

# **RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT REPORT**

for

## **HAVRE /HILL COUNTY MONTANA**

**November 18 – 19, 2003**

In partnership with  
Montana Department of Commerce, USDA/Rural Development,  
Montana Economic Developers Association, Bear Paw  
Development Corporation, Montana Department of Agriculture,  
Montana Community Foundation, Butte Local Development  
Corporation, CTA Architects Engineers,  
and the people of Hill County.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The slogan for the Havre Chamber of Commerce “It’s the People” is a perfect description for all of Hill County. It is the people of Hill County that make your region so unique. Thank you for welcoming the team and for allowing us to listen to your hopes and dreams for Hill County.

Before delving into the report itself, I would like to give recognition to Montana Department of Commerce (MDOC), USDA/Rural Development and MEDA – Montana Economic Developers Association. MDOC sponsors Resource Team Assessments across the state, while USDA/Rural Development provides funding for training team members and follow-up costs. MEDA provides the contractual services that make Resource Teams possible. You can join MEDA and become a part of this economic development network at <http://www.medamembers.org>.

Many thanks are due to many people; I hope that no one is overlooked. The project came about due to support from the Havre Area Chamber of Commerce, Blue Sky Public Schools, Box Elder Public Schools, KG Public Schools, Havre Public Schools, Independence Bank, Holiday Village Mall, Town House Inns, Bi-Mart, Heberly & Associates, US Bank, and Northern Montana Hospital. Special thanks to Bear Paw Development Corporation for making the assessment possible. More thanks to the Hill County Commissioners and the City of Havre, plus the local leadership in Kremlin, Gildford, Inverness, Rudyard, Hingham, and Box Elder. In addition, I applaud each and every team member that dedicated hours of work and travel in order to participate on the team: Brent Poppe, MT Department of Agriculture; Linda Reed, Montana Community Foundation; Evan Barrett, Butte Local Development Corporation; Ken Richardson, CTA Architects Engineers and Andy Poole, MT Department of Commerce. 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!

This document can serve as one pathway for Havre/Hill County’s future. 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!

Be watching for the date, time and location of the Havre-Hill County Follow-up Town Meeting!

Gloria O’Rourke  
MEDA

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

Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA) provided staff support for the coordination of a resource team to assist Hill County, Montana, in evaluating the county's assets and liabilities and in developing suggestions for improving the environment, social and economic future of the area.

Paul Tuss and Craig Erickson, of Bear Paw Development Corporation, served as the local contacts and local team leaders for the project. Bear Paw took the lead in agenda development, logistics, budgeting and publicity for the assessment. Resource team members were selected to visit, interview citizens, business and community leaders; and develop a plan of recommended action for the county. The team members were carefully selected based on their fields of expertise that local officials indicated would be needed to respond to the problem areas identified.

The Resource Team interviewed over 130 people in 12 listening sessions, which included East and West Hi-Line communities and the area of Havre/Hill County. The team was available for listening to the following groups: the people of Kremlin and Gildford; the people of Inverness, Rudyard and Hingham; the people of Box Elder; MSU Northern and Havre Public Schools; Retail, Business and Utilities; Farming, Ranching, FSA; City, County, Law Enforcement; Banking and Financial; Natural Resources (oil, gas, etc.); Health Care and Social Services and the youth of Havre High School.

Each participant was asked to respond to three questions designed to begin communications and discussion and to serve as a basis for developing the action plan. The three questions were:

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

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 a final report to Hill County.

A preliminary oral report and a summary of group recommendations was presented to the people of Hill County on November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2003.

Following the oral report, this formal written report was prepared and is presented to Havre/Hill County. Copies will be made available in print and electronically. The report is available on the MEDA website at <http://www.medamembers.org>. A meeting date will be set soon to review the report with the people of Hill County and to set priorities and initiate action plans.

**HILL COUNTY, MONTANA  
RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT  
NOVEMBER 18 – 19, 2003**

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**City/State/Zip: Helena, MT 59620-0501**  
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**City of Havre/Hill County  
Resource Team Agenda  
November 18 & 19**

<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Location</b>
	7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.	<b>Team Breakfast</b>	PJ's
	8:40 a.m. to 9:10 a.m.	Drive to Gildford	
	9:25 a.m. to 10:35 a.m.	East Hi-Line Listening Session (Kremlin and Gildford)	KG High School - Gildford
	11:00 a.m. to 12:10 p.m.	West Hi-Line Listening Session (Inverness, Rudyard, Hingham)	Blue Sky High School
	12:15 to 1:00	<b>Lunch</b>	Eagle's Nest Café - Rudyard
	1:00 p.m. to 2:20 p.m.	Drive to Box Elder	
	2:30 p.m. to 3:40 p.m.	Box Elder Listening Session	Box Elder High School
	3:45 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.	Return to Havre via Rocky Boy's & Beaver Creek	
	4:45 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.	MSU-Northern/Havre Public Schools Listening Session	Havre Middle School Auditorium
	6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.	<b>Working Dinner/Potluck w/ Chamber Board</b>	US Bank
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Location</b>
	6:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m.	<b>Breakfast</b>	Lunch Box
	7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.	Retail/Business/Utilities	Mall Meeting Room
	8:05 a.m. to 9:05 a.m.	Farming, Ranching, FSA	Mall Meeting Room
	9:10 a.m. to 10:10 a.m.	City, County, Law Enforcement	Mall Meeting Room
	10:15 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.	Banking & Financial	Mall Meeting Room
	11:20 a.m. to 12:20 a.m.	Natural Resources (oil, gas,???)	Mall Meeting Room
	12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.	<b>Lunch</b>	Northern Montana Health Care
	1:45 p.m. to 2:45 p.m.	Health Care/Social Services	Northern Montana Health Care
	3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.	Youth	Havre High School
	4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.	Prepare for Town Meeting	Bear Paw Development
	6:30 p.m. to 7:10 p.m.	<b>Working Supper</b>	Bear Paw Development/Catered
	7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.	Town Meeting - Team presents oral reports	Havre Middle School Auditorium

## **HAVRE/HILL COUNTY RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT**

**November 18 – 19, 2003**

### **MAIN ISSUES**

Note: These issues are a summary of all of the listening notes listed at the end of this report.

### **AGRICULTURE**

- Value Added Ag
- Captive market - lack of competition
- Promotion of alternative crops
- Identity preserved crops
- Ag shipping/freight issues
- Inter-modal loading for specialty crops
- CRP
- Northern Ag Research Center - alternative products
- Encourage next generation of farmers, ranchers
- FFA Chapter
- Retiring farmers/young farmers match
- Fertilizer Plant

### **AREA COMMUNITY ISSUES** (Note - Other issues reflected elsewhere in the report.)

#### **\* BOX ELDER**

- Basketball courts
- Drop Out Issue
- Senior Citizen Cr.
- Cultural Center
- Litter issues
- Recycling Center

#### **\* KREMLIN - GILDFORD**

- Playground equipment
- Improved signage for tourists

#### **\* RUDYARD**

- Year round pool use/Hingham
- Maintain current services

### **BUSINESS AND COMMERCE**

- Buy Local
- Multi-purpose Center
- Attract tourists
- Economic Development funding
- Return of Cooperative Development Center
- Value added opportunities

- Meat processing plant
- Jobs
- Attract Canadians Downtown Revitalization
  - Tax Increment District
  - Housing (Atrium)
  - Old Post Office for Human Services Consolidation
- Local investment
- Natural Resource Development
  - Oil and gas
  - Fertilizer
  - Alternative energy
  - Transmission capacity

## **COMMUNITY**

- Demographics
  - Aging population
  - Population loss
  - Loss of youth
- Quality of Life
  - Beautification
  - Litter issues
- Fair Grounds improved and used
- Stabilize Tax Base
- Cost effect of incarceration of Indians
- Drug Alcohol abuse Recreational improvements
  - Ski hill
  - Hockey rink improvements
- Fresno Reservoir
- Local park improvements
- Medical/Social
  - Personal Care Cr.
  - Assisted Living
  - Senior Center
  - Cost of services and insurance
- Transition support for Native Americans

## **EDUCATION**

- Applied Technology Center
- Double college enrollment
- Degree offerings
  - Trade degrees
  - Native American studies
  - Medical Para-Professionals Coordinate/partner more closely between high schools and MSU Northern
- Transient student issue (20%)

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

- Water system
  - St. Mary's
  - Fresno Dam
  - Rocky Boy North Central Water Project
- Community infrastructure
  - Paved streets
  - Storm drains
  - Safe and available rail crossings
  - Sidewalk over Havre Beneath the Streets
- Funding shortfalls
- Four for Two
- Long Distance
  - Expanded service area
- Airport
  - Terminal & buildings

## **REGIONAL HUB**

- Multi-purpose Center
- Sustain Hospital/Regional Health Center
- MSU-Northern
  - Completion of Applied Tech Center
- Retail
  - Buy Local
  - Customer loyalty
  - Perception Change

## **REGIONAL ISSUES**

- Transportation
  - Public Transportation
- School Consolidation
- Domestic water (Rocky Boy North Central Water Project)
- Development of Historic Resources
  - Bear Paw Battlefield
  - Buffalo Jump
  - Ft. Assiniboine
- Duplication of dispatch services
- Revitalize smaller towns in area
- Remove telephone barriers
- Planning for future of outlying communities

## **TRANSPORTATION**

- Paved streets
- 4 for 2

- Amtrak
- Public Transportation
- BNSF
  - Need for competition
  - Regional asset

## **YOUTH**

- School Paper
- Harassment
- Diversity training
- More emphasis on non-athletic activities
- Expand leadership program
- Non-Bar for youth
- More Arts and cultural activities
- Lack of community attachment – feel disengaged

### **Report by: Andy Poole**

**Administrator: Business Resources Division**

**Montana Department of Commerce**

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**Helena, MT 59620**

**Phone: 406-841-2707**

**Email: [apoole@state.mt.us](mailto:apoole@state.mt.us)**

### **OVERALL RESOURCES AND GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS:**

I want to take a minute to personally thank all of the wonderful people from Hill County and the communities that we visited. It was a wonderful experience and one that I will remember fondly for years to come.

