each of the agencies that fund these kinds of projects. Additional information can be obtained through the Montana Department of Commerce, USDA Rural Development, and other state and federal agencies.

Montana Department of Commerce  
301 S. Park Ave  
Helena, MT 59601  
(406) 841-2700  
<http://comerce.mt.us>

USDA Rural Development  
900 Technology Blvd.  
Bozeman, MT 59771  
(406) 585-2520

**Local government officials may want to consider an urban renewal plan and the implementation of tax increment financing (TIF) to assist areas within the downtown that may suffer from blight.** Several communities across the state have implemented TIFs. Local government officials may want to visit with some of these communities and discuss the benefits of downtown revitalization efforts using this tool.

Montana just adopted a state-wide main street program and several communities across the state have developed their own main street programs for revitalization. **Again, local government officials may want to investigate the merits of the program and consider some sort of implementation of this proven program.**

TIF Information  
Tax Exempt Financing for Economic Development Purposes  
Mae Nan Ellingson  
Dorsey & Whitney LLP  
125 Bank Street, Suite 600  
Missoula, MT 59802  
(406) 721-6025  
ellingson.mae.nan@dorsey.com

Karen Burns, URA Director  
Butte-Silver Bow  
(406) 497-6465

Main Street Approach-Making Downtowns Come Alive  
The National Trust for Historic Preservation  
[www.mainst.org/](http://www.mainst.org/)

George Everett  
Butte Main Street Director  
gevertt@mail.montana.com

Deer Lodge is rich with historic resources. **Preserving its historic buildings and maintaining its historical integrity will benefit Deer Lodge's overall economy.** The Deer Lodge Hotel is worth looking at as a preservation strategy along with the community's housing needs. Deer Lodge should work with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Montana State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and the Montana Preservation Alliance. Federal and state tax credits are available for preservation of historic building. Local preservation officials should work with the SHPO on any preservation projects.

National Trust for Historic Preservation  
[www.nationaltrust.org/](http://www.nationaltrust.org/)

Montana State Historic Preservation Office  
225 N. Roberts Office  
P.O. Box 201201  
Helena, MT 59620-1201  
[www.his.state.mt.us](http://www.his.state.mt.us)

Montana Preservation Alliance  
516 N. Park, Suite A  
Helena, MT 59601  
(406) 547-2822

\*\*\*\*\*

## MAIN TOPIC: BEAUTIFICATION

### RECOMMENDATIONS/RESOURCES:

**Headwaters can and has assisted Deer Lodge in the past with grant writing assistance for community beautification projects.** Community Transportation and Enhancement Program (CTEP) funding through the Montana Department of Transportation have been used in the past for beautification projects.

\*\*\*\*\*

## MAIN TOPIC: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### RECOMMENDATIONS/RESOURCES:

Headwaters provides several programs and services that can assist Deer Lodge with its economic development efforts.

**Planning:** Headwaters is always willing to assist communities with planning and project development. The Headwaters Board adopts a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), which is a five-year planning document that is reviewed annually. In order for a project to meet most federal and state funding requirements it must be included in this document. Both Powell County and the City of Deer Lodge have representation on the Headwaters Economic Development Committee and Board. If you are considering any new projects or programs, please contact the Headwaters office and have it included in the CEDS.

**Small Business Development Center (SBDC):** Headwaters has professional staff to assist individuals who are considering going into business or who maybe already in business with business planning and technical assistance. Counseling services are free and confidential. Interested persons can meet with the SBDC Director in Deer Lodge. Please contact the Headwaters office for dates and time.

**Loan Programs:** Headwaters has several loan programs to assist businesses with gap financing. The Headwaters loan programs are not intended to compete with local financial institutions, but rather to work with local banks. Again please contact the Headwaters office for a complete listing of loan funds and lending requirements.

**Business Expansion and Retention Program (BEAR):** The BEAR program offers support, help and assistance to existing businesses. A team of qualified interviewers sit down and interview businesses to determine how they maybe assisted to survive. Deer Lodge may want to discuss the BEAR program further and through its local economic development group consider conducting a series of BEAR interviews with the City's businesses.

The BEAR program involves five steps:

1. Local business people volunteer to assist with the program.

2. Local businesses apply to be interviewed.
3. Volunteers interview the businesses and identify roadblocks to their expansion.
4. BEAR task force identifies solutions and/or resources to alleviate those roadblocks.
5. Resources provide individual assistance (at no cost) to the company in the form of
  - a. Marketing assistance
  - b. Workforce training
  - c. Financing
  - d. Public services
  - e. Grant research and writing
  - f. And more

**Natural Resource Technical Assistance:** Headwaters has assisted communities with fuels for schools, hazardous fuels reduction programs, water, weed, and other natural resources programs and projects.

Headwaters has also assisted communities with workforce investment assistance, including Deer Lodge with the Sun Mountain Lumber Mill Project.

For more information regarding any of these programs, please contact the Headwaters office at (406) 782-7333.

**CONCLUSION:**

While Deer Lodge is faced with some challenges your strengths can make you very successful. You have great facilities including your schools, hospital, museums, and community center. Natural beauty abounds along with recreation opportunities including the Clark Fork River, great mountains, and your historic resources including the Grant Kohrs Ranch, all make for an incredible visitor destinations. I was impressed with the people, their volunteerism and support for the community. Your location on I-90 and being located between the two national parks is truly an asset. Your small town flavor can offer opportunities to southwest Montana. The Montana State Prison and Sun Mountain Lumber are tremendous economic resources for Deer Lodge and the surrounding area. Development at Rock Creek will also add economic benefit to Deer Lodge and Powell County. Finally, I came away from Deer Lodge with a deep appreciation for your community and a new understanding of its dynamics. I look forward to assisting you in implementing your priority projects.

**DEER LODGE RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT  
LISTENING NOTES  
APRIL 24 – 25, 2006**

**STRENGTHS**

**Deer Lodge Strengths: Eighth Graders**

- Less crime
- Have a lot of things other small towns don't have
- The Old Prison
- School programs
- Parks
- School activities, lots of room
- Movie theater
- Museum
- Small, therefore everybody watches out for each other.
- It is a safe place to live.
- It is small enough to walk everywhere
- It is clean – for the most part.
- It is productive
- Car museum
- We have after school programs for kids
- Some extra out-of-school activities
- Hunting, fishing
- Tourism
- Small community
- Good food
- Lot of open space to go 4 wheelin'
- It's small so you know everybody
- It is so small that you can walk everywhere
- The CPC
- We are a rather close community.
- Well spaced out
- Almost everyone has a yard
- Clean
- You can walk everywhere
- Less crime
- Less crime
- DARE program
- It is small so everyone watches out for each other.
- Kids get to have more freedom.
- Kids can walk around cause Deer Lodge is so small.
- We had the first college.

- It is not a big town so kids get to go places.
- Great people.
- Tourist spot because of the old museums.
- The strength is our community.
- Assets are the prison, museum and the mill.
- We have two food stores in town.
- Deer Lodge has good parks but they should be better kept.
- We have the Old Prison Museum as an asset. It is good for tourists.
- Sports
- JC Park
- Youth groups
- Our parks are good but not a lot of people go
- We used to have a rec center but they turned it into an adult place.
- The CPC is all right for kids to hang out.
- No violent crime
- Fair amount of extracurricular activities
- Schools aren't too big
- Park
- Little kid programs
- Sports
- It is not a big town and not too many problems
- The strengths are sports, a movie theater, movie store and school to keep kids out of trouble.
- Friendly community
- Radio Shack
- CPC Gives me something to do
- Many gas stations
- Discount video
- Very strong united churches (First Baptist, Assembly of God)
- Good schools that offer a GREAT education.
- A lot of extra curricular activities
- A lot of clubs – 4-H, FFA
- Volunteer work for the community
- Yearly fairs, derbies, rodeos.
- Sports
- Mill
- Close to Butte, Missoula, Helena.
- Small community – no real major crime such as murder, arson, etc.
- Cheap movie theater \$4 - \$2
- It has good public schools
- It is close to other cities
- It is quiet
- One stoplight
- The mill

- The history
  - In the middle between Missoula, Helena and Butte.
  - There is a lot of history.
  - It is close to Butte, Helena and Missoula.
  - There is a good school and most activities are cheap.
  - Small community
  - Good after school program
  - Giving community
  - Lots of history
  - Close to bigger towns
  - Lots of history and tourist-y places
  - Good school system
  - Life lines
  - Community involvement
  - Small community, close to different towns.
  - Small, not a lot of people
  - A stop light
- 

#### **Deer Lodge Strengths: Junior Class**

- Location
- Room for growth
- Small town so everyone knows everyone else and when everyone knows everyone, people are polite and caring for the most part.
- Deer Lodge is a small town so I would consider that a strength because it is easier to get all or most of the people to unite.
- Deer Lodge has a good education program and a ton of after school sports and programs to keep kids occupied.
- Deer Lodge is a beautiful place steeped in history.
- Our strengths are our Christian churches and missionaries.
- Tourist attractions
- Mountains
- All the students know each other – it is a big family.
- Good people.
- It helps that we are a small town and everybody knows everyone – reduces problems.
- We are pretty strict in our policies and we have to follow laws or you will get in trouble.
- Museums like the old prison, Grant Kohrs Ranch.
- Movie theater and good places to eat.
- Good cops.
- It is a close knot community that most will do anything to help another.
- Its sense of community and togetherness
- Fairly diverse programs
- Small town atmosphere

- **Too many strengths to pinpoint them all**
- **Great leaders with plans and ideas that will carry us into the future.**
- **The mill and MSP are holding this town together.**
- **Friendly town and community.**
- **Has its ups and downs.**
- **Nice small town and easy to grow up in**
- **I love that everyone in our community seems to actually care and want to have togetherness.**
- **The bakery (that is slowly going out of business)**
- **Beautiful mountains**
- **The library**
- **The prison**
- **Airport**
- **Rock Creek Cattle**
- **Jim Magone**
- **Library**
- **Grant Kohrs**
- **Strong community bond, generous community**
- **The schools**
- **Some cops**
- **Deer Lodge has a lot of things to see for such a small town.**
- **People stick together**
- **School pride**
- **Get involved with the town local projects**
- **When someone dies, everyone goes to the funeral.**
- **Choice of recreational activities**
- **Swimming pool, the track, golf course, football field, bowling alley, trails at both Arrowstone and JC Parks.**
- **Car museum, old prison museum, Yesterday's Playthings.**
- **People help each other**
- **Great 4-H program**
- **Power to keep the prison in town.**
- **Small size and community support for our younger members**
- **People know each other so you can trust them at work and what not.**
- **In the schools – get more individual attention.**
- **Small friendly town**
- **Free gym and pool – open to the public**
- **Good public school**
- **Touring sites: old prison, Grant Kohrs, etc.**
- **Greater chance for participation in sports**
- **Good neighborhoods**
- **Deer Lodge has loyal fans for sports programs and coaches that work very hard for their programs.**