I want to especially thank Paul Tuss, Craig Erickson, and Tracey Jette who were so gracious with their time and were absolutely wonderful hosts. The amount of work that they put into the resource team assessment for Havre and Hill County was incredible and I hope that the citizens from the county are aware and appreciate their effort.

Although I have visited Hill County a number of times over the many years I have lived in Montana and worked at the Department of Commerce, I really didn't get an appreciation of how wonderful the people are and how much they appreciate each other. If we heard it once, we heard it a thousand times how the people from Hill County think that their greatest strength is the other people from Hill County. If that isn't something to build on then I don't know what is. It is obvious that so much goes right in the County and the communities that we visited because there are people who are dedicated to making their community a vibrant, good place to live and raise a family.

## **MAIN TOPIC: AREA/COMMUNITY ISSUES**

### **Issue: Box Elder - Senior Citizen Center, Community Center**

During our listening session in Box Elder, it was repeated several times that a senior citizen center and community center was needed so that local citizens would have a place to meet and socialize.

#### **Recommendations:**

Senior citizen and community centers have been awarded funding before from the Community Development Block Grant program for public facilities. Although not the highest funding priority category, it is possible to received funding for the construction of a facility of this nature.

#### **Recommended Resources:**

For additional information, please visit the following website.

[http://commerce.state.mt.us/CDD/CDD\\_CDBG\\_FC.html](http://commerce.state.mt.us/CDD/CDD_CDBG_FC.html)

### **Issue: Kremlin – Gildford: Improved Signage for Tourists**

The citizens from Kremlin – Gildford indicated during the listening session that they believed that more retail and tourist traffic could be generated into town in better tourist and information signage was put up on the highway.

#### **Recommendations:**

This is an issue that should be discussed with the Montana Department of Transportation and the Montana Department of Commerce (Montana Promotion Division). I believe that these agencies can provide the process that the town would need to pursue to get better signage on the highway.

#### **Recommended Resources:**

Victor Bjornberg

Montana Promotions Division

Montana Department of Commerce

406-841-2795

## **MAIN TOPIC: BUSINESS AND COMMERCE**

### **Issue: Multi Purpose Center**

During many of the listening sessions, one of the top priorities that people identified as potentially having a significant impact on Hill County was the creation of a multi-purpose center that would be constructed in Havre. Among other things, people indicated that some of the basketball tournaments would come back to the Hi-Line if it were to be built.

**Recommendations:**

The Bear Paw Development Corporation applied on behalf of Hill County to the Montana Department of Commerce for a planning grant that could assess the feasibility of constructing and maintaining a multi-purpose facility in Havre. The grant was awarded and the feasibility study is underway. If the study proves that the project could be economically viable, Bear Paw Development should apply for public funding to finance the construction of the facility based upon its economic merits.

**Recommended Resources:**

Montana Department of Commerce  
Mr. Randy Hanson: Regional Development Officer  
406-262-9581  
[http://commerce.state.mt.us/BRD/BRD\\_RDO.html](http://commerce.state.mt.us/BRD/BRD_RDO.html)

Montana Department of Commerce  
Montana Finance Information Center  
<http://www.mtfinanceonline.com/>

US DOC/EDA  
Mr. John Rogers  
406-449-5380

USDA Rural Development  
Mr. John Guthmiller  
406-585-2549  
<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt/RBS/rbs.htm>

**Issue: Economic Development Funding**

During the listening sessions, a number of people indicated how important the work that Bear Paw Development is doing and that it would be good to find additional resources to expand this work.

**Recommendations:**

House Bill 76 was passed by the last legislature and provided funding to the Montana Department of Commerce to fund up to 12 Certified Regional Development Corporations (CRDC's) in Montana. I believe that the Bear Paw Development Corporation is currently preparing an application to the department to apply to become one of these 12 CRDC's. If the application is selected for certification and funding, additional economic development resources will be available to the counties that Bear Paw applied on behalf of.

**Recommended Resources:**

Montana Department of Commerce  
Mr. Quinn Ness  
406-841-2758

**Issue: Value-added Opportunities, Meat Processing plant, Jobs, Natural Resource Development.**

In a rural setting like Hill County, it is important to take advantage of the natural resources that are indigenous to the area. Realizing that, many citizens were hopeful that better use of these natural resources could be realized.

**Recommendations:**

All of these issues are being worked on by the capable staff of the Bear Paw Development Corporation. Hopefully, with certification as a Certified Regional Development Corporation, more resources will be available to help with these efforts. The Bear Paw Development Corporation has the expertise and resources available to help start, expand, retain, and attract businesses in the Hill County area. These resources include revolving loan funds, public infrastructure grant writing, and, small business technical assistance. In addition, the Montana Department of Commerce, Regional Development Officer is available and work with Bear Paw on a continuous basis.

**Recommended Resources:**

Bear Paw Development Corporation  
Mr. Paul Tuss  
406-265-9226

Montana Department of Commerce  
Mr. Randy Hanson: Regional Development Officer  
406-262-9581  
[http://commerce.state.mt.us/BRD/BRD\\_RDO.html](http://commerce.state.mt.us/BRD/BRD_RDO.html)

**MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY**

**Issue: Population Loss, Loss of Youth**

One of the toughest issues for many towns and counties across the state to deal with is the loss of population – especially our young people. As our children grow up and get their education, so many of them want to leave to explore other places. This is natural and I’m sure many of us experienced it as young adults. The challenge is to create an environment that provides them with the opportunity to come back home when the time is right.

**Recommendations:**

These are issues that deal with creating businesses and good paying jobs through business retention, expansion, and recruitment. It is also one of the primary strengths of the Bear Paw Development Corporation. We (the Montana Department of Commerce) have worked with the folks at Bear Paw for many, many years and have always found them to be the consummate professionals in community and economic development.

The Bear Paw Development Corporation has the expertise and resources available to help start, expand, retain, and attract businesses in the Hill County area. These resources include revolving loan funds, public infrastructure grant writing, and, small business technical assistance. In addition, the Montana Department of Commerce, Regional Development Officer is available and work with Bear Paw on a continuous basis.

**Recommended Resources:**

Bear Paw Development Corporation  
Mr. Paul Tuss  
406-265-9226

Montana Department of Commerce  
Mr. Randy Hanson: Regional Development Officer  
406-262-9581  
[http://commerce.state.mt.us/BRD/BRD\\_RDO.html](http://commerce.state.mt.us/BRD/BRD_RDO.html)

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**MAIN TOPIC: AGRICULTURE**

**Issue: Value-Added Agriculture Development**

Havre/Hill County residents want more value-added agricultural development in the county. A number of comments were made about the potential for livestock feeding and meat processing. Other community members commented about the potential for grain processing, milling, or even ethanol distillation. But overall, community members have not defined the types of value-added agricultural businesses they would like to see grow in the community.

**Recommendation:**

Havre/Hill County has a tremendous asset in its production agriculture base. Producers and community members are encouraged to consider value-added agricultural ventures that will compliment other business, recreation, and tourism activities being considered in the community. Producers and investors must look carefully at the nature of new value-added agricultural businesses, the costs that will be incurred in starting such a business, and are encouraged to begin with smaller scale, and attainable projects. Making the transition from basic production agriculture to advanced agricultural processing is complex and should be made in stages.

The development of meat and/or livestock related projects may be achieved in stages and may enable the community to take advantage of existing grain and livestock production within the

county and elsewhere in the region. For example, the level of investment required for back grounding yards in Hill County can be relatively low, and an extensive amount of research and knowledge on how to successfully operate a back grounding facility is readily available through the university system, and other technical assistance providers. Establishing a fledging cattle back grounding and/or feeding industry enables producers to build a base that may be needed to support future stages, such as cattle finishing, or certain types of meat processing. It also enables producers to add value to a commodity currently being produced in the area, and one that is prone to be difficult to market - feed barley.

Identity preserved grains, and specialty crops were both mentioned as areas of interest and are certainly worth pursuing as potential value-added agricultural projects. With consolidation in the grain industry and local elevator closures, there is under-utilized grain storage and handling capacity in Hill County. This sets the stage for producers to produce and merchandise their own identity preserved, high quality crops to processors, and further sets the stage to develop or recruit processors to the community. For example, there are reports of inconsistent quality and quantity of Durum being available in Montana. Producers may wish to consider working with the Northern Ag-Research Center and pasta manufacturers to grow more Durum that meets a pasta manufacturer's specifications. As this is accomplished, producers may form a business entity that takes delivery of their annual Durum crop at one or more of the idle grain elevators (which will need to be purchased or leased) and merchandises that identity preserved grain directly to a pasta company. There are obviously numerous variations of this concept that producers could focus on in Hill County.

Hill County residents also mentioned ethanol distillation as a value-added opportunity for the area. The performance history of the ethanol industry in Montana suggests that this opportunity should be carefully investigated, as a facility's financial performance may be less than desirable when a person considers all of the development and operating costs. There is an extensive amount of research that intends to develop grain varieties and enzyme additives that will improve efficiency levels of wheat and barley used for ethanol distillation. There is also a promising new systems-based approach being implemented jointly between ethanol distillers and livestock feeders. Operations are able to improve production efficiencies and reduce operating costs by operating together rather than as a stand-alone facility.

**Resources:**

Hill County's producers are a primary resource provider. Without the willingness to adjust current farming and marketing practices, value-added development is less likely to occur. Producers must also be prepared to position themselves, and the community, to recruit outside value-added agricultural businesses if local entrepreneurs are not willing or able to develop the types of value-added enterprises that the community would like to target.

Bear Paw Development – Paul Tuss & Craig Erickson – with vision and leadership, both are able to assist the local producers entrepreneurs in helping developing value-added agricultural businesses in the county.

The Montana Dept of Agriculture – Growth Through Agriculture Program, has been formed specifically with value-added agricultural development in mind. The Department has both

financial and technical assistance available for value-added business development projects. Producers and/or entrepreneurs interested in learning more about the assistance available through the Department are encouraged to call the Agriculture Marketing & Business Development Bureau at (406) 444-2402.

USDA-Rural Development has a significant amount of financial and technical assistance available and compliments the local and state resource programs and providers nicely. Producers and/or entrepreneurs are encouraged to work with Bear Paw Development and USDA – Rural Development to evaluate program options. USDA-Rural Development may be reached in Bozeman at (406) 585-2580

The Montana Department of Commerce – Business Resources Division has numerous programs also designed to assist communities and entrepreneurs in developing and recruiting new enterprises to the county. Producers and entrepreneurs are encouraged to work with the Department of Commerce Regional Development Officer for the area, Randy Hanson, who is located in an office adjacent to Bear Paw Development.

## **MAIN TOPIC: BUSINESS & COMMERCE**

### **Issue: Local Investment**

Based on comments heard during several of the resource team sessions, a portion of Hill County’s residents express a low tolerance level towards risk and exhibit an unwillingness to lead community and business/industry enhancement projects. However, there appears to be a bit of a ground swell movement and realization that investment capital must be available for business development projects in the community.

### **Recommendation:**

Given the current economic health of much of rural America, local investment in projects is apt to be limited; but remains as one of the triggers and the leverage points in attracting outside investment. Both public and private financiers look at the amount of equity or “equity-like” investment contributed towards a project; and many require at least a third, and up to half or more, of the total financial need to be met with equity contributions before they will provide financing.

Community members who may not be willing or able to invest in projects are encouraged to develop their own “business friendly” attitudes and welcome outside investment and development partners’ participation in community and business development projects. This may require that community members forgo “project ownership”. Ultimately, outside investment and ownership within the community will result in an enhanced tax base, secondary/supporting businesses opportunities, all of which leads towards the development of “community infrastructure” that will support new primary business.

Investors residing within the community are encouraged to work with Bear Paw Development to make their willingness to provide investment capital for projects in Havre/Hill County known.

This may be an informal effort that results in a loosely organized pool of investors, or may take on a more structured appearance and result in a Havre/Hill County venture capital fund.

**Recommended Resource:**

Community members interested in investing in their community and vocalizing that willingness are the primary resource providers needed to implement change in this area.

Bear Paw Development – Paul Tuss & Craig Erickson - are vital links in coordinating and/or facilitating local investment in projects.

Glacier Venture Fund – John Marchi – and other Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA) members are excellent sources of information with regard to developing and cultivating angel investment and venture capital in Montana. The Montana Economic Developers Association may be reached at (406) 563-5259, and its members’ contact information, including John Marchi’s, are listed on the MEDA website at [www.medamembers.org](http://www.medamembers.org).

**Issue: Business Development**

Community members expressed a desire for more business and industry in Havre/Hill County, but did not specifically pinpoint the types of businesses to be developed in the area. Two industries mentioned as being suitable targets for expansion and recruitment are the oil and gas industry and the agricultural processing industry(s).

**Recommendation:**

The process of developing and/or expanding business and industry in a community is accomplished in steps. Community members are encouraged to take the first step by better defining the businesses and industries that should be targeted for expansion or recruitment. Community members are further encouraged to target business and industry that compliments other business activities already in existence or being considered in the community.

As mentioned above, the oil and gas industry was mentioned as one that is suitable for expansion in Hill County. Community members indicated that this industry has been quite transient and is apt to expand and retract as oil and gas prices fluctuate. Despite the fluctuations, there appears to some significant potential in Hill County for growth within this industry. But rather than targeting firms involved in the extraction side of the industry, Havre/Hill County may wish to further refine their recruitment/expansion parameters and target the firms that provide services, supplies and materials to the drilling companies. This effort may better compliment the community’s desire to become a regional hub.

**Resources:**

Community members are the first resource needed to develop new business and industry in Hill County, in that they are responsible for providing guidance to local economic development professionals when it comes to the types of businesses to be targeted.

Bear Paw Development – Paul Tuss – based on input received from community members, Bear Paw Development may begin efforts at creating a development and/or recruitment strategy designed to expand a business or industry’s (like the oil & gas industry) presence in the community.

The Montana Department of Commerce – Business Resources Division has numerous programs also designed to assist communities and entrepreneurs in developing and recruiting new enterprises to the county. The community is encouraged to work with the Department of Commerce as efforts begin to take shape.

## **MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY**

### **Issue: Stabilize Tax Base**

A significant portion of Havre/Hill County’s community members expressed a desire to initiate projects that will improve the quality of life in Havre/Hill County. In reviewing the resource team notes, it appears that approximately half of the projects the resource team heard about will not directly or indirectly enhance city or county revenues. **The community’s focus on projects that do not contribute to the municipal revenues appears to be a factor contributing towards the continued problem of budget shortfalls.** When this contributing factor is combined with others, like an aging and shrinking population, the city and county budgets are stretched even further.

### **Recommendation:**

Havre/Hill County community members may wish to adopt a new approach when thinking about budgeting, and strive to place more priority on projects that will directly or indirectly generate municipal revenues. To illustrate, municipal revenues resulting from property taxes are paid primarily by homeowners and business owners. If the community prioritizes, to the best of its ability, projects which will “add value” to the community’s resident businesses, or increases the number of resident businesses, real and personal property taxes will increase as a result. Consequently, projects like downtown business improvement projects, or new commercial/industrial complexes generate more municipal wealth because the community’s resident businesses, which pay property taxes, are growing and increasing in size and value. Increased municipal wealth and larger municipal budgets will allow for the “quality of life” projects to be completed as well. This is certainly the most difficult recommendation to offer, and even more difficult to implement, as the basic education, health and human safety issues can monopolize the time, energy, and resources of a community.

### **Resources:**

Strong, forward thinking community leaders are the primary resource needed to begin the process of investing in projects that generate revenue rather than deplete municipal funds.

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**Executive Director**  
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## **MAIN TOPIC: AGRICULTURE**

### **Issue: Promotion of alternative crops**

I was disappointed to hear that Montana State University, College of Agriculture, and Extension Service was not doing enough to promote production of alternative crops, specifically organics. The implication was that large chemical companies had too much influence through grants and contracts. From some recent reading I have done, it appears that large farm corporations are becoming more involved with organic productions, so this field is no longer the exclusive realm of the niche farmer. This implies that there could be corporate money to encourage research into and development and production of organic crops.

### **Recommendations:**

- Get the facts
  - Determine who is growing organic crops – still small growers, how much production is from corporate growers, what are they growing, what are the markets for what can be grown in the Golden Triangle.
  - Determine the status of the search for a permanent dean of the College of Agriculture.
  - Determine the amount and source of, and purpose for research dollars supporting the College of Agriculture.
  - Find out if the Extension Service is doing any work in this area.
  - Determine if the Experiment Stations are conducting any research.
  - On a very high level determine what organic crops can be grown in the Golden Triangle and what the market demand is for them.
- If the facts support what I heard
  - Assemble the facts gathered and prepare your case.
  - Make arrangements to meet with the new dean (assuming that position is filled at this time), head of Extension Service and the President of MSU.
  - Be sure to ask for next steps before leaving the meeting.
  - Speak to our Congressional delegation regarding any federal funding that might be available to support research needed at MSU, international marketing opportunities, or public policy changes that support alternative crop production.

### **Contacts**

- Geoff Gamble, President, Montana State University, 406-994-2341
- Jeff Jacobson, Interim Dean, MSU, College of Agriculture; 406-994-3681
- Myles Watts, Professor of Agricultural Production, Economics, Management, and Finance, 406-994-3704

- Jim Johnson, Professor of Farm and Ranch Management and Production Economics, 406-994-5606
- Ralph Peck, Director, Montana Department of Agriculture, 406-444-3144

## **MAIN TOPIC: AREA ISSUES**

### **\* BOX ELDER**

#### **Issue: Basketball Courts**

#### **Recommendations:**

- Talk to the Great Falls High School. There's a fairly sophisticated design and architecture program there. Perhaps the students could use the basketball courts as a design project. They might also be able to spec. the materials.
- Talk with either a professional design firm or the College of Architecture at MSU to see if they would approve the design and specification pro bono.
- Contact the Montana National Guard to see if they have needs to train reservists in the use of heavy equipment.
- Contact the Montana Contractors Association. They have a heavy equipment operators training program at the College of Technology in Helena. Ask if this could be a training project.
- See if there are local farmers/rancher who would contribute equipment to do the earthwork.
- See if there are local supply companies who would donate or discount materials.
- Determine if there are restrictions from OPI regarding building the courts as a community projects. What are the legal requirements?
- This could be a project that would appeal to the Steele-Reese Foundation, if not too expensive.