- In the classroom – block scheduling increases the amount of learning time and student teacher contact.
- Lacks leadership
- Needs more youth centers and places of interest for younger generations.
- With more facilities I believe the drug use and cartel in the high school would dwindle significantly.
- There needs to be less focus on teen drinking and more effort to stop meth. I personally know many people who do the drug and it angers me immensely.
- I feel safe here.
- I like how the people are nice and close.
- We have a variety of people and a large county that seems to come together.
- Small close-knit town, few but good activities to take part in.
- Police department
- Well organized
- The prison and the mill
- Programs for elementary school kids
- Tourists brought in my the old prison and museums.
- Beautiful forest around us.
- Providing sports all year: volleyball, football, cross country, basketball and wrestling, track and golf, baseball and softball.
- Good schools
- Not having a department store
- A lot of history behind us with the old prison museums and Grant Kohrs.
- It is a beautiful town combined with history.
- Logging and restaurants
- Strong sense of community

---

**Deer Lodge Strengths – Jr. High Teachers**

- K – 8 School District is very strong.
- Downtown – merchants have made a tremendous step in making it attractive
- Generous community – we rally for theater, library, etc., people are right there.
- People are there for people that are hurting.
- Improvements in JC Park are very nice.
- Safe place to raise kids.
- Real attractions Kohrs Ranch, old prison, Clark Fork River, recreation options
- Ditto
- Lots of trail heads and access to back country
- Can afford to buy a house here.
- We are close to Missoula, Helena, Butte where you can get what you need fairly quickly.
- Own our own theater that volunteers run. City owned – lots of elbow grease.
- Best popcorn at the Rialto – than anywhere else.

- Water system, sewer system, garbage monthly payments are reasonable.
- Don't have to pay extra to water your grass.
- Natural land fill
- Good fire department – all volunteer
- Full service hospital and a clinic
- Buildings are in good shape for their age – good custodians, good leadership to keep our infrastructure in repair
- Ditto – great elementary schools – superb.
- Ditto- services in high school just not there and need to be.
- Good mental health K – 8.
- Women's club

---

**Deer Lodge Strengths – Powell County High School Teachers/Staff**

- we're a great community of volunteers
- if a financial need for family we step up
- our kids can compete anywhere, educational, sports and behavior wise
- Arrow Stone park and its beautification
- Powell County coalition started and working on several youth issues

---

**Deer Lodge Strengths: No Host Dinner**

- The people – fantastic people here – right there whenever you need them.
- Some of the nicest people in the world.
- Art club
- Elks – wonderful organization
- Churches
- Chemical Dependency Office
- The people ban together when there is a crisis.
- People know our kids – can help watch out for them.
- People work well together – and want to see change.
- People want to make this community better.
- Great schools – teachers and staff, work hard for the kids.
- Good history in this town – could be a draw.
- Deer Lodge Players
- Vast wealth of knowledge and skills that goes untapped.
- A lot of talent for the size of town.
- Museums
- Grant Kohrs
- Historical – do have two anchors on both sides of town.
- Two exits on the interstate – huge advantage.

- Natural beauty
  - Welcoming town – even the kids.
  - Hard working people.
  - Ranch that is so interwoven into the community – Grant Kohrs
  - People willing to try different businesses to stay open – keep Main Street viable.
  - People
  - Community values
  - Great downtown
  - Beautiful open spaces
  - Quality and caliber of the people here
  - Antique store
  - American Legion sponsored baseball team
  - Rotary
  - Hospital Auxiliary
  - Friends of the Library
  - Medical facilities – for the size of this town, great medical care.
  - Specialists come in from Missoula and Butte.
  - Arrowstone Park
  - Parks Commission
- 

**Deer Lodge Strengths: Hospital, Emergency Services, Law Enforcement**

- Small community
  - Active Chamber of Commerce
  - Good medical services
  - Previous Powell County for Progress group
  - Strong Board of Directors with the hospital
  - Community steps to the plate to keep the hospital open – shows ownership
  - Hospital is the backbone of the rural health care system
  - Good EMS component – lack funds
  - Good search and rescue crew
  - Willingness to work together
  - Community of volunteers
  - Parent run youth center
  - Saved the Rialto
  - Great library
- 

**Deer Lodge Strengths: Business, Financial Institutions, Chamber, Civic Groups**

- Stable economy because some of our variables do not fluctuate as in other communities
- Quality of life
- Small town atmosphere
- Environment

- **Exceptional people**
  - **Growth potential – key is finding out what we need to do to get there**
  - **Good connection with rail and interstate**
  - **Just a few miles from three colleges – great cultural advantage**
  - **Great geographical location**
  - **Incredible ambiance and history—**
  - **Grant Kohrs on one end of town – Prison on the other and all the historic buildings in between**
  - **How do we make the prison work for us?**
  - **Been in business 18 years and every year my business has improved**
  - **Good education system**
  - **Fair grounds – right in town and holds tri-county fair**
  - **Draft Horse Show**
- 

#### **Deer Lodge Strengths: Churches, Non-Profits, Foundations, Social Services**

- **Our people**
  - **Schools**
  - **Headstart**
  - **Basically, we are a religious community**
  - **Great people and the many hats that they wear in our community**
  - **History that we still have here – historic buildings**
  - **Ditto re: people. Food pantry funded by those in the community.**
  - **Coalition concerned with underage drinking newly formed.**
  - **Camping, hiking, boating, fishing, snow skiing, snow mobiles, etc.**
  - **Great connections between pastors in town.**
  - **Art club**
  - **Western Region Addictions office**
  - **Alcohol Education Wagon – fatal vision glasses**
  - **New to You Store – need more customers, though**
- 

#### **Deer Lodge Strengths: Prison, Boot Camp, Industries**

- **Location, beautiful here, and close to Butte, Helena, Missoula and other cities**
- **Scenery**
- **Excellent school system – checked it out before I moved here to make sure it was good. It is.**
- **Like small community - great place to raise a family – lots of opportunities for kids to participate.**
- **Enjoy the ability to be personal with people and call them by their first name.**
- **Ditto – raised three kids here, off to college and came back.**

- **Great recreation.**
  - **I feel safe here. Low crime rate. Nice people.**
  - **My family loves hunting – big plus.**
  - **You can bring a family here and support it here.**
  - **Recreational opportunities are outstanding.**
  - **Ditto all of the above.**
  - **It is all about the people....it is what makes it special.**
  - **More ambiance and facilities for historical tourism than anyplace.**
- 

#### **Deer Lodge Strengths: City, County, and Federal Government**

- **Location**
- **Great hospital, excellent schools**
- **Don't need a Tee time for the golf course**
- **Collaborative work environment – not a lot of political infighting**
- **In the center of a recreation area – whether it is fishing, skiing, etc.**
- **Historic integrity of Main Street**
- **Ability this town has to move forward – i.e, Rialto Theater, etc.**
- **Ditto on the work-togetherness**
- **Can't say enough about our Planning Board and staff**
- **Ditto – doing the job right**
- **Disagree but remain united.**
- **Great volunteerism**
- **Pride in being from Deer Lodge**
- **Grant Kohrs Ranch – and what the staff has to offer**
- **Hospital and professionals**
- **Land fill that works well and will into the future**
- **Prison museum and entire complex**
- **Major treasures on both ends of town.**
- **Beautiful valley**
- **Ditto – documentaries in the works for our area**
- **Businesses that provide fair wages and benefits**
- **Deer Lodge is being discovered – need growth policy and plan**
- **Pride is here.**

#### **Deer Lodge Strengths: Senior Citizens**

- **Main Street has looked good in last three years, banners, trees adds to the town.**
- **This is my home**
- **Best Ministerial Associations in the state**
- **People are great**
- **Comparatively clean town**
- **Good schools**
- **One-in-a-million churches**

- We all get along in Deer Lodge
  - Can do a lot in Deer Lodge if we really want to do it
  - Medical facilities are good
  - I love Deer Lodge
  - Everyone in Deer Lodge is our friend
- 

#### **Deer Lodge Strengths: Ag, Farming, Ranching**

- Agriculture is a major industry here – always has been.
  - Cattle prices are good – livestock producing area.
  - Ag has a vital role in this community.
  - Active weed management program
  - Grant Kohrs – historically an ag operation
  - 4-H program and FFA program very strong
  - Tri –County fair
  - Great thing Ag has done is kept the open space – kept us a beautiful three valley county.
  - Smaller land owners have not capitulated to developers yet.
- 

#### **Deer Lodge Strengths: Employees in general: Sawmill, Contractors, Construction, Retail, Office Workers, Self-employed**

- Good variety of businesses
  - Rock Creek Cattle wants to make sure the town survives and thrives – and are putting money on the table.
  - Positive outlook for Montana’s economy in the next 5 years.
- 

#### **Deer Lodge Strengths: Misc. and Handwritten Comments**

- We are a close-knit community
- Friendly and helpful
- Our community watches out for our children
- Deer Lodge is a great place for Senior Citizens!
- We have a great hospital.
- Size – small is good
- Friendly people who help and support one another when needed
- Beautiful location, moderate climate
- Conveniently situated on the interstate and fairly close to larger communities
- Active and cooperating ministerial association
- Excellent and well run nursing home and assisted living facilities
- Excellent library with meeting-place space
- Good schools for the most part with minimal teacher turnover
- Lovely wide streets – perfect for bikers
- Great indoor swimming pool