#### **Contacts:**

- Cary Hegreberg, Executive Director, Montana Contractors Assn. 406-442-4162
- Jean Wolverton, The Steele Reese Foundation, (406) 722-4564

### **\*KREMLIN-GILFORD**

#### **Issue: Playground Equipment**

#### **Recommendation:**

Potential funding source of small grants to support a project like this is the Montana Community Foundation. Check [www.mtcf.org](http://www.mtcf.org) after March 15 for grant guidelines.

## **MAIN TOPIC: BUSINESS AND COMMERCE**

### **Issue: Return of Cooperative Development Center**

Several times the loss of the Cooperative Development Center was mentioned; however, there did not seem to be agreement or understanding about the facts leading to its transfer to Helena, other than politics. I heard conflicting information about the reasons the center was relocated and whether the center could be financially viable.

#### **Recommendation:**

- If possible determine the facts underlying the decision to relocate the Center.
- Base on the facts regarding why the center was relocated, determine if those factual circumstances can be addressed.
- If so, discuss with the appropriate decision makers the steps to develop a proposal for consideration.
- Given that this is a business development resource, working with economic development facilitators might result in useful partnerships.

### **Issue: Meat Processing Plant**

As I recall there is a facility in Havre that was once engaged in this kind of business. Montana generally laments the fact that we have no meat processors in the State and I can only conclude that these businesses cannot be financially viable, certainly serving traditional markets. In light of mad cow disease and generally a growing recognition and demand for organic food products, a niche market approach might be possible.

#### **Recommendation:**

- Understand accurately the capabilities of the existing facility (if my memory is correct) and whether or not it meets current codes.
- Base on that evaluation determine if the building can be economically refurbished for a modern processing plant.
- Determine the market for some kind of niche market meat product; organic, prime, buffalo, range fed,
- Determine financial feasibility
- If the project is feasible, present the business case to local business people. We heard there were individuals in the area with the financial resources to invest in local projects. Perhaps this could be one.

#### **Resources:**

**Same as those for alternative crops.**

## **MAIN ISSUE: EDUCATION**

**Issue: Degree Offering – Trade Degrees**

It was very exciting to learn about the skilled trade degrees that have recently been incorporated in the MSU-Northern curriculum. And especially since tradesmen actively encouraged them. The plans to continue introducing skilled trade degrees seemed solid and I hope the private sector momentum for their development continues. As much I think this work might need broader exposure to the State generally, certainly with decision makers and those that influence decision makers.

**Recommendations:**

- I believe the Montana Ambassadors are still advocating for educational matters, especially programs and legislation that will support development of skilled workers. Educating this group about the new and planned curricula would develop a corps of business and education leaders that could advocate for additional programs.
- Perhaps holding a Regents meeting at Northern where the skill-trades program could be showcased would further solidify support.
- The Montana Contractors and Department of Transportation should be briefed on the program and plans for expansion. These two organizations are trying to encourage the development of training programs specifically to address shortages of workers engaged in highway design and construction, specifically skills needed for design, construction, and inspection.

**Contacts:**

- Barbara Martin, Montana Department of Transportation, 406-444-6408

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**MAIN TOPIC: REGIONAL ISSUES**

**Issue: Development of Historic Resources:**

- **Bear Paw Battlefield**
- **Wahkpa Chu'gn Buffalo Jump**
- **Fort Assinniboine Historic Site**

One of the topics that surfaced several times during the listening sessions was the desire to improve the profile and access to Havre / Hill County's historical sites. The community realizes that historical resources can become one of the catalyst for tourism, and the associated boost to the local economy. In addition, it is important to preserve the history that made this community what it is today.

**Recommendations:**

Havre and the surrounding communities are well positioned to actually in-fill the "trail" of historically significant activities of past centuries. Think of it this way, immediately to the east is the "Bear Paw Battlefield National Historic Site" Visitor Center, currently in the design and funding phase (see profile below). While at the same time, a relatively short distance to the south (by Montana terms) in Fort Benton another historic related project is becoming a reality, namely the "Upper Missouri River Breaks" Interpretive Center (also, see profile below).

Havre has two sites, the Buffalo Jump and Fort Assinniboine, which will fit into the history buffs "trail" of interest as they trek across the upper Missouri region of Montana. From a historic perspective it is important to put these locations on the map for the community, the state, and the visitors who dearly love to visit Montana!

As a part of recommendations, it is important to understand what the adjacent historic projects are about, learn from their profiles and use their outlines and goals to create your own. Here is the latest information on the ongoing process for both:

**Profile: "Bear Paw Battlefield National Historic Site" – Visitor Center**

Location: south of Chinook, MT.

Projected date of occupancy: 2005

Size and Cost: 3000 SF / \$ 1,000,000

A collaboration process with the Denver Service Center of the National Park Service, the Nez Perce National Historic Park and the Chinook community to develop a 3000 square foot Visitor Facility designed to be sustainable, efficient, cost effective and meaningful to visitors, and the Nez Perce culture. A two-day design charette process in the Chinook community and at the Battlefield unified the enthusiasm for the project in addition to establishing positive goals, and developing an attainable project program.

The concepts strive to integrate the landscape, minimize the visual and physical impact to the earth, the National Historic Site, and to respect the Nez Perce cultural bond to “Mother Earth” as they consider this battlefield location spiritually significant. The concept utilizes imagery from the traditional Nez Perce dwelling, a tule mat-covered long house. These dwellings were used for ceremonial purposes and for winter housing by several families. The sustainable visitor facility will incorporate the best solar orientation, site-specific climate protection, passive solar and maximum day lighting design concepts. Renewable technology such as photovoltaics, natural cross ventilation, water reuse/conservation and “green” building product selections are incorporated.

In comparative terms this is a small visitor center, only 3000 square feet, but fulfills the needs of the site and makes for a more “doable” project.

**Profile: “Upper Missouri River Breaks” – Visitor Center**

Location: Fort Benton, MT.

Projected date of Occupancy: 2005

Size & Cost: 5,200 SF / \$2,400,000 (including Interpretive Exhibits)

This project is a collaborative process with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the City of Fort Benton, and the local River & Plains Society. The new facility will be constructed on the bank of the Missouri River within the city of Fort Benton. The 5200 SF facility is located on approximately 5.2 acres donated to the BLM by the City of Fort Benton. Of note is the exterior deck that will project over the river and pay tribute to the Riverboats that plied these waters, “ a river travelers perspective” from another century. It is being designed to accommodate an annual visitation of approximately 15,000, with a peak day being 350 visitors.

The objectives of establishing an interpretive center in Fort Benton are to:

- Improve the region’s economy through tourism by means of recreation, historical, geological, and natural resource education/appreciation.
- Emphasize the importance of the Missouri River’s significant role in our nations westward expansion.
- Interpret a multitude of interests contained within the new Monument area and the “Wild and Scenic Missouri River”.
- Emphasize the importance of the Missouri River as a component of the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail. (Make a connection to the Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail Interpretive Center in Great Falls, MT.)
- Enable those visitors who are unable to boat or personally enjoy the river to “experience” the river and the history of the area via the interpretive center.

The community of Havre and Hill county can now make a good case for becoming yet another historically significant stop in this continuum of cultural conservation and education.

**Wahkpa Chu'gn Buffalo Jump** - certainly fits this profile. The site is believed to have three distinct cultures using this site starting 2000 years ago and still in use until 600 years before today.

The Buffalo Jump site unfortunately does not have a great “Front Door”. Efforts to improve access and make the site recognizable from Highway 2 would greatly increase visitor ship. Developing a connection to other historical sites, like those noted above, would make the travelers “planned journey” a more fulfilling experience. Create a link to their upcoming websites, share publication costs and printed materials. Consider a prominent link on Lewis and Clark Bicentennial sites as travelers begin to plan for their bicentennial experience in Montana. Most importantly the actual experience of visiting the site must be a very positive one – focus on being an outstanding “host”!

**Fort Assiniboine Historic Site** – is one of the last cavalry outposts of the west and perhaps the largest fort constructed in Montana, and the western United States. Speaking from a personal experience, access to the Fort is not a “visitor friendly” experience. Signage at the entry will “stop you in your tracks”.

The ultimate goal would be to seek preservation of the Fort, and an operating entity that could adequately fund that effort. This effort might start with conversations with the adjacent communities that currently have visitor centers underway. Learn from their experience where and how to approach ownership and stewardship. Start conversations with Montana’s Congressional Delegation, get on their radar screen now, these efforts take time.

An intermediate goal would be the creation of a new visitor center along State Highway 87. This visitor center could be smaller in size (less expensive to fund), create more of a “gateway” to the actual fort, be the permanent banner to attract visitors, and may even be seasonal.

The immediate goal could be to make access more user friendly. A concerted effort between the Heritage Center and MSU to improve highway signage, and have immediate access on high travel days could be a good test of interest from travelers. **Consider trying a temporary banner** as signage on high travel days. Banners can be large but not expensive. Keep good statistics on visitation, to build a case for funding.

Include the Fort in the linkages noted above, both electronic and printed media, make it a part of “planned journey”. Preservation of this Fort, which represents a fairly short snapshot of the history of the west, is a perfect complement to a 2000-year-old cultural resource just miles away.

### **Recommended Resources:**

- Bear Paw Battlefield National Historic Site: Contact the National Park Service-Denver Service Center. Request the NPS Project Manager for this project.

- Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument: Contact the Bureau of Land Management, Lewistown, MT. Request the BLM Project Manager for this project.
- The River & Plains Society, Fort Benton, MT. Contact Jack Lepley.
- Cultural Resource Specialist Candy Zion (professional consulting services), Great Falls and Havre, MT.
- U S Senator Max Baucus, Billings, MT. Contact Melodie Hanes. [HTTP://baucus.senate.gov](http://baucus.senate.gov)
- US Senator Conrad Burns, Billings, MT. Contact Todd Capser. [HTTP://burns.senate.gov](http://burns.senate.gov)
- Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail Interpretive Center, Great Falls, MT. Contact US Forest Service Contracting Officer at the Interpretive Center.

## MAIN TOPIC: YOUTH

### Issue: Non-Bar for youth

- **Create a “Club” for non-drinking teens**
- **Youth Leadership Program develop a business model**
- **Expand fine arts / music / cultural opportunities**

One of the most intriguing and enjoyable listening sessions was with the young people of the Youth Leadership Program. In general this group had a very positive outlook on the community. It certainly appeared we were in fact meeting with the future leaders of the community.

My notes recorded that this group listed among their challenges: easy access to alcohol and drugs (said “it is easy to buy”); over emphasis on the bad acting youth and little recognition of the good youth; the need for expanded access to fine arts, music, and cultural opportunities; and on three occasions, the need for a place to “hang out” (activities that did not include a parking lot!).

This same group listed among their assets: a community that was close knit, supportive of each other, and safe; teachers that were dedicated and willing to help; and a community that supports youth events.

Among their projects were listed: an expanded youth leadership program (they are ready to take on more); a touring/acting group that could travel; and a top priority was a “Youth Club” with dancing and music.

### **Recommendations:**

**What we have here are the young leaders of this community willing to take on more responsibility, the belief that they have the support of the community, and a project to take on – pretty good chemistry!**

Location - this group had already identified a site for their Youth Club or “Non-Bar”. They felt that the upper floor of the Heritage Center was vacant and would make a great space for a youth club. They pointed out that during the day it could be a Heritage Center, but by night it could have a new and different life with the music volume turned up not bothering a business that would be closed.

Business Plan - the Youth Leadership Program (Havre Chamber of Commerce) in conjunction with Havre Public Schools could make this an opportunity for a group of young people to learn the challenges of creating and sustaining a business. It is very important that this is a youth-lead effort. Ownership must be given to the champions of this project, along with the responsibility for its success. Havre has a community full of very savvy business people who would be willing to pitch in with guidance.

Scope of Work – have the group create a checklist of things that need to be accomplished. Some that come to mind are creating a program of what the youth want from their project, establishing a lease for the space, how much renovation is needed and attach a cost, anticipated utility costs, maintenance, security, and insurance. Include the fun stuff – furnishings, lighting, equipment (i.e. music and video), and artwork.

Phased Project Development – consider a phased approach to creating the youth club. Early recognition that all things may not happen at once will help to prioritize what needs to be done, when, and how much it will cost. There are really only three basic principals to managing any project: 1) Quantity v/s Quality, 2) Time v/s Schedule, and 3) Budget v/s Spent. If any one of these three things change it affects the other two. There it is the secret to Project Management 101!

Fine Arts / Music / Cultural Opportunities – consider this youth club an opportunity to create an environment that promotes the goal of bring youth and adults closer together.

Discuss how the youth can produce fine art / comedy / acting / a “catered” dinner play / and live music. Include events that are suitable for entertaining the whole community (adults included). Use the “Club” as a “theatre” some of the time. Plan ahead to take the acting/entertaining opportunities out to other communities in Hill County and beyond. This is not only good experience for the youth, but can increase the opportunities for funding!

Budgeting – Havre & Hill County has General Contractors, Bankers, Economic Developers and Planners that could help guide the budgeting process. Perhaps a design firm could be engaged to create the vision and help define the scope for budgeting.

Funding – always a tough one. Start calling on the usual suspects; the economic development office is always a good resource for direction, the Chamber of Commerce, business and private donations, grants, and a creative fundraising event or two that might include using the proposed site (Heritage Center, if selected?). And, perhaps even contact the US Forest Service – they are administering a program to fund the arts in rural communities as an economic stimulus. Keep the bar raised high, you might be surprised at the results!

Time Line – It will be important to establish a time line (or schedule) for accomplishing the tasks listed above. The Youth Leadership Program could create their idea of the time involved, how it is structured and the phases needed. The important lesson will be to understand that the schedule will be a work in progress – subject to change. Will the time actually spent versus the proposed time line affect the budget or quality of the project?

Most of all have fun with the project and expect tremendous results!

### **Recommended Resources:**

- Havre Area Chamber of Commerce: Contact Debbie Vandenberg [www.havremt.com](http://www.havremt.com)
- Havre Public Schools: Contact Superintendent, High School Principal and Business Teachers.
- Bear Paw Development Corporation, Havre, MT: Contact Craig Erickson
- MEDA – Montana Economic Developers Association, as a link to US Forest Service Rural Arts Program: Contact Gloria O'Rourke  
[www.medamembers.org](http://www.medamembers.org)
- Conceptual design - CTA Architects Engineers, Great Falls, MT: Contact Martin Byrnes  
[www.ctagroup.com](http://www.ctagroup.com)
- Contractors for Budgeting: Possible Contacts Dave Clausen, Clausen Construction or Terry Schend, Shine Electric, Havre, MT.
- Billings Depot Inc., Billings, MT: Contact person unknown. (a grassroots success story of converting an historic structure to a busy conference and catering center, ask how they did it?)

**Report by: Gloria O'Rourke**  
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**Web: <http://www.medamembers.org>**

What a pleasure it was to serve on the Havre Hill County Resource Team Assessment. Thank you for your warm welcome, your openness to the team's visit, your enthusiasm and for demonstrating over and over that it truly is "the people" of your region that makes it so unique.

### **MAIN TOPIC: AGRICULTURE**

#### **Issue: Value Added Ag**

It has become apparent to everyone involved in Agriculture that Montana producers must add value to their product. It is expensive to grow, market and ship Montana products, thus, we must add value to our product *before* sending it out.

## **Recommendations:**

Here are some resources/ideas for adding value to your products –

- Montana State University Extension has been involved with a variety of products concerning value added. A video has been produced and is available through Extension Publications and can be ordered through your local extension office or their website. The cost is \$24.95 for the video – it includes many ideas and resources.
- Although the Montana Cooperative Development Center was moved from Havre to Helena, it is still an excellent resource for innovative approaches to agriculture. (Perhaps if the Hill County area uses MCDC heavily, it will send a clear signal to return the center to Havre!)
- Taking a different spin, what about Ag Tourism? Activities designed to attract visitors and generate supplemental income for farmers and ranchers range from conducting tours and selling products directly from the farm to operating a bed and breakfast, allowing horseback riding, Dude Ranches (cattle branding) or holding festivals and other regional events on the land. Research shows that to be successful with Ag Tourism, the tourism side must be secondary to production. It has to be a working farm or agricultural concern that encourages access to visitors – a simple pretty scene involving a plow standing in a field, a goose and a cow or two, does not cut it. That is not ag tourism.
  - Create a committee to explore Ag Tourism in Hill County. Be sure to include the neighboring communities included in this report. What does the area have to offer? Take into consideration land resources, the different seasons and weather, buildings/facilities/corrals, and attractions (streams, wildlife, fishing, points of interest, etc.).
  - Match people on the committee with their strengths – who is good at marketing? Financing? Fund raising?
  - Compile a list of activities that you already do within the area – or on your farm/ranch that would appeal to the general public, i.e., Farmer’s Markets.
  - Assess what is lacking in your community/area – so that you are prepared for the visitors that will come.

Once you have some ideas in place, contact Montana Growth Through Agriculture office for assistance with marketing and expanding your ag business.

## **Resources for Value Added Ag:**

Value Added Ag Video: <http://www.montana.edu/publications> or your contact your local extension office at 406.265.5481.

Montana Cooperative Development Center: Ty Duncan, ph: 406.444.2402 email: [tduncan@state.mt.us](mailto:tduncan@state.mt.us)

Ag-Tourism: <http://www.montana.edu/wwwwrdc> Community Tourism Assessment Handbook and a great place to start: <http://www.sfc.ucdavis.edu/agritourism/factsheets.html>

Montana Growth Through Agriculture, Matt McKamey, 406.444.2402 email: [mmckamey@state.mt.us](mailto:mmckamey@state.mt.us)

## **MAIN TOPIC: AGRICULTURE**

### **Issue: Encouraging the next generation of farmers/ranchers**

#### **Recommendations:**

The Montana Farm Bureau Federation provides grants for use in educational forums or activities promoting agriculture. Grants cover two different areas – the first area is to reach out to students in grades K – 12. The second area provides financial assistance for programs or projects not directly affiliated with classrooms, i.e., extra curricular organizations, groups, clubs.

The American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture has a Commitment to Ag Scholarship Program. Eligible applicants must come from a farm family and plan to pursue a career in the field of agriculture. The competition is open to high school seniors across the U.S.

Montana does have its own Young Farmers and Ranchers Program that is a terrific resource.

Montana Department of Agriculture has a great resource on encouraging young farmers in Sam Antonick. Sam is the Ag Finance Loan Officer.

#### **Resources – encouraging the next generation**

Montana Farm Bureau Federation – <http://www.mfbf.org/newnews/mini%20grants.html> or call Diana at 406.587.3153.