- **All manner of historical places and buildings for attracting tourists**
- **Summer theater program at old prison**
- **Good senior citizen program – as far as it goes**
- **Clinic and hospital with good visiting specialist programs**
- **Outstanding bookstore and quilting supply store**
- **Historic area with great potential: Aboriginals used this as their cross roads 100's of years before the 1860's Mullen Trail, 1870's Northern Pacific RR, 1910's Yellowstone Trail and the present day I-90. Deer Lodge is the 2<sup>nd</sup> oldest town and its Main Street is still in tact.**
- **Deer Lodge is home to Grant Kohrs National Park and a world class Museum Complex.**
- **Excellent golf course, nearby cross county and down hill skiing. Good snowmobile trails.**
- **Swimming in School District and pools at Fairmont Hot Springs.**
- **Employment is strong with Sun Mountain Timber and Montana State Prison.**
- **Clark Fork Remediation is a plus. Tourism should compliment this also.**
- **Deer Lodge is the center of Western Montana's largest communities – Polson, Great Falls, Bozeman, Missoula, Helena and Butte – all good roads lead to Deer Lodge.**
- **I like the friendliness of Deer Lodge. I like small towns.**
- **The Deer Lodge Valley has incredible, unspoiled beauty, particularly the mountains to the West. The area has a rich history, being one of first areas in the state to be populated. Johnny Grant and other settlers were here before the gold rush era of Virginia City and Bannack.**
- **Agriculture remains one of the primary industries of the area raising cattle, hay, some grain and certified seed potatoes.**
- **We have two major tourist attractions – the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site, a part of the National Park System, and the Old Prison Museum complex that includes the Montana Auto Museum, Montana Territorial Prison, Law Enforcement Memorial, Frontier Montana and Desert John's Saloon, Yesterday's Playthings, Cottonwood City, and the Powell County Museum.**
- **The headquarters of Gold West Country is based in Deer Lodge. Gold West Country is one of six tourism countries established by the Montana Dept. of Commerce and Travel Montana.**
- **We are midway between Yellowstone and Glacier Parks**
- **We have excellent outdoor recreational opportunities in nearby rivers, lakes and mountains – fishing, hiking, mountain biking, river floating, horseback riding trails, cross country skiing, and snowmobiling.**
- **The local residents are friendly and hard working.**
- **We have several employers who hire 50 or more people – the sawmill, prison, Registrar's office, medical center, and school system.**
- **The merchants in town offer a lot of products at reasonable prices, and for the most part provide good personal service – one doesn't just feel like a number.**
- **We have easy access for industrial shipping – the Interstate highway system, railroad and expanded airport runway.**
- **We have an excellent school system with dedicated teachers who provide a very good education. School District One also has an indoor Olympic size swimming pool that residents can use for free during specified hours.**
- **We have an up-to-date medical facility with three very good doctors and medical services provided by specialists who come weekly or bi-weekly. The hospital wing is being renovated to make it more inviting and efficient. The hospital has up-to-date diagnostic equipment, lab, surgery, birthing room and long-term care facility. There are an active**

Hospital Auxiliary and Medical Foundation groups in place. Across the street is the Colonial Manor Nursing Home.

- The community can work together, and has done so in the past when there is a need and the people “buy into the project”. For example:
- The Rialto Community Theatre that the community purchased and has renovated – mostly with donations and grants and a lot of elbow grease and hard work. The theatre is run by the board of directors and a group of dedicated volunteers.
- The Main Street Beautification Project – three blocks of Main Street have new streetlights, planters, garbage containers, benches and banners. It took a lot of effort to get that accomplished – again with local donations, grants and a lot of hard work on the part of a small group of people.
- The Kohrs Library Expansion project – a community fundraising effort made it possible, as well as a lot of work on the part of the library board and interested friends of the library.
- The development of Arrowstone Park – a massive clean-up was conducted with people of all ages helping to clean up tons of unsightly trash that had accumulated on both sides of the roadway over a period of many years. ARCO then deep limed the area to neutralize heavy metals and clean soil capped the land that was destroyed by historic smelting operations. Walking paths and picnic table were installed.
- Three major events during the year draw visitors from out-of-town. These include: Territorial Days and Rod Run in June, the Tri-County Fair in August, and the Big Sky Draft Horse Expo in September.
- Territorial days, the third weekend of June, began in 1990 as a result of the state centennial in 1989 when everyone had so much fun. It has changed much during the years, but still is well attended and people have fun during the event that includes a 3,5 and 10K race, the rod run show and shine, streetwalkers jamboree with sidewalk sales and games, a barbecue and street dance.
- The Tri-County Fair, the third weekend of August, is an event that draws people from Powell, Deer Lodge/Anaconda and Granite County as 4-H and FFA members exhibit their projects. Other activities include the Montana Barrel Racing Association barrel race, team roping, parade and barbecue. Sometimes there is entertainment and/or a carnival. The biggest event of the weekend is the demolition derby where hundreds of people pack the grandstand. This is a Chamber sponsored event that is the primary fundraiser for the Chamber of Commerce.
- The Big Sky Draft Horse Expo, on the third weekend of September, started in 1995 under the auspices of the Old Prison Museums. They were going to drop it in 1999 but a group of people who wanted to see it continue took the reins and built it from just a parade and small activities to the largest draft horse show in Montana. The event, now under the umbrella of the Chamber of Commerce, draws people from throughout the nation and even some international visitors each year. The expo features exhibitors from throughout the Northwest who bring six-horse show teams, four-ups, and antique vehicles, as well as teamsters who compete in obstacle courses, log skidding, and cultivating. There is an extensive carriage and quilt display and a trade show with 30 vendors under the grandstand and on the grounds. The Montana Draft Teamster Hall of Fame awards are announced on Saturday. This year the committee is working to expand the program to include most of the week prior to the show with a program called the Montana Living

**History Academy that will include workshops in draft horse training, historic clothing and photography, wagon wheel construction, carriage restoration, Dutch oven cooking, Western art rendezvous, and an evening history and hot dogs educational program.**

- **There have been/are programs to provide activities for young people. For example: Lifelines provides after school educational programs and tutoring. It was highly successful initially, but seems to be fading. There is a summer baseball program for all ages of kids. There are volleyball and basketball teams for fourth-eighth grades for whoever wants to participate, unlike high school where you have to make the team.**
- **Other assets include the Blue Ribbon Pavilion and Fairgrounds**
- **We have an active Elks Lodge, Rotary, Women's Club, FFA, 4-H, two Senior Citizens groups, Art Club, and churches of various denominations.**
- **We have several live theatre productions each year – with Cutler Brothers Productions, Deer Lodge Community Theatre and Deer Lodge Players, Powell County High School Drama and Music departments and Missoula Children's Theatre.**
- **Rural, friendly, uncongested, safe living**
- **Great place to live.**
- **Ample work force**
- **Close to many educational institutions, both 4 year and 2 year. One of our biggest strengths is the effort put out by merchants on Main Street- Our Main Street is really getting to be a show piece- in summer we have baskets of flowers, benches etc. to welcome our tourists- Merchants have beautified their store fronts and kept the down town area immaculate.**

**We are lucky to have the Clark Fork River running through our town and we are fortunate to have the Flint Creek Range to gaze at on our western side.**

**We are fortunate to have the Old Prison museum and surrounding points of interest and we are fortunate to have the Grant-Kohrs Ranch as a national historic site.**

Location is the first asset. Deer Lodge is almost half way between Glacier Park and Yellowstone Park. Around an hour's drive from Butte, Missoula and Helena

It is right off I 90 with an exit on both ends of town.

A few good motels – with local owned and one National chain – Super 8

A few National chain eateries – Pizza Hut, 4-Bs, A & W (if it still exists this year) and a few local family style restaurants.

Two grocery stores one with a deli and one with a bakery

Several green houses for plants and vegetables

Hospital, clinic a few dentists and doctors including eye care

Massage therapists, hair & nail care and 2 fitness centers

Three gas stations, many churches, a great Ace hardware store, a building supply store, a wonderful quilters store, a couple antique stores, two drug stores, a furniture store, laundry mat, feed store for livestock and two campgrounds.

Post office with very friendly and helpful employees and nice post master

Grant-Kohrs National Park is a huge asset as is the Old Montana Prison Museums – each entity is staffed with creative people with interest in bringing visitors to this town.

Chamber of Commerce

Powell County seat with a beautiful, historic Court House

A wonderful library with a very helpful librarian

Big Sky Draft Horse Expo brings people from all over Montana and other states across the country to enjoy this show in September – and the new Montana Living History Academy – will be a great opportunity to live, learn and be active with the historical life and development of Montana. These tie in with the Grant-Kohrs Ranch and the Old Prison Museums.

Fairgrounds – having a fairground and the tri-county fair is an asset that needs to be expanded, improved and better maintained.

The Montana state Prison is an asset as far as employment but it can also be considered a problem as far as visitor attitude and comfort zones. The craft store is an asset.

Friendly people who create fun activities in town

Clark Fork River

Vista – one of the greatest assets. The mountains that surround us offer lots of outdoor activities and a great view.

Large cattle ranches for open land and income.

The Timber company is a big asset - it offers many jobs and local products and community support.

The new development at Rock Creek could well become an asset

Registrar's office – driver's licensing.

Forest Service building and employees – unfortunately we are losing this.

Central Park Center with the pool and basket ball court

City Park

One traffic light

Good Adult Ed program & County Extension office

Airport and Golf Course

**Location, scenic beauty, historic attributes, museums, Grant Kohrs Ranch,  
No traffic, no crowds, great theater, on I-90**

**Location on I-90, close to I-15, and between to national parks  
The museums, Grant Kohrs Ranch, and scenic beauty**

I believe it is our ability to work towards common goals ie. Rialto Theater etc.  
The community has always pulled together to make things work. Our community  
has always been very supportive of the schools and passed levies even when it has  
been a hardship tax wise. This community has made good use of its resources.

**What are Deer Lodge's strengths and assets:**

The strengths are found in our young people. They are also our greatest assets and the are  
leaving us for other states and Montana towns.

**DEER LODGE RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT  
LISTENING NOTES  
APRIL 24 – 25, 2006**

**CHALLENGES**

**Deer Lodge Challenges: Eighth Graders**

- We have a lot of drug problems and a lot of bars.
- We don't have enough to do.
- We have a lot of alcoholics.
- Drugs
- Long distances to travel
- Meth
- Kids running
- How to keep Deer Lodge chemical free
- You have to drive to Butte or Missoula if you need something
- Robberies
- Drugs
- We don't have a lot of sports to play
- We have a lot of drugs and alcohol
- Drugs and alcohol
- Nothing to do
- Troubled children
- Teen sex
- School lunch
- Crime
- Drugs
- Bullies
- Drugs and Alcohol
- There is honestly really nothing to do. I think this is some of the reason we have a drug problem.
- Not much money
- Not very much to do.
- Lots of crime for such a small town.
- Lots of drugs and sex
- Drugs
- Everybody knows what's going on with other people
- Nothing to do for the kids
- Have to drive places to buy things
- Small firehouse
- Small police station
- Drugs and alcohol
- We have to go to Butte or Missoula to get some of the more needed stuff.
- There are drugs and kids are getting into trouble.

- Drugs
- Rumors
- Not many things to do
- Not many clothing stores.
- Have to travel far to get something.
- Its economy doesn't provide good jobs and it is hard to get people to move here to fill a specific position.
- A lot of people do drugs like meth and alcohol and cigarettes
- Drugs are easy for kids to get a hold of
- There aren't many things to do for kids.
- Deer Lodge lacks a drug controlled environment.
- We have a lot of meth abuse because it is easy to obtain.
- Our schools have a lot of "drama".
- Meth
- Other drugs
- Town looks like "poo."
- Drugss
- Not enough sports
- Too much drama
- We have a big problem with drugs.
- A lot of kids do drugs in this town.
- A lot of kids drink.
- We don't have enough to do and that's why I think kids are doing drugs. That is my opinion. We need actual fun things to do, not what parents think are fun.
- Meth problems
- A lot of low paying jobs
- The streets are in bad condition
- Some cops
- Meth and Drugs
- Town doesn't look nice
- Too many bars
- It is so small we don't have much to do.
- Teen drinking
- Teen sex
- Troubled kids
- Lots of drugs
- Not a whole lot to do here so teens get involved in alcohol, drugs, etc.
- Need better fast food places.
- I don't always feel safe around town because a lot of people do drugs. A lot of the kids at my school smoke and drink. There are a lot of fights over things that aren't really important.
- Our prison is almost full.
- People litter the streets constantly.
- Nothing to do.
- Drugs, Alcohol

- Poverty in some families
- No recreation
- Not enough school activities
- Too small
- Some very rude people
- Not enough for kids to do
- Bad roads
- It is too small
- Not a lot of different jobs
- Drugs and alcohol
- Teen sex
- There is not enough entertainment.
- Teen pregnancies.
- You have to travel for many things.
- There tends to be somewhat of a drug problem and a high drop out rate.
- Drugs
- Underage drinking
- Teen pregnancy
- High school dropouts
- We have to travel for about an hour to get the things we need.
- Not a lot of activities to keep kids out of trouble.
- Housing
- Adequate jobs
- Meth
- Teen sex
- Not enough to do
- Drop outs
- Too much drama
- Rundown housing
- Poverty
- Not much to do
- Lots of drug use
- Not a lot to do
- Having to drive other places to get things
- Not good consequences for getting in trouble
- Vandalism in parks
- In ten years- Rock Creek program
- Access is easier to drugs and they are readily available – more than in other towns.

---

**Deer Lodge Challenges: Junior Class**

- Community apathy

- Lack of city and county commitment to growth
- No place for an industrial company to locate – need an industrial park
- Need economic incentives to attract good paying businesses
- Drugs and alcohol – problem with kids and adults
- Not much to do
- Because Deer Lodge is small, there are not a lot of things for kids to do that are not in after school sports. These kids find things to do such as drugs, and illegal things that will eventually get them into trouble.
- Many children are raised in terrible homes. This has become “okay” or “typical Deer Lodge”. Drugs and alcohol run rampant in both adults and children.
- There are not enough Christians – our challenges are making reborn Christians
- Silver State Post
- Lack of Warden supporters
- Not very good jobs and economy.
- Not many new people moving in
- Low graduation rate
- I think we have a high drinking rate for high school kids.
- I know that there are many people that do many other drugs.
- We need to do a lot of work to make this community a better place.
- The sawmill – it has had so many changes for the worst that people are quitting.
- Rock Creek Ranch – the changes will run prices up so we cannot afford them and the ranch will never give back to the community.
- I feel that what is lacking is our funding. Luckily we have the prison and the mill to keep people employed.
- Lack of activities for students (which results in drug/alcohol abuse)
- Rejection of new ideas or challenges
- Income is low
- High rates of high school drop outs, pregnancy, corruption, drugs and alcohol.
- Deer Lodge is going to become more populated and change will be forced upon the community. However, I believe the community will lose its togetherness and closeness with one another and there will be an increase in problems and a decrease in positive support groups and/or activities.
- Untrustworthy police force
- The town is full of drunks, thieves and drug addicts
- Leaders giving out the wrong ideas: example – city beautification project is a waste of money. It could have been used on our TERRIBLE roads and the tree roots will soon break up the sidewalks. When the sidewalks become crumbled the city will have to pay MORE money (which means more taxes) to have them replaced. GREAT LEADERS – BAD IDEAS. We need to be more resourceful.
- There was a problem a couple years back with skate boarding. The town should fix it.
- Meth and bad people
- I dislike it when people are disrespectful
- I hate it when people do meth and are killing our community.
- A big challenge for teens is staying in school. We have too many drop outs and teen pregnancies.

- The bloody 25mph speed limit on Main Street is one of the biggest problems along with the little creek/stream that runs through town. There's so much garbage in it that you could mutate into a blob by standing in it.
- The roads around town are bad.
- The biggest problem and challenge DL faces is the meth epidemic.
- Not enough jobs
- I don't think there should be a curfew – no other town has one.
- The speed limit should go up to 5 to 10 mph
- Not very many good fast food places to eat at.
- Deer Lodge doesn't have anything fun to do so a lot of high school kids just drink and do drugs.
- Lots of drop outs
- Problems with alcoholism, drugs, teen pregnancy, high school dropouts.
- Kids not even in high school are going to parties having sex, drinking, doing drugs, smoking and some of the parents don't even care...just as long as their son or daughter don't knock or get knockedup.
- DL is full of litter
- It is challenging to keep everyone working toward one goal.
- Don't have a place for teens to hang out
- We don't clean up after ourselves – trash in the streams and parks.
- Fairgrounds run poorly – we are losing business because of how people are running it. (i.e., gates are locked when they are to be open so classes are ruined)
- Not enough jobs.
- Lots of drop outs
- Too much drugs
- Too many parties unsupervised
- Same as every town: teen drinking and drugs. I hear more and more about how drunk kids got on the weekend and about what people in the community is using, dealing or sometimes doing both with drugs.
- We are limited to what we can and can't have: new stores or clubs.
- Hard to find a good job if you don't want to work at the mill or prison.
- Too many bars.
- Not enough things to prevent underage drinking or drug use.
- Three days out of the week are movies – but what about the other 4 days?
- Need stricter consequences for law violators.
- I am not going to lie to you – DL has no strengths or assets. We have too many bars, and so many places to gamble it is not funny. We have a bad problem with drugs and sex and drunk driving. I see no strengths.
- You have to drive around 90miles to just find something good and pure to do.
- Low wages, not much money circulating
- Not a lot of employment
- Drop out rate is high
- Teen pregnancy
- Drug abuse and alcohol abuse
- Not many shops

- The use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco is big and administrators don't do enough to enforce the no tolerance policy .
- Some teachers strive for excellence while others don't care.
- I believe the goals of the principal are wrong – they should be stopping the use of alcohol, drugs, instead of sending students to detention for an absence.
- DL seems to focus too much on the past problems or victories. We need to work at the present and what we can accomplish.
- Drug use, small town with little to do can get you in trouble; parts of town are bad.
- Drugs and underage drinking
- Not a lot for high school kids to do – programs for little kids and Jr. High – but not high school.
- Small, no jobs, nothing going on
- Kids have no fun club or place to go. I understand it is hard to provide that when certain people take advantage of such things but it is still a good idea.
- Not enough business; need a Mexican fast food store
- There are a lot of parties and underage and illegal events going on
- We don't have a strong sense of community like most small towns.
- Sometimes it seems like we have a caste system here – the social classes are so separate.
- Drugs, alcohol, teen pregnancy, drop out rate
- Nothing to do – very boring.

---

### **Deer Lodge Challenges: Jr. High Teachers**

- Employment – not a lot of choices
- Hard to find good paying jobs
- Benefits – if you work at the sawmill and you are sick – lose a day's pay.
- Housing – very poor housing for sale, not a lot of adequate housing.
- High teen pregnancy
- Lots of high risk behaviors from students
- Not enough alternative activities – especially goal directed activities (entrepreneurial, etc.)
- Drop out rate is 30 – 40%.
- City Rec – volunteering is tough – run a lot of basketball that was previously run by the schools.
- Can't finish the skateboard park.
- Not a lot of jobs for high school students
- Mentoring – so that our kids come back here.
- Activities are not supervised, for example, when going to the theater, or at the CPC.
- Kids not connected to the community in positive ways.

---

### **Deer Lodge Challenges: Powell County High School Teachers/Staff**

- economic revitalization to provide opportunities to keep students here
- ugliness of community when you come in from Butte.
- No welcome sign
- Abuse of children and adults, sexual and physical

- Finding good quality daycare
- Poverty, abuse
- Need parental support, teach them how to handle finances
- Verbal abuse issues
- Drug, alcohol abuse among teens, adults
- Need after school programs for high school age kids
- Kids lost who choose not to be athletes need activities for those
- Students who say their parents are using meth, more adults than student-usage
- Number of bars and casinos in communities
- no place for kids to go
- we have a youth center, but a police officer must be present
- 18 year olds being able to gamble

---

### **Deer Lodge Challenges: No Host Dinner**

- Need younger generation in our churches
- Meth, drugs, alcohol starting at young ages, escalating problem
- Economic issues
- Jobs, wages, hotel accommodations
- Economic development
- City needs to be cleaned up – old cars, old trailers that haven't been moved in years.
- Preserve great historical infrastructure
- Can't hold large events because we do not have enough lodging
- Also – want western style lodging
- Economics
- Both for adults and high school kids – not enough jobs
- Empty buildings make us seem incomplete
- Drugs and alcohol
- Places for kids to go – supervised – kids involved in operation of it
- Advertising – billboards push old prison or car museum – we have so much more!
- Have ordinances for clean up – but they are not enforced.
- Apathy – build more excitement around town
- Get the information from the Resource Team process out to the community – it is not a case of outsiders coming in, but rallying the community.
- Projects not getting done – a cause for disappointment and apathy

---

### **Deer Lodge Challenges: Hospital, Emergency Services, Law Enforcement**

- EMS lacks funds
- Funds limit what we can do
- Economic development, planning for growth, beautification

- Few carry the burden of the many – volunteers have limited time – same group of people do the same thing for every piece
  - Burnout
  - Don't see completion of tasks because people burn out along the way
  - Housing – need adequate space, took over a year to find a house suitable for my family
  - Large gap – between nice and run down.
  - People at the prison can't live here even though they work here.
  - Prison can be a negative when recruiting health professionals
  - Out migration for health care
  - Deer Lodge is a transition for most people – don't stay here for long
  - Lack of 12 step programs (not just AA)
  - Lack of behavioral support programs
- 

#### **Deer Lodge Challenges: Business, Financial Institutions, Chamber, Civic Groups**

- Can't work in Deer Lodge –
  - Good ideas have been brought to us but we don't carry through
  - We don't have a vision
  - Improved leadership is needed
  - Not capitalized as well as could be.
  - A lot of the community that wants Deer Lodge to stay just the way it is.
  - Entrances into town – help us see what needs to be cleaned up.
  - Retail businesses hurt by closeness to Helena, Butte and Missoula
  - Commercial properties are hurting –
  - Extreme lack of housing in the affordable arena
  - Rental market is non-existent
  - No money – our community doesn't generate money like others do
  - Ditto.
  - When 50% of houses need to be removed – it is tough. Have the cost of demolition.
  - Houses are overpriced because there is no choice.
  - When a business dies, it is not replaced.
  - Need more well paying jobs.
  - Apathy – can't see the good.
  - People do not like change – why are you improving your business is a question asked.
  - Export our educated children
- 