American Farm Bureau Foundation for Ag – <http://www.mfbf.org/newnews/monsanto.html>

Young Farmers and Ranchers Program – contact Scott Kulbeck at 1.888.532.6601.

MT Dept. of Ag – Loan Finance Officer, Sam Antonick, ph: 444.5420. email: [santonick@state.mt.us](mailto:santonick@state.mt.us)

## **MAIN TOPIC: AGRICULTURE**

### **Issue: Retiring farmers/young farmers match program**

**Recommendations:** This idea (of matching retiring farmers to young farmers eager to begin) came for someone in a listening session. I got onto the Internet, did some searching, and came up with what I believe the individual was referring.

The program is called The National Farm Transition Network. The goal of this program: to support programs that foster the next generation of farmers and ranchers. The need this program addresses: The economic future of the nation's agriculture depends on the ability of a new generation to enter farming. I visited the website at <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/nftn/> and found that there is a Montana contact. I called

AERO and learned that the funding is no longer in place to maintain the Montana office, but Jonda would be glad to talk with any individuals about the program and provide “match” information. Even though Montana’s office is no longer funded, individuals can still participate in the program.

**Resources:**

Visit <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/nftn/> for entire program information.

Also contact: Montana Farm Link

Alternative Energy Resources Organization

432 NW Last Chance Gulch

Helena, MT 59601

Office: 406.443.7272

Fax: 406.442.9120

Contact: Jonda Crosby, Sustainable Ag Program Manager

[E-mail: aero@aeromt.org](mailto:aero@aeromt.org)

**MAIN TOPIC: AREA COMMUNITY ISSUES - BOX ELDER**

**Issue: Box Elder**

The team received a warm welcome from the community of Box Elder. Each individual’s participation was much appreciated. Several issues were raised in Box Elder: the need for basketball courts, drop out rate, senior citizens center, cultural center, litter issues and a recycling center.

**Issue: Box Elder Basketball Courts Drop Out Rate**

**Recommendations:** Here is a thought...perhaps by increasing the school spirit, and the community spirit for the school, both problems (basketball courts and drop out rate) could be addressed.

You just need a few tools to get the spirit rolling:

1. Discuss the issue with your Box Elder student leadership.
2. Appoint a “spirit” committee that will carry the torch to re-ignite school spirit
3. Visit the website at <http://www.spiritworks.com>. This website is loaded with ideas and plans as to how to re-ignite your school spirit, project focus and fund raising.
4. Do it!

A snippet of information from the website: Every kid deserves to feel like she or he goes to the best school in America. Students feel like their school is "Number One" when they sense a strong attachment- a feeling of belonging to something SPECIAL. The school with the most "spirit" is not necessarily the one with the loudest pep rallies, or the most championship teams, or the most posters in the gym at game time. But rather, the most spirited school is the one that has the largest percentage of students who feel like they belong, like it's *their*

*school, too*. The challenge of advisers and student leaders, as they begin another school year, --- perhaps their most significant challenge, is to plan as many ways as possible for ALL students at their school to become involved and thereby develop positive feelings about themselves and their school.

**Resources:**

Go to <http://www.ask.com> and type in: How do I improve school spirit? There are tons of ideas!

At <http://www.spiritworks.com>, order the book “Spirit Works, Turn it On!” for even more ideas.

**Issue: Box Elder - Litter issues/Recycling Center**

Several residents of Box Elder requested assistance in dealing with litter in the area and liked the idea of opening a recycling center. I have no doubt a recycling center would also assist with the litter problem.

**Recommendations:**

Headwaters RC&D, located in Butte, Montana, has done an outstanding job of creating and promoting recycling centers. Contact Headwaters to see what resources are available to you – including staff assistance and funding. Box Elder should work with the RC&D in its area – but I would not hesitate to contact Headwaters as well.

I know! What if the funds earned from the Recycling Center were used to pay for the new basketball courts?

**Resources:**

Headwaters RC&D, Connie Ternes-Daniels, ph: 406.782.7333 email: [ctdaniels@bigskyhsd.org](mailto:ctdaniels@bigskyhsd.org)

North Central RC&D, Larry Robertson, ph: 406.434.9161 email: [lrobertson@mt.usda.gov](mailto:lrobertson@mt.usda.gov)

**Issue: Kremlin – Gildford**

The people that met with the team in KG specifically expressed the need for playground equipment and improved signage for tourists.

**Issue: Kremlin – Gildford – Playground Equipment**

Recommendations: Please read the information under Box Elder regarding school spirit – a good dose of school and community spirit could go a long way toward new playground equipment. I did conduct a search, however, using the GrantStation database. Here are some possible funding sources/programs:

“The Rural Development: Community Facilities Grants Programs provides grants to assist in the development of essential community facilities in rural areas and towns of up to 20,000 in

population. Grants are authorized on a graduated scale. Applicants located in small communities with low populations and low incomes will receive a higher percentage of grants.

Grant funds may be used to assist in the development of essential community facilities. Grant funds can be used to construct, enlarge, or improve community facilities for health care, public safety, and community and public services. This can include the purchase of equipment required for a facility's operation. A grant may be made in combination with other Community Facilities financial assistance such as a direct or guaranteed loan, applicant contributions, or loans and grants from other sources.

The Community Facilities Grant Program is typically used to fund projects under special initiatives, such as Native American community development efforts; child care centers linked with the Federal government's Welfare-to-Work initiative; Federally-designated Enterprise and Champion Communities; and, the Northwest Economic Adjustment Initiative area.”

Also, consider contacting the US Dept of Health and Human Services: Native American Programs. Their grant criteria includes: governance projects which assist tribal and village governments, Native American institutions, and local leadership to exercise local control and decision-making over their resources; economic development projects, which promote the long term mobilization and management of economic resources necessary to achieve a diversified economy; and, social development projects which support local access to, control of, and coordination of services and programs for the social benefit of community members.

**Resources:**

USDA/RD, Bozeman, MT  
Sue Gants, Community Facilities Specialist  
Ph: 406.585.2555 email: Sue.Gantz@mt.usda.gov

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: Native American Programs  
Administration for Native Americans  
Mail Stop 8th Floor  
370 L'Enfant Promenade  
Washington, DC  
20447 - 0002  
**Phone:** 202-690-7776  
**Fax:** 202-690-7441  
**Email:** [ANA@acf.dhhs.gov](mailto:ANA@acf.dhhs.gov)  
**Url:** <http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/ana>

## **Issue: Kremlin-Gildford – improved signage for tourists**

### **Recommendations:**

There is very, very little signage to encourage a traveler to stop in the area – the few signs that do exist are old and faded. Visitors will not stop if they do not feel welcome or receive a bad first impression of the community.

### **Recommendation:**

Communities along the Hi-Line need to take advantage of the Interstate exits and/or Interstate traffic to market their community. Have two “Gateway” signs (coming and going) and work with your local artists to construct beautiful signs.

To provide more reasons for travelers to stop, developing a strategy outlining actions:

Identify kinds of visitors (i.e. leisure, pass through, sightseers, retirees, friends etc.)

1. Recreationists; destination visitors
2. Heritage/Cultural Travelers; seeking enrichment from local history
3. Commercial and Business Travelers; international trade, agency/business travelers

Identify where visitors come from. Tourism development efforts can focus on serving these markets more effectively by anticipating and fulfilling their needs. Pass-through tourists need visible information and activities (farmers market, hikes) and improvements to entrances/community appearance to entice them. Heritage and cultural travelers seek local history, culture and arts (historic buildings, community/tribal culture, local artists/craftsmen, events). Commercial travelers need business support services (data ports in hotel rooms, access to copying/printing services, meeting rooms, cell phone coverage). All of these segments seek good quality dining and shopping experiences.

You MUST visit the MT Dept. of Transportation website regarding Outdoor Advertising Regulations. <http://www.mdt.state.mt.us/rw/oacinfo.html> Here is a *small portion* of the information available on the website.

**C**ongress passed the Highway Beautification Act to control and limit signs along the interstate and primary highways which allows the traveling public to enjoy the nation's scenic beauty.

The Montana Legislature also enacted laws consistent with the federal act. Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) is responsible for enforcing these laws, and failure to do so could jeopardize millions of dollars in highway construction funds.

Outdoor advertising signs are not prohibited, but there are specific limitations such as where they may be located, how close they can be to other permitted signs, how large they can be, and how they must be maintained.

- Signs may be placed in areas that are zoned for commercial and industrial use or in unzoned areas where commercial or industrial activities are located. It's our responsibility to determine if those areas qualify for the placement of signs.

- Permitted signs must be at least 500 feet apart along interstate highways and 300 feet apart along primary highways. Outside of incorporated cities and towns they cannot be closer than 500 feet from a public park or public forest boundary. Also, they must be at least 500 feet from highway rest areas or from an interstate highway interchange

- Signs may vary in size but cannot be larger than 672 square feet in area. (A sign that is 48 feet long and 14 feet high is 672 square feet.) The sign cannot be more than 48 feet long and no higher than 30 feet above the surface of the roadway.

- In addition, there are several other regulations that may apply. Before applying for a sign permit, you should discuss your plans with a right-of-way agent at the [MDT district office](#) in your area.

**Resources:**

Montana Community Foundation  
Linda Reed  
101 N. Last Chance Gulch #211  
Helena, MT 59601 ph: 406.443.8313  
<http://www.mtcf.org>

For onsite signage assistance visit  
<http://www.sba.gov/starting/signage>

**Issue: Hingham and Rudyard**

Two specific issues were listed by the people of Hingham and Rudyard

- Year round pool use (Hingham) and
- Maintain Current Services

**Recommendations – Year Round Pool Use**

Polson, Montana, is working on a very large pool project – an aquatics center, actually. But I suggest you contact the coordinator and pick her brain for ideas and solutions to funding even a small pool project/expansion. Polson has struggled for 20 years to get this project rolling – and Tana Seeley is finally making it happen!

**Resources:**

Tana Seeley, Mission Valley Aquatics [mvaquatics@compuplus.net](mailto:mvaquatics@compuplus.net)

**Issue: Rudyard and Hingham – maintain current services**

**Recommendations:**

My memory is faltering a bit on this one...I am uncertain as to whether “services” refers to services such as water, infrastructure, and basic civic services, or if it refers to maintaining current services that businesses provide. Thus, my two directional recommendations.

First, if Rudyard/Hingham is concerned about maintaining current community services, it is essential that good communication takes place with local leadership and county leadership. Your County Commissioners need to be aware of pending problems and issues so that they can be addressed in a timely fashion. It is always best (I am sure I am not telling you anything new) to maintain relationships so that when a problem does arise – your network for action is already in place.

Second, if the area is concerned about business retention, please see the section under Regional Hub with the issue titled: Retail

**MAIN TOPIC: BUSINESS AND COMMERCE**

**Issue: Buy Local (see recommendation and resources under REGIONAL HUB**

**Issue: Attract tourists/Attract Canadians – see Kremlin-Gildford – improved signage for tourists (above)**

**Issue: Economic Development Funding**

I have participated in many Resource Team Assessments in which the community/area did not have an organization such as Bear Paw Development. The Havre/Hill County area is so fortunate to have this incredible asset...do whatever it takes to keep this organization running effectively. The staff of Bear Paw will bring in much more money and resources to your community than its operating costs require.

**Issue: Downtown Revitalization**

It is never soon enough to focus on downtown revitalization.

**Resources:**

I believe Havre/Hill County has dabbled with the Main Street program. I encourage you to talk to someone (George Everett) with the program that knows it inside and out to learn how Havre, especially, can benefit. Surrounding communities would benefit as well – as these areas expressed the desire for Havre to serve as a hub for expanded services. Evan Barrett of Butte Local Development Corporation has in depth knowledge of funding this type of program.

**Resources:**

George Everett, MainStreet Uptown Butte, ph: 497.6464 web: <http://www.mainstreetbutte.org>  
Evan Barrett, Butte Local Development Corp., ph: 723-4349, email: [ebarrett@bldc.net](mailto:ebarrett@bldc.net)

## **Issue: Old Post Office for Human Services Consolidation**

### **Recommendations:**

What a terrific idea! And...it is a do-able idea. I currently work in a building that served as Anaconda's hospital for many years. This building closed when a new hospital was built – and remained closed for over ten years. Jim Davison, of Anaconda Local Development, took on the task of re-opening the building for business. Currently, over 23 businesses reside in the four story building. Jim Davison would be happy to talk with anyone regarding the steps he went through and the many partners that were involved in the project.

### **Resources:**

Jim Davison, Anaconda Local Development Corp., ph: 406.563.5538 email: [jdavison@intch.com](mailto:jdavison@intch.com)

## **MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY**

### **Issue: Aging population, Population Loss, Loss of Youth**

#### **Recommendations:**

Something Hill County communities can do immediately is get on board the Come Home Montana website. This website is designed to match individuals who want to “come home” with job opportunities available in the state. This website is getting huge exposure as the university system is including the information in its alumni newsletters. Contact Julie Foster (there is no charge) and get your community listed today! Julie will provide you with a username and password, simple instructions, and you will be ready to welcome home Montanan's.

Sometimes we are our own worst enemy regarding the loss of our youth. We often encourage our young people to leave the state so that they can make a better living and earn higher wages. It is possible to keep our youth in Montana – but we must change the way we do business. Montana's youth must look past the usual business practices, the usual marketing techniques, and reach out to the world market that is so accessible via the internet today. We need to encourage our youth to become entrepreneurs and make a difference right where they live.

Finally, please note the 20 Clues to Rural Community Survival below. The Heartland Center Leadership Development published this information and is highly respected for its work.

#### **20 CLUES TO RURAL COMMUNITY SURVIVAL**

**1. Evidence of Community Pride:**

Successful communities are often showplaces of care, attention, history and heritage.

**2. Emphasis on Quality in Business and Community Life:**

People believe that something worth doing is worth doing right.

**3. Willingness to Invest in the Future:**

In addition to the brick-and-mortar investments, all decisions are made with an outlook on the future.

**4. Participatory Approach to Community Decision Making:**

Even the most powerful of opinion leaders seem to work toward building consensus.

**5. Cooperative Community Spirit:**

The stress is on working together toward a common goal, and the focus is on positive results.

**6. Realistic Appraisal of Future Opportunities:**

Successful communities have learned how to build on strengths and minimize weaknesses.

**7. Awareness of Competitive Positioning:**

Local loyalty is emphasized, but thriving communities know who their competitors are and position themselves accordingly.

**8. Knowledge of the Physical Environment:**

Relative location and available natural resources underscore decision-making.

**9. Active Economic Development Program:**

There is an organized, public/private approach to economic development.

**10. Deliberate Transition of Power to a Younger Generation of Leaders:**

People under 40 regularly hold key positions in civic and business affairs.

**11. Acceptance of Women in Leadership Roles:**

Women are elected officials, plant managers, and entrepreneurial developers.

**12. Strong Belief in and Support for Education:** Good schools are the norm and centers of community activity.

**13. Problem-Solving Approach to Providing Health Care:** Health care is considered essential, and smart strategies are in place for diverse methods of delivery.

**14. Strong Multi-Generational Family Orientation:**

The definition of family is broad, and activities include younger as well as older generations.

**15. Strong Presence of Traditional Institutions that are Integral to Community Life:**

Churches, schools and service clubs are strong influences on community development and social activities.

**16. Sound and Well-Maintained Infrastructure:**

Leaders work hard to maintain and improve streets, sidewalks, water systems, and sewage facilities.

**17. Careful Use of Fiscal Resources:**

Frugality is a way of life and expenditures are considered investments in the future.

**18. Sophisticated Use of Information Resources:**

Leaders access information that is beyond the knowledge base available in the community.

**19. Willingness to Seek Help from the Outside:**

People seek outside help for community needs, and many compete for government grants and contracts for economic and social programs.

**20. Conviction that, in the Long Run, You Have to Do It Yourself:**

Thriving rural communities believe their destiny is in their own hands. Making their communities good places is a pro-active assignment, and they willingly accept it.

\*Reprinted from Heartland Center Leadership Development, Spring 2002  
*Visions Newsletter.*

**Issue: Native Americans – transition support and incarceration costs**

**Recommendations:**

Larry Keown, of LDK Associates, is well known for educating, defining and improving tribal relationships. Larry has been active with many Native American projects that involve federal, state and local issues, which sometimes tangle with Native American issues. I encourage you to meet with Larry and use his resources in addressing these problems.

**Resources:**

Larry Keown, LDK Associates, ph: 307.673.4838 email: [lkeown@ldkassociates.com](mailto:lkeown@ldkassociates.com)  
<http://www.ldkassociates.com>

## **MAIN TOPIC: EDUCATION**

### **Issue: Coordinate/Partner more closely with high schools and MSU Northern**

In my experience, communities with high schools would love to access resources from their nearest higher education institution. Also, I have no doubt that higher ed institutions, such as MSU Northern, would love to promote itself and make known all of its resources to neighboring communities.

### **Recommendations:**

If high schools and higher ed institutions BOTH wish to have closer relationships, why doesn't it happen? Often, there is a communication gap – and it is more likely that area communities have no idea what MSU Northern has to offer. What a shame and a waste of resources.

To me (and I could be over simplifying this) it is a problem that must be addressed “on purpose.” Someone...and therein lies the problem...*someone* must make it a priority to begin building the bridge that will allow MSU Northern to access the area high schools, and in exchange, allow the school systems to access MSU Northern. But again, there needs to be a designated person, committee or taskforce that focuses on this purpose. Otherwise...it will not get done.

### **Issue: Transient Student Issue**

### **Recommendations:**

I recently learned about a Superintendent of Schools in Worcester, Massachusetts, that has put on workshops regarding the transient student issue. It would be worth your time to visit James Caradonio's website and contact him with additional information.

### **Resources:**

Superintendent James Caradonio

Web: <http://www.wpsweb.com/administration/supt/>

Phone: 508.799.3115. email: [caradonio@worc.k12.ma.us](mailto:caradonio@worc.k12.ma.us)

## **MAIN TOPIC: INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Issues:** The people of Hill County mentioned infrastructure issues ranging from water systems to streets to sidewalks.

### **Recommendations:**

I have no doubt that Bear Paw Development can assist you with all infrastructure issues. In addition, Randy Hanson, who serves as the Regional Development Officer for Montana Department of Commerce, is very familiar with state programs that address infrastructure needs. In addition, it has been said that USDA/Rural Development could build a community on its programs alone. Please do not hesitate to call upon these resources!

### **Resources:**

Entire crew of Bear Paw Development, 406.265.9225

Randy Hanson, MDOC/RDO, 406.262.9579. email: [hanson@ibic4.ibic.org](mailto:hanson@ibic4.ibic.org)

USDA/RD, ph: 406.585.2580 web: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt>

### **Issue: Long Distance – Expanded Service Area**

**Recommendations:** This is another issue that must be tackled “on purpose” by several dedicated individuals leading the way. To telephone a friend or business in Butte from Anaconda used to be a long distance call; the same from Anaconda to Deer Lodge. One reason our service area was expanded to make these now “local” calls was due to a letter writing campaign from local citizens. The phone company we dealt with was then US WEST, currently Qwest.