#### **Deer Lodge Challenges: Churches, Non-Profits, Foundations, Social Services**

- How do we get our young people to understand that “something to do” is up to their imagination and creative.
- Lack of employment
- Aging community – affordable housing for senior citizens

- Downtown is small – people shop out of town. And then we wonder why shops close...and then more shop out of town...vicious cycle.
- Many people commute to Deer Lodge to work.
- Finding our vision and focus – are we going to be a retirement community?, High tech? Blue collar? Bedroom community? Tourism?
- Very concerned about addiction to mediocrity. We are anti-excellence here.
- Tend to be suspicious of those who excel.
- Drop outs – over 40%
- Better instruction at home so that kids remain in school
- Want sensible growth – affordable growth for those of us that live here

---

### **Deer Lodge Challenges: Prison, Boot Camp, Industries**

- Sometimes we are so friendly we don't hold people accountable for their yards, junk vehicles, powers that be do not deal with those issues.
- Things for kids to do to keep them out of trouble with drugs and alcohol.
- Skatepark back on track
- Volunteers are burned out.
- Problems with drugs and alcohol here – hear more about it more and more.
- Some problems come with a small community – can't have some things because we are small.
- Lack of retail here – shop elsewhere
- Ditto – more things for kids to do, but also for our young adults. Sometimes we don't want new businesses here.
- General clean up – especially when coming in to town off the freeway.
- Housing – people don't work here because no housing. – Actually, quality of housing is bad.
- People complain that we bring in people from out of town to work – but actually 1/3 from here, 1/3 from Deer Lodge County and 1/3 from Butte Silver Bow county.
- Lack of moderate to low income housing.
- School system has not adapted to the way the community has changed. Serious problems now – drop out rate is incredibly high. Dropouts then become a problem for law enforcement and other agencies in town.
- We want to complain and not do anything.
- Our diversity is hurting us – old timers, new comers, wealthy and poor – can't come to agreement.
- Activities are shrinking for our kids – no longer have soccer, etc. Don't have jobs to support the families so we don't have parents to step up.
- Natural resources – Clark Fork pollution and soil pollution

---

### **Deer Lodge Challenges: City, County and Federal Government**

- Landlocked
- Few building sites
- Inventory of houses – need upgrades and improvement

- Some of our strengths are our challenges – need to balance our development potential and still maintain our beauty.
  - Sidewalks are in bad shape
  - Blight – address the eyesores
  - Crossing Main Street – wide to get across for pedestrians.
  - Pride can be turned into arrogance- we don't have to do anything
  - Parents do not provide good model for our kids – say don't drink – then are abusing alcohol.
  - Many divorced parents – kids caught in limbo at times living in two places.
  - Hard town to break into.
  - High rate of Hepatitis C and mis use of prescription drugs
  - When we get a good law enforcement officer – often scooped up by other cities.
  - Limited by taxable value – money just doesn't come in!
- 

### **Deer Lodge Challenges: Senior Citizens**

- Paying property taxes
  - Not becoming another California
  - Potholes
  - Need industry
  - Better wages
  - Keep children here
  - People from out of state make it so we can't afford to live here
  - Weeds are a fire hazard
  - Boats, horse trailers, trailers parking on streets; get them off
  - Empty stores and buildings
  - Give kids what they reasonably want not what we want for them, and then get them involved
- 

### **Deer Lodge Challenges: Ag, Farming, Ranching**

- Fear that big money will change the landscape and social/cultural mores of the community. Must work hard to balance it all.
- Hard to stay in business when someone offers you \$10,000 for an acre.
- Older people are retiring and young people don't want to work hard in ag for so little money.
- Fuel costs - going to increase production costs. May push some ranches/farmers over the edge.
- Land being bought up by the rich – and they are not using it for cattle or production.
- Time will come when ranching as we know it will no longer exist. Something to plan for.
- Harder for young people to get into Ag.....
- Plan for change....
- When all of our land is gone to development, where will our food come from?
- Large factory farms are sweeping thru Europe – is that the quality of food we want?
- Small acreage land ownership – 5 to 10 acreage – expect services that are not available.

- Newspaper doesn't cover ag issues.
- 

### **Deer Lodge Challenges: Employees in general: Sawmill, Contractors, Construction, Retail, Office Workers, Self-employed**

- Housing
  - Industry base
  - Bad vibes from the prison
  - Lack of affordable housing
  - Need to do a clean up more than twice per year
  - Need another access when train blocks the road – especially when there is an emergency
  - Need more industry here
  - Nothing for the kids to do – youth center is not open much
  - Skate park – still struggling to get that opened
  - Volunteers and funding are a problem
  - People go outside of Deer Lodge to shop
  - Resistance to competition from some of the businesses
  - Policy is not consistently administered in the community. i.e. building permits, unused vehicles sitting, etc.
  - Need a market – probably on the internet.
  - Industrial accident is complete out of line. Eats up profit for businesses.
  - Drugs are a problem with our work force.
  - Hard to find people who really want to work – sawmill is hard physical labor.
  - On the interstate and between two college towns, plus the prison, may assist our drug abuse.
  - Don't have a trained workforce to meet the new job skills.
- 

### **Deer Lodge Challenges: Misc. and Handwritten Comments**

- I feel that law enforcement officers need more training
- We need more businesses on Main Street
- We need more activities for our youth – skate park, dirt bike tracks, organized fishing trips, hikes to Mount Powell
- Our “city Fathers” are old and are afraid of growth (growth in the business community.)
- We need more growth so our young adults can stay and make a decent living.
- .....[name deleted] ....to better our schools and provide our future (our children) with the needed materials and equipment.
- Bus service out of Deer Lodge stinks. Greyhound by-passes Deer Lodge going east and west but we have to go to Butte to catch the bus.
- The Senior bus stops at 4:00pm even though the courthouse is open until 5:00pm. Often people get stranded at the clinic and need to call someone to come and get them.

- We need affordable senior housing – not necessarily low income and not nursing home or Beyond Home. Often older people want to sell their big house and move into a smaller home, but there are no affordable places without stairs.
- What can be done about illegal drug use in the community?
- People traveling to large communities for shopping, for more choice and better bargains
- Resistance to change on the part of many citizens.
- Difficulty in recruiting music teachers (statewide problem)
- Challenge: nurturing pride in community's outlook and physical appearance
- Recognize our potential and realize we are not in the 1950's.
- The community has to be cleaned up. Leadership needs to come from the City Council, County Commissioners and Law Enforcement.
- Taxes may have to be raised to pay for improvements, this is OK – no time to be timid.
- The apathy - It trickles through every facet of the community. I don't care if it's businesses or churches. We just don't feel we can do anything. It's always been that way.
- The town has a tired, dingy appearance. As pointed out at the Governor's Conference on tourism, the entrances to a town invite people to come in off the Interstate. Deer Lodge does not have inviting entrances.
- Subdivision development pressures - it is difficult for landowners to turn down huge prices per acre.
- Apathy among the majority of area residents. There are many people who have never been to the museum complex, Grant-Kohrs Ranch, don't attend any of the events (many of which are free or low cost), or participate in anything. Yet they are the people who say, There's nothing to do in Dead Lodge, or criticize the efforts of those who are working on projects. There is a core group of people who for many years have worked to make the town better, but they are becoming discouraged and burned out.
- Business people who don't want any competition or any changes
- Lack of money is a challenge for families and local government entities
- In past years the town lost two major employers. The Cominco American Inc. mine and the Milwaukee railroad shops each employed more than 150 people. The loss of these businesses occurred over a period of years, but both caused a major population decreases as people went elsewhere for work. These jobs were high salary and contributed greatly to the local economy. The last company – Cominco American Inc. – was the largest taxpayer in the county up until 1993. The closure caused a huge economic impact on county and school budgets.
- There are few good paying jobs available
- Gambling and alcohol addiction of adults is affecting many families
- Drugs and alcohol are readily available to young people
- Young people say there is nothing to do
- Lack of cooperation between fair board and Blue Ribbon board
- An unfriendly, uncooperative fairground caretaker
- Attracting internet based businesses
- 40% poverty rate
- Many retirees – not a problem but no children in system
- Butte became the “can do” city, and they have. Deer Lodge has become the “We can't do that!” city and we have not. How about a new slogan like “The Yes We Can” city or “Deer Lodge—

Let's Roll". Have the people of Powell County and Deer Lodge come up with the perfect slogan for our "We've got a new attitude!" when we get one.

- Rec Center – no one is allowed to use it unless the one night a month dance and organized carnival activities. If Rec Center is to help kids it must be available. Consider change in director to a less controlling management style.
- Jobs, wages, hotel accommodations, super fund issues
- Law enforcement – no more, just better and tougher.
- Apathy – the community is dying due to a lack of enthusiasm and participation. Partly I believe due to the negative reputation we now have from incidents the last few years....but honestly it began prior to that. We need to get excited and get some pride back.
- In betweens – have a population that is too young for bars, too old for high school.
- Limited infrastructure – we are in-between Missoula, Butte and Helena and are on the edge of what they have. There has been discussion about a Wi-Fi system in Deer Lodge. I do not think it would be beneficial. In my opinion we need to have a fiber-optic system throughout the business district which would provide high speed voice, data and video capabilities. A fiber system would have to be connected to the outside world through Qwest (I assume they have the facilities and capacity) or others. The fiber system would not only benefit the existing businesses, especially the banks, medical facilities, mill, schools and prison, but would be an asset that could be used to draw others into Deer Lodge. The fiber would allow people and companies to do business from Deer Lodge as if they were in a high population area with all of the amenities.
- Nothing for our school age children to do except wander the streets. We need to have a facility such as a skate park, entertainment center, etc. for the kids. It should not be hid in the back of JC Park but visible.

The state prison offers many jobs but a lot of those are out of county workers so the local economy does not benefit totally. Still at least we have jobs.

The stigma of a prison may deter visitors from coming into the area

The school system needs to be updated – I believe we should teach self esteem and teach kids for their abilities and strengths and better prepare them for life

Drugs are becoming a problem in the schools and the bully syndrome is still prevalent.

Chamber of Commerce is under-staffed and under-paid

We need more support and funding for events, and improvements at the fairgrounds. The bleachers are rickety and the horse barn is antiquated

We could use an event planner/promoter to bring in corporate money or grants to help promote the activities

The Grant-Kohrs National Park is under funded. This is an awesome place but there are too few people who know about it or visit it. It is a treasure!

If you weren't born here – you are an outsider attitude – it makes it hard for new comers to make friends and fit in. A few of the ranchers are very open but many local business people fight any changes or new businesses. I tell them they should be glad new people are moving in otherwise they kids will be marrying their cousins....

Water pollution from the mining is a problem and the blowing toxins in the air from Anaconda and Opportunity areas are a problem. I understand the Bonner area wants to move their toxic dredges to our area – this is stupid – move the toxins up stream so they can filter back down.

We could use a few better choices for restaurants and a 4 star would be great.

The Deer Lodge Hotel is wasted space – and would be nice to restore it somehow

Lack of Kid's activities! We could us a Skate-board park! We have many kids on the streets looking for places to practice their skills, which creates a dangerous situation exposing them to traffic. We even had plans to build a skate park at the city park and had donations from town businesses. The kids sold raffle tickets to earn money but narrow minded officials squash it under flimsy excuses. We have team sports at the park but nothing for individual skaters. A nice park would make it safer for kids and give them a place to go and meet other kids. A better park would bring in more visitors and open the possibility for skate board and inline roller events. There is not much for the town kids to do. The ranch kids have chores, horses and 4H projects but the city kids are stuck in town with too few activities.

Earning a living is a huge challenge. New Clean air industries have been discouraged for one reason or the other. The economy in Montana is not good but it is terrible here in the Deer Lodge valley. Kids leave after high school and have little reason to return.

Some of our roads need repair and a few town building could use some restoration.

I really don't see the casinos as an asset or problem. That money does not filter into the community development but it may help the tax base. I don't have an opinion about these.

**Problems could be our streets which are pocked with holes. The attempt to make a park just south of town is an embarrassment as it is dirty, fences are falling down. It is not a place out of towners would care to spend any time- no picnic tables, ghastly bathroom facilities, the river banks are slimy and not conducive to walking.**

**Another eye sore is the myriad of parked and/or abandoned cars along all our streets. The barking dog situation is out of control- once there was a rule about 2 dogs in a yard, now we see even as many as 4! The noise factor alone would deter anyone from staying in the city of Deer Lodge.**

**The unsightly mess as one drives in from I-90 truck stop, past the Super 8 is another embarrassment. That open land is just a catch all for junk.**

**Financial difficulties for the people, city, county and other agencies are a problem.**

**Need a good recreation director to set up programs for the city – children to adults; need age-appropriate activities and do not bunch younger kids with older kids, need a soccer program, art, painting, or other cultural arts for all ages, adults should have opportunity to participate in activities – keeps people healthy, happy, and more fulfilled.**

**CPC Center should be open everyday, swimming should be offered during the afternoons all summer long including Sundays – adds to family time and gives kids something healthy to do; gymnasium should be open all summer long. Programs that are age appropriate should be set up.**

**A new city recreation facility would be ideal with great programming and opportunities for everyone.**

**Need a place for kids and adults to bicycle, roller blade, and skate board.**

#### **--- What are Deer Lodge's problems and challenges?**

**Financial difficulties with the city and county, low paying jobs, lack of cohesion with the people, stores are closed early and on Sundays even though this is a tourist area. Need more recreation. Workers in the stores need to push the attractions to visitors.**

As with all small towns the economic base is small. It is difficult to provide new jobs to bring people to our community. I believe the Rock Creek development will be a step in the right direction. It will provide some new jobs, but will also provide and increase in the tax base. We need to realize that we must promote what we have to sell. This is a beautiful valley and people will come here to live.

There are some here who are holding the town and its growth back. They reside on Main Street and guard their territory well. ( Don't tell me this isn't true I heard it come right out of the mouth of two down town business men.) We need to grow and the only way we are going to grow is to encourage new businesses to invest in Deer Lodge. We need young families not retired couples and singles. I'm a retired single, so don't think I have something against retired people. I don't! We can contribute too and we have but growth comes from youth.

**DEER LODGE RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT  
LISTENING NOTES  
APRIL 24 – 25, 2006**

**PROJECTS**

**Deer Lodge Projects: Eighth Graders**

- More sports
- Less bars
- Less drugs
- The 18 year old driving rule will cause problems in the future.
- After school projects for older kids
- Continue to keep the community involved
- We need a lake or good camping spots that are not on private property
- In the next ten years I won't be here.
- The new 18 year old driving rule.
- More sports and games
- Hang out places for older or younger kids
- 20 years – Down in dumps, but our community is booming with people; Don't care, I'll be out of here in 5 years.
- Build a better park
- More sports
- More stores or shops
- Make Deer Lodge bigger some how
- I see a problem with our driving rule, I mean this whole 18 year old deal. It is not helping anyone.
- A place for teens to be able to hangout and not get in trouble
- More jobs.
- Skatepark
- Mall
- Skatepark
- WalMart
- More jobs
- More firefighters
- More policeman
- After school programs for older kids and a teen center
- I hope it gets bigger with malls.
- More things to do.
- I will be gone in five years so, oh well.
- Have a carnival during fair.
- If you live outside of town but still work there you should be able to vote for things that have to do with it.
- Keep the streets clean

- **Help the community get new jobs.**
- **I hope we will get a skateboarding park**
- **In a few years I think Deer Lodge will be doing good overall. We will probably just keep trying to improve until we fully succeed.**
- **I would like to see a soccer program soon.**
- **A skatepark**
- **Better after school programs**
- **More stuff at parks**
- **Paintball park**
- **More drug programs would be good.**
- **I want it to stay the same just to see how far it would go.**
- **Fix up the fair grounds**
- **Repair the streets**
- **More events**
- **Carnivals**
- **Skatepark**
- **More equipment at parks**
- **Paintball park**
- **Hockey**
- **All the bridges and new streets**
- **In 20 years I think our community will have grown and there won't be as much violence.**
- **In 20 years I will be starting a career.**
- **To grow in business and have a lot more to do around town.**
- **Have less bars.**
- **In the next few years or so I hope to see groups formed to clean the litter and plant flowers around the dead looking places.**
- **And in the next few years I hope to see people not just talking about the things that need to be done but actually DO those things.**
- **I would also like to see a debate team in the high school because I think that debates are a healthy way for kids to express their feelings toward a specific topic.**
- **I would also like to see students holding fundraisers for new Junior High Sports Uniforms.**
- **More stuff to do like paintball course, waterpark, arcade, skatepark, places to go to hang out.**
- **More recreation such as a rec station**
- **More activities at the park, bigger park, maybe a small paintball area.**
- **To be an actual city and not a town**
- **New buildings and more companies**
- **I HOPE THERE WILL BE A SKI AREA!!!!!!!!!!**
- **I hope the schools will have less dropouts.**
- **It would be nice for there to be more activities for adults and children.**
- **More after school activities available.**
- **Better organized activities for kids**
- **Making the movie theater nicer**
- **Lifelines**

- I don't see much happening
- A better community center with more recreation opportunities
- A Habitat for Humanity project or one to clean up the housing.
- Get more activities and jobs
- Lots of history here
- Good sports and after school systems
- Great movie theater
- Two community parks
- Good school system
- Arrowstone Park
- Fixing the parks more
- More community events
- Community clean up days to clean up parks and stuff
- Getting teen volunteers at PAWHS

**Meeting with the eighth graders face to face:**

- When asked who would like a skate park – only 2 raised their hands; when asked about a paintball course/facility – many hands were raised.
- Arcade
- Ski area
- Community garden – clubs plant things, given to local charity, some things sold and give money to charity, food avail.
- Paint ball, more popular than skateboard park
- Shooting range
- Motor cross track
- Soccer program
- Swim tea, AAU program outside of school
- Go cart track
- Miniature golf
- Rock climbing walls
- Boxing
- Recreation station, batting cages, go-carts
- After-school programs for older kids 7<sup>th</sup> grade and up
- lifelines for little kids to help with their homework
- ASSP program
- Fitness center where you don't have to be 18
- Better place to play basketball courts in bad shape
- School gym open longer hours during school year
- Gym open all summer
- Parks & recreation geared toward older kids
- 4-h, church youth activities,
- rodeo team
- Get coaches to volunteer

---

## Deer Lodge Projects: Junior Class

- **Industrial park**
- **Economic development director**
- **Unification of city/county governments**
- **I don't think Deer Lodge will grow much over the next few years. We may have a few new stores and houses, but that's about it until the guy who bought Rock Creek Cattle gets everything up and running.**
- **Build things that will keep kids occupied.**
- **I want to see drug clean up, which is being attempted.**
- **Rebuild the houses for the poor**
- **Raise money for cancer patients**
- **Paintball course**
- **Better local paper**
- **Better jobs**
- **More people**
- **Get a better name in some sports**
- **Clear our name from the lawsuits**
- **All I can say is if all people did their own part it would be a much easier place to live.**
- **2 – 10 years – Deer Lodge will be fine. In about 20 years, Deer Lodge will be a National Park if some people get their way.**
- **I think we should do something with the vacant buildings downtown. We should tear them down or put them to use.**
- **Put something in like a Quiznos or a Subway here.**
- **I hope some day Deer Lodge will help fix things for once instead of just creating more of a problem. Solve the issues at hand before taking on and creating new tasks.**
- **Have a skate park**
- **Swim team at the CPC**
- **More fun things for kids and teenagers before we start wrecking Deer Lodge for fun**
- **Meth Watch**
- **Things for high schooler's and others to do and have fun.**
- **DL should go back to being a mining town. NOT!**
- **I think it will probably stay the same unless the Rapture happens between now and 20 years.**
- **A soccer program again would be nice.**
- **Hopefully, more jobs and houses, better paying jobs.**
- **Hopefully the cops will stop following certain people and stop driving by certain houses just because they don't like the people.**
- **Things for high schooler's to do.**
- **2 years – a little bit bigger, but little change; 5 years – growing maybe a new store here and there; 10 years – drop in problems such as drugs, drop outs, etc.; 20 years – a good reputable town.**

- I would like to see a bike and roller rink within the next five years.
- It would be nice to see more family oriented activities.
- I think DL needs to adopt the K.A.C.K. program that cleans up Cottonwood Creek once per year.
- I think DL will be a crappy place to live unless a lot of things change: schools, the way the town is being run.
- In all honesty, I don't think that any new programs will be started. It is the same as it was when my mom was in high school and I don't see it changing in the future.
- New structures for new entertainment.
- More to keep teens occupied.
- Project to fund youth – they are the future.
- I think the whole Rock Creek thing is going to be the only good thing to happen in this town. The only down side is you will have to be rich to enjoy it.
- I would like to see the bars shut down.
- More work places
- Better school place with less use of drugs and alcohol
- Decrease in drop out rate
- The Rock Creek project will bring more commerce but with growth comes more vice. And Deer Lodge can barely deal with its crime and drug use as it is.
- In 2, 5, 10 or 20 years Deer Lodge will be the same. It seems like people will continue to live like in the past. However, there is chance that with more people coming in their views won't things will be present time.
- Counseling for drug use
- More activities for the youn'un's...to stop the meth use.
- More sports, more jobs.
- I don't really envision anything happening in this town. It will always be a (expletive deleted) little farming community.
- WalMart
- Batting cages
- Skatepark, roller staking, soccer, batting cages, go karts, an arcade
- Nothing – in five years Deer Lodge will be a ghost town.
- Construct a WalMart or Kmart
- Drugs and alcohol clean up
- Complete turn around for Deer Lodge
- It will get smaller and only stay afloat by the prison and the mill.

---

#### Deer Lodge Projects: Jr. High Teachers

- Skateboard park – have ramps in storage

- **Mentoring – so that our kids can grow up here and return once they have their complete education**
  - **More volunteers to keep the rec program running**
  - **Recreation center – that has batting cages, arts and crafts, multiple activities**
  - **Tennis courts need new nets**
  - **Folf – but no one is organized to put it into place**
  - **Jobs – without jobs won't have people will in got volunteer**
  - **Rails to trails – nature trail – is in process.**
  - **Grant Kohrs –**
  - **Save Trask Hall – do have grant materials and will put together ppt to get things started.**
  - **Sustain things that people want to sustain**
  - **City Rec- find more money to hire High School kids as in the past.**
  - **Continuation of activities in summer.**
  - **20% not involved in sports – need to capture their interest in something**
  - **Life lines has faded – need sustainability**
  - **Youth coalition – new – to attempt to address the drugs, meth, problems.**
- 

#### **Deer Lodge Projects: Powell County High School Teachers/Staff**

- **skatepark**
- **taking measures to be proactive about drug alcohol abuse among teens**
- **economic development -- keeping our kids here**
- **bringing people in because it's an economically viable community**
- **set up master plan with zoning regs**
- **master plan established for subdivision**
- **looking at homes to buy that are condemnable**
- **zoning laws in city, residential, light commercial**
- **rental property in very bad shape**
- **hard to find a nice affordable place, clean and nice.**
- **Consistency with zoning laws of people who are building**
- **Some have to go through hoops, some don't**
- **Consistency between city, donut and county**
- **Worried that groceries and taxes going up from Rock Creek**
- **Not hiring enough from the community**
- **Skate board park**
- **Youth center**
- **Parenting classes**
- **Affordable parenting classes**
- **4-H is huge, rodeo, softball is a positive**
  
- **turn the deer lodge hotel into a viable business like a senior center**
- **deer lodge is a great place to raise your family, want to see kids stay or comeback**
- **job-base that pays a livable wage**
- **the elk's gathering place**

- **first-time home buyers can't get loans for the houses around here. Houses are not up to code, need a lot of work.**
- 

#### **Deer Lodge Projects: No Host Community Dinner**

- **New building for the Elks**
  - **Work closer with Grant Kohrs – even more!**
  - **Develop economic growth policy for the area**
  - **Renovate parts of downtown**
  - **Grow existing businesses**
  - **Activities for kids**
  - **Build indoor ice drink**
  - **Restore, renovate historic architecture downtown**
  - **Deer Lodge Hotel restored – true western experience**
  - **Place for kids to hang out**
  - **Tournament – annual basketball tournament – PCP – can't charge people to come in?**
  - **Better signage in addition to old prison i.e., Toy Museum, etc.; improved advertising**
  - **Enforce clean up ordinance that is on the books**
  - **Anti-apathy campaign**
  - **More volunteers – need younger people to contribute**
  - **Look at affordable housing project – new people need places to live**
  - **Suitable housing is also an issue – some is available but not quality**
  - **Master growth plan**
  - **Member based economic development organization**
  - **Work together as a community – not let it all fall on the business owners shoulders**
  - **Gold West Country – use that asset more.**
  - **Communication – a newspaper that publishes and pushes things in this community.**
  - **Ditto- Deer Lodge Hotel restored.**
  - **Drug and Alcohol issue addressed – attempting to form coalitions....new one formed in Deer Lodge.**
  - **Meth Watch community.**
  - **Identity crisis – do we want economic development? Come to consensus and develop a “hook” to draw people in.**
  - **Create a compelling reason for people to stop here. Create a theme and things will fall into place.**
  - **Assisted living, elder care homes – especially for Alzheimer patients. Not a nursing home – or extended care, but Alzheimer's care.**
  - **Road repair badly needed**
  - **Write own press releases for the paper – contact newspaper owners and educate them as to what is needed.**
  - **Complete walking trail through town.**
  - **A book about how to move here and fit in “How to move in to a small town.”**
  - **Start a Welcome Wagon again.**
-

**Deer Lodge Projects: Hospital, Emergency Services, Law Enforcement**

- More affordable housing market to take care of those that want to live here
  - A clean Main Street
  - Removal or restoration of the Deer Lodge hotel - it is a pigeon sanctuary
  - Property across from the A & W become viable
  - Elks attain their goal – fill that empty lot
  - Instilment of pride turned into action
  - Energy = Progress = Success = more Energy Energize the base! The web of a thousand spiders can stop an elephant.
  - Baseball fields maintained
  - United purpose – on an equal playing field
  - More for the kids to do
  - Economic development so kids can return
  - Skateboard park
- 

**Deer Lodge Projects: Business, Financial Institutions, Chamber, Civic Groups**

- Get people to stay longer when they do come here – so much to do.
  - The prison is a great asset but it is also a challenge. Housing survey from prison employees showed the majority is not interested in living here.
  - Build houses!
  - Strengthen medical corridor to improve our economy
  - Whole blocks should be demolished and new housing put in place.
  - 40 unite housing development with USDA/RD help
  - More indoor/outdoor activities for our youth and families
  - Ditto
  - Retain our kids –
  - If become retirement community – have to have strong medical facility. We do have a good one now.
  - Attitude change: This is a problem but.....(and state the positive that can come about.)
  - Fair grounds – need new grandstand, better horse facilities
  - Get an event planner/promoter for the fair – someone to find sponsors to assist with funding
  - Bring in outside money – and then send them on their way again
  - Grant Kohr ranch is a treasure – as is the prison museum
  - Promote better what we have
- 

**Deer Lodge Projects: Churches, Non-Profits, Foundations, Social Services**

- New community resource book - current one is very outdated. So many resources that people are not aware of.
- Low income housing need addressed

- People become informed as to the addictions coalition
- Find our identity and go with it – make it a theme throughout the town.
- Aggressive economic development to build a better economic base.
- Stop crying about what other towns are doing and do it ourselves.
- Provide incentives for whatever is needed within the community.
- Montana Academy of Living History – make Deer Lodge the signature place for that kind of hands-on tourist activity. From ranchers to horses, logging, etc. Known as THE place for hands-on historical learning. Dutch oven cooks, rebuild wagons, quilting, arts, etc. September- event already scheduled.
- We have a teen community center, but not manned very often. Can we open it for longer hours and have more things available for the kids to do.
- Not a lot for young mothers to do here – would like a softball league for young adults.
- Repair roads.
- Join the Art Club.
- Begin the Welcome Wagon again.
- Art Club – want to teach art to troubled kids – can't do it right now because don't have funding.
- Bring in artists again – to give lessons two or three times per year.
- Youth coming this summer to help clean up yards for elderly and disabled.
- New to You Store – with Woman's Club – need volunteers
- Instill pride for living in Deer Lodge.

---

#### **Deer Lodge Projects: Prison, Boot Camp, Industries**

- Clean up the town
- Ditto
- Housing –
- Must support local retail – a mind set more than anything else
- Make the commitment to develop housing
- The prison is bigger than a lot of towns in the state – we are a good neighbor for Deer Lodge; need expansion, need housing. Does the community want this growth?
- Schools must adapt to the changing community – reduce drop outs with alternative school or some other format.
- Good jobs that allow a middle class income so that people aren't buried by working two jobs.
- Housing – lose employers because tired of living in a hotel.
- Working hard to change perception of the prison, but the community has to join us in this effort.
- Promote Deer Lodge as a prison town – place pride in it.
- Town needs to reach out to employees at the prison and invite to activities, invite to go to the doctor here, etc.
- Work together to recognize the prison system is not what it used to be – we are dairy producers, makers of furniture – very training oriented. Includes job skills and education now.

- **Mandatory for all legislators to tour the prison.**
  - **Educate the community to all that the prison does, products it produces. – Prison needs to sell itself more.**
- 

#### **Deer Lodge Projects: City, County and Federal Government**

- **Put out SIDS**
- **Buildable lots – annex areas if necessary**
- **Potholes repaired – improved roads**
- **Sewer and water lines in much need of replacement – take care of this infrastructure before work on streets**
- **Address blight- enforce ordinance on the books**
- **Junk Vehicles – state provides some money to remove junk vehicles but when the money is gone, it is gone. It is always spent fairly quickly.**
- **Welcome Wagon – used as a training as well as a welcome – to tell about Deer Lodge.**
- **Websites – be the best they can be to get people here.**
- **Deer Lodge needs to update its growth plan to preserve what we have and allow for sensible growth. Funding is available for this type of project.**
- **Use our pride to clean up the town.**
- **Make sure our youth are okay.**
- **Drop out program and vo-ed program is critical. Huge dropout rate in spite of our school's best effort. Drop-outs do have things to offer – but we have nothing to offer them.**
- **Big Brothers, Big Sister's program here....may need to go under Butte's umbrella. These kids are our future and they need some help.**
- **Skatepark?**
- **Kids Helping Kids – use this model.**
- **Life Line program – great concept – latchkey program, summer rec, needs funding. (21<sup>st</sup> Century Grant)**
- **Bridges are going to be replaced.**
- **More officers – need to pay them substantially more – and train them better. May need special levy for costs.**
- **City and County meet three times per year to discuss joint problems. – Or may communicate more as problems demand.**

#### **Deer Lodge Projects: Senior Citizens**

- **Wants to be able to keep her home**
- **Outdoor pool**
- **Assisted living homes**
- **Rooms with a dining area in the center**
- **Improve senior bus, time-wise; run it more efficiently**
- **Emphasize tourism so more people come here**
- **More good paying jobs**

- Take pride in homes and clean them up without paying taxes
- Pen Convention Center needs better parking
- Powell County bus, but does not go out of Deer Lodge
- Need a program where waterlines and sewers are in proper places, need planning in city offices to find those
- Enlarge senior center
- Enforce ordinance on books for junk vehicles and blight
- Get the kids a youth center, a place to go after school
- Take off blinders regarding drugs
- Senior citizens open all day to work on crafts, projects, visit
- Medical alert program
- Greyhound bus transportation
- Improve on store fronts
- Attract renters to our Main Street buildings

---

**Deer Lodge Projects: Ag, Farming, Ranching**

- Value added business started here that will add value to the products that are grown/raised here.
- Keep educating on Agriculture in our schools – thru 4-H, FFA, Grant Kohrs Ranch, etc, so our youth retain and remember their roots.
- Provide cultural experiences – if someone is haying that day, have people pay to observe it.
- Programs that enable young farmers to get started – buying from those farmers wanting to retire
- Good soil left for production – some programs do allow for development but leave the good soil.

---

**Deer Lodge Projects: Employees in general: Sawmill, Contractors, Construction, Retail, Office Workers, Self-employed**

- Enforce the laws that are on the books – especially regarding junk vehicles, building permits, etc. City may need legal representation for liability purposes.
- Gasohol – ethanol fuel
- More places for kids to go and do things
- Experiment to see if Catalina will grow
- Wind generation – will it work here?
- Access road for Garrison people that would make our community safer.
- Economic growth – which would bring population growth.
- Limited sprawl
- Do the right education so that we have a prepared workforce.

---

**Deer Lodge Projects: Misc. and/or Handwritten comments**

- **Growth in business**
- **Growth in activities for our children**
- **Growth in positive thoughts for our community to better itself – we are stagnant.**
- **I hope that the summer programs will expand! Our baseball seasons for our younger children starts when it is still snowing and ends in July.**
- **The CPC center should be open to our children year round – 7 days a week.**
- **The old college gym could be used for basketball/volley ball all year round for children under 13 years old.**
- **Senior bus service continue until 5:00pm so that people are not stranded at the clinic or courthouse.**
- **Affordable senior housing**
- **I would love to see this community grow, to see Main Street commercial buildings occupied.**
- **Expand Powell County's Senior Citizen's services in the community – add on to the present building or perhaps have a new one with more space for all day activities; perhaps a kind of adult day care center, with a paid activity director.**
- **An outdoor swimming pool facility would be great – also a summer or year round community band, and a community choral group.**
- **Sorry to say, I don't see much change for the better in this community.**
- **We need to work hard on the appearance. You drive through Main and it looks like Sanford and Son. That includes homes and stores.**
- **Hire a part time promoter who can devote time totally to Deer Lodge, from tourism to business. Look at what Philipsburg has done. Quit bickering and join hands. Work together. They somehow joined hand and did something. They promoted their community.**
- **We have two speeds when it comes to changes. Slow and reverse.**
- **Planned change that will maintain the appearance of the Valley and its natural beauty without the pox of postage stamp subdivisions all over it. Limit development sprawl because once land is covered with houses and pavement it is not replaceable.**
- **Create inviting entrances at both ends of town – starting at the Interstate exits – not waiting until you get to the city limits.**
- **Clean up the town – encourage people to take pride in the appearance of their individual properties as well as in the general appearance of the town.**
- **Enforce city and county ordinances against junk and junk vehicles**
- **Market the natural beauty and outdoor activities available in the area – according to tourism reports, people come to Montana for the wide open spaces and majestic vistas**
- **Market the historical and cultural assets of the community – people want to have interactive experiences while on vacation.**
- **Introduce Community Supported Agriculture programs that will create a bond between urban and rural families, while providing locally grown products to local households, helping the agricultural community survive and protect productive land from development. These programs could be primarily livestock oriented, but it is possible that potatoes for market rather than seed, and possibly some vegetables and/or fruits that will tolerate cold weather could be produced as well. (The valley at one time was the largest seed potato producing area in the state)**

- Encourage producers to experiment with alternative crops with high revenues
- Continue to encourage good conservation practices among farmers and ranchers.
- Encourage development of Montana Made products and/or a Value Added industry here.
- Determine which lands are the most productive for tillable agriculture. Develop a program to preserve them as agricultural lands by giving the landowners some incentives to do so.
- Develop a program for young people who want to be farmers/ranchers so they can afford to purchase current farms and ranches when present owners retire thus maintaining an agricultural base in the community. These farms and ranches would not be developed.
- Attract at least one or two clean industries that pay good salaries and provide jobs for local residents including young people graduating from high school. Ideally these would be high-tech jobs and/or industries that utilize local raw materials.
- Help current businesses to be successful – Main St. businesses need to let people know what they have to sell so people will shop at home first before going out-of-town
- Attract a small department store with clothes, shoes and office supplies.
- Either tear down the old hotel (allegedly the foundation is unstable) or restore it
- For subdivisions that are approved, encourage PUD planning to allow for the maximum amount of open space in one piece. Some in Idaho are built on a cul-de-sac with open areas fanning out beyond the buildings. Encourage and enforce strict covenants to prohibit messy areas.
- Create affordable retirement housing – a cottage community with small lawns and flowers - with maintenance and lawn work available, and/or a condo facility both within easy access of downtown
- Attract tournaments and competitions – utilizing the local gyms, golf course, and swimming pool.
- Attract more agriculture and horse events to use the Blue Ribbon Pavilion and fairgrounds
- Market the area as ideal for small corporate conferences/workshops - utilizing the Pen Convention Center and St. Mary's Hall
- To be successful at this, we need more clean, well-maintained motel rooms.
- Somehow get local residents to see the potential of the town, and be enthusiastic about making Deer Lodge the best small town in America.
- Sidewalks in all residential districts
- Support local businesses
- Keep surrounding area same in terms of open country (support ranches)
- I would like to see renovation of the Old Hotel
- Develop economic growth policy
- Renovate certain areas of downtown
- Grow existing businesses
- Bring in new capital.
- Decent housing – rentals
- More participation by more citizens. We need a kick-start in “positive” ..this is the time!
- Shift reliance on 1 or 2 industries (mill and prison). We need to have more diversification (not service jobs), that does not mean large employers but a number of employers that employ a small number of skilled people.
- The kids to have a business downtown, supervised by adults, a place for kids to hang out. Snacks, coffee, dinner could be served, not in competition with anything else. Open in

evenings and weekends. If the kids have ownership, it boosts their self-esteem, they learn a lot, marketing accounting, food services, management. It could be an Entertainment club, Sudoku tournaments, Chess championships, place for singers, art work; kid driven, alcohol free product. Multiple project building – we have cool ones to renovate - across from the coffee house. Let kids decide the décor. Tricia Anderson at school teaches interior design a project for that. The kids would decide how run and what they do. It could be a moneymaker like the Women's Club's New to you. They could raise their own money for paint ball, trips, skateboard park, or even community service things such as buying something for the hospital, etc. They could learn the value of giving back to the community. It would have so many purposes; would need a central coordinator.

- This town needs a centralized coordinator.

In a perfect world – I would like to see clean rivers, more activities for the kids, an alternate school and alternate health care practitioners. I would like to see the area develop the arts and crafts and offer them through a catalog and to visitors.

Offer continuing education for kids and adults and create a more energetic population.

There are a few activities that bring visitors to town for the day, but these can be developed to keep people in town a little longer.

More stores, cottage shops and other shopping opportunities. I don't mean Wal-Mart but perhaps a Department store offering clothing shoes and a ranch supply store

Expanded Airport and air shuttle service to Butte or Missoula

Railroad line to include passengers going east or west or even north and south

Improved Fairgrounds and Event Center

Creative thinking people to move in and be able to help Deer Lodge succeed

None of us want a huge population and we don't want California style growth, but we would like to make a better living and be proud of our community.

What I would like to see and what I expect to see are two different things.

**Clean - Up - Fix - Up - Paint - Up**

**Mayor Jim has good idea: Clean Up Residences & Businesses**

**A. More Publicity - More Participation - More Results:**

**1. Make this a 2 Day Event**

**General Fix - Up: Fix Everything that is Broken**

**A. Fences, Gates & Railings**

**B. Windows & Doors (Screen Doors)**

**C. Trim Trees & Shrubs and Spruce Up Landscape & Flowers**

**1. Digital Photos of Planting Area**

**a) Mini Landscaping Seminar (Ed)**

**(1) Proper Site & Soil Preparation**

**(2) Best Type of Flowers (Annual/Perennial)**

**Paint - Up: A little Paint goes a Long Way**

**A. Discount: R&C (Ron) - ACE (Allen) (Time Limit)**

**1. Mini Exterior Painting Seminar (Columbia Paint / Allan)**

**a) Proper Way to Prepare & Paint**

**B. Show Case for those who Participate (Register)**

**1. Time Limit**

**2. Before & After Digital Photos - 5 X 7 or Larger**

**a) Most Improved**

**b) Best Over-all - Appearance**

**c) Most Unique - Color Scheme**

**PUBLICITY - PRINT Before & After Pictures in Silver State**

**Program Management - Establish Guidelines**

**A. Planning Board**

**1. Present Staff**

**2. Volunteer Committee**

**B. City Council Committee**

**C. Chamber of Commerce**

**1. Volunteer Committee**

**Now we need to entice people to want to stay here for awhile. Let's talk about a Rails to Trails project running from Deer Lodge to Garrison- We have the old Milwaukee Road bed- why not use this perfect facility for a bike, walking and running path? This would be an asset for tourists staying in our two RV parks, for people who visit the Grant Kohrs ranch allowing more walking area.**

Hire a recreation director and have Recreation available for all ages. A recreation facility – one that could hold a variety of tournaments could bring in revenue year round. (another motel would be needed to accommodate these people)

A skating rink would be nice for figure skating and hockey.

Have main street continue to spruce up.  
Get a bike trail, and a place for roller blading and

Educating people on the benefits of tourism, and a sales tax (10 million nonresident visitors come to this state expecting to pay sales tax. These nonresidents spend \$2 billion dollars per year. Add a 3% sales tax and the state gets 60 million new dollars for cities, state, and all kinds of programs. This is new money from out of state people who expect to pay it.

Roads are fixed, more street lights are up, sidewalks are built, places for bike riding are available, city recreation is set up, economic development has money to plan for city development, marketing program is set up for the city, educate the workers on how to help visitors to get around to the different attractions

The city gets spruced up and people are proud of Deer Lodge.

We need to continue to try and develop our economic base. We need to focus on the small business. We will not be successful in attracting those industries that will employ large numbers of workers. We need to continue to promote tourism. We have some marketable landmarks and we need to make sure we utilize their value.

I'd like to see moderate constant growth. New business along with the Tourist Industry. We need jobs that pay a living wage. We need to protect our tax base so Montana people are able to live in their own state. We need to protect our water, land, and other resources to keep our state in the hands of Montana people. No, I am not saying we can't sell or encourage others to buy and work in this great state. I feel strongly that Montana people not be forced out by high rent, high taxes etc.

- **Complete projects already begun four years ago.**

- **Main Street Preservation encouraged**
- **Arrow Stone Walking Train completed**
- **Previous involved persons need to be used as resources! Why weren't they contacted, interviewed, etc?**