#### **Resources:**

Local citizens dedicated to the Expanded Service Area project.

Contact Rick Hays of Qwest to learn all of the details on expanded service. Ph: 406.441.7700. email: [rhays@qwest.com](mailto:rhays@qwest.com)

### **MAIN TOPIC: REGIONAL HUB**

#### **Issue: Retail – Buy Local**

It was refreshing to learn that the communities surrounding Havre expressed support for utilizing Havre as a regional hub for the area. The area communities realize the ideal location of Havre and appreciate the services Havre provides. At the same time, surrounding communities do not want to lose ground with the businesses and services they currently hold.

#### **Recommendations:**

Buying local is an issue near and dear to my heart. ☺ All it took for me to have a tender conscience shopping outside of Anaconda was to serve as our local United Way President. I soon realized how often our local businesses are leaned on for support – whether for personnel, products or cold hard cash. And how do we acknowledge their support? By shopping out of town! I realize that not everything is available in any local community, but at least give your local businesses the courtesy of visiting their place of business...first.

Another factor (besides guilt) that opened my eyes to the evils of shopping out of town – is the expense. Al Jones, Regional Development Officer for SouthCentral Montana shared the following information:

“ Most folks barely account for the cost of gas when they drive 100 miles to shop at big box stores, grocers, etc. and this mileage cost from AAA assumes THEIR TIME IS WORTH NOTHING. In other words, that they're unemployed, pay no one for timesaving services like day care or lawn mowing, and that they'd just be home watching TV during the hours spent driving. So by running to the distant stores 1x-4x a month, in most cases the shopper is actually reducing their purchasing power while also wasting a day in the process.

Take AAA's current numbers, i.e. .501 cents a mile and multiply that by the actual mileage to the 1-2 primary shopping destinations of your town, (don't forget to figure it as a round trip.)

60 mile jaunt = 120 miles @ .501 = \$60 cost so if they really saved 20% shopping there on everything (very unlikely), they have to buy \$300 worth of stuff or about a full week's after tax wages for the average Montanan. Just a thought, since penny-pinchers tend to be penny-wise, pound-foolish. It's also why the large discount stores have far higher net profit rates than average retail stores (see [www.chainstoreage.com](http://www.chainstoreage.com) for the breakdown by store type.)”

**Recommendation:** Take the AAA driving cost per mile, multiply that with the roundtrip mileage to the retail centers your shoppers regularly drive to "to save big money" and then show the math, perhaps on billboards on the way out of town.

**Resource:**

[www.chainstoreage.com](http://www.chainstoreage.com)

**Issue: Regional Hub – Buy Local – Business Retention**

It is obvious that local communities (as well as Havre) need to focus on retaining the businesses they currently have. We all know that it is easier to grow a current business than to recruit a new one.

**Recommendations:** consider the following article by Del Birch of Business Retention Technologies <http://www.brt-inc.org/index.html>

**12 Essential Steps for Jumpstarting the Business Retention Process**

Creating an effective, sustainable business retention program *looks* easy on paper. Actually implementing it is *easier said than done*. Providing an ongoing retention program that delivers value to your community is a significant accomplishment and a major competitive advantage for your community.

*Here are 12 essential steps that economic development and community leaders can take to create an effective program sustainable over the long term.*

Again, we offer a note of caution: these steps only look easy on paper. Creating and then maintaining an ongoing retention program is not easy. Here's another caveat: this is not an *a la carte* line where steps can be taken – or missed – at will. Building an effective, **sustainable retention program is a systematic** process. Each step in the process is critical and essential.

There's no question that retention takes a substantial investment in time, energy and willpower. While the investment is high, the potential return on investment is equally high – keeping wealth and job creating companies in your community and growing job opportunities for area residents.

Remember what every private sector company already knows: *satisfied customers* – your community's employers – *typically don't leave*.

**Step #1 Recognize the value of retaining existing businesses.**

Attraction or retention? Consider that up to 80% of job growth in any community is generated by firms already located in the community.<sup>1</sup> Can you really afford to ignore the customers – your community’s existing employers – that you already have?

**Step #2     Generate a commitment from key service providers. Build the team.**

Retention requires a team of dedicated service providers who are ready (and willing) to respond to customer needs identified through the interview or outreach process. Don’t bother with outreach without a strong, committed, dedicated team in place. And, don’t expect the team to coalesce immediately. Team-building takes time so start early.

**Step#3        Focus on a common objective: job growth through retention and expansion of existing businesses.**

The objective is simple: create more jobs at existing firms. How is this done? First, use outreach to build relationships and identify the firm’s needs. Second, deliver required services efficiently, enhancing the firm’s bottom line. Third, maintain open lines of communications with CEOs to ensure that they are happy and satisfied.

**Step #4        Target specific business segments yielding the highest return on investment.**

Economic development organizations have limited budgets, staffs and time. It makes sense to target limited resources to those firms that have the highest propensity to create jobs and wealth. Retention is Darwinistic. Focus limited resources on winners, not losers.

**Step #5        Create an efficient team communications network.**

Winning teams know each player’s strengths and weaknesses. Winning teams communicate efficiently. Today, winning teams in business use technology and email to communicate quickly and efficiently.

**Step #6        Initiate customer outreach**

Why talk to your community’s business owners? You want to accomplish specific goals: 1) learn more about the companies that employ area residents; 2) identify the needs of the company and then deliver those services efficiently; 3) learn what business owners like and dislike about the business climate in your community and state; and, 4) use this knowledge and intelligence to constantly improve service delivery and the business climate.

**Step #7        Create a useable, accessible, dynamic customer database.**

Empower your team to efficiently meet the needs of businesses by giving them the data, knowledge and intelligence gathered through outreach. Databases are useless unless they are used. Allow service providers on the local retention team to access company profiles and satisfy customer needs faster, smarter and better.

**Step #8        Respond to customer needs consistently and promptly.**

Train your team to respond to pre-qualified company needs quickly. The service provider receiving a referral should contact the CEO within 24 to 48 hours for a follow-up meeting. This demonstrates to the CEO that the local economic development team understands the real time constraints that the firm faces in today’s dynamic business environment.

**Step #9 Use the database to anticipate needs.**

The data from your outreach effort is current, accurate and highly specific to your community and region. Analyze it for opportunities to add services, improve existing services, and identify programs and policies that can make your community and state more competitive. You're gathering relevant, accurate information from your business owners so use it!

**Step #10 Measure customer satisfaction.**

Adopt another technique from the private sector: call companies requesting assistance and ask if they were happy with the assistance provided to them. Follow-up with the customer to ensure customer satisfaction. This strengthens the customer relationship and provides valuable feedback about the quality of programs and service delivery.

**Step #11 Make necessary changes to increase customer satisfaction.**

Follow-up with the customer provides a good checks and balances for the team. It identifies those service providers who are doing a superior job – and those who are not. Use this information to strengthen the team and replace non-performers with service providers totally committed to superior customer satisfaction. Customer follow-up can identify opportunities to improve program. Use this feedback to make programs more user-friendly.

**Step #12 Constantly strengthen the team to benefit the customer.**

Once you have a team in place, use it to benefit the customer. Tap the expertise of your multi-organization team as an informal economic/community development “think tank.” Analyze gaps in resources and programs. Create and/or suggest new programs or program enhancements. Respond to recurring problems or opportunities. And, always remember: *satisfied customers typically don't leave.*

## **MAIN TOPIC: REGIONAL ISSUES**

### **Issue: Duplication of Dispatch Services**

Apparently, there is duplication of services between Hill County and the City of Havre, i.e., dispatch services.

**Recommendation:** Resources are so very hard to come by; it is important that waste and duplication are minimized. However, this issue must be approached cautiously and sensitively as jobs may be at stake. Perhaps a neutral task force could be appointed to determine just where overlaps exist – if indeed they do. (Perhaps the problem is more a communication gap than a duplication of services.) Once the duplication has been pinpointed, it will be easier to adjust an employee’s job description and adjust accordingly. It is hoped that no jobs would be lost – but that city and county agencies would operate more efficiently.

### **Resources:**

Local taskforce

**Issue: Revitalize Smaller Towns in the Area – please see Regional Hub information above.**

**Recommendations:** Consider encouraging entrepreneurial efforts in your community. With our world of ever-changing business practices and access to a global market, why not go into business for yourself? There are many resources to assist you in getting started.

### **Resources:**

First, read the “Are You Qualified to be an Entrepreneur” article published by the Startup Journal (of the Wall Street Journal), then take the quiz “Test Your Entrepreneurial Potential.” This information is available at the Wall Street Journal website at <http://startup.wsj.com>

Next, visit the Montana Finance Online website to learn of all the financial resources that are available to you. <http://mtfinanceonline.com/>

Also, visit <http://www.matr.net/print-9255.html> to read an article titled “Management Lessons from a Young Entrepreneur.” - and learn from another’s experience.

Finally, as there are so very many resources available to entrepreneurs, go to [www.ask.com](http://www.ask.com) and type in “Help for entrepreneurs.” Happy exploring! Check out <http://www.tannedfeet.com/>

## **MAIN TOPIC: YOUTH**

### **Issue: School Paper**

The students we visited with were very interested in re-starting a school paper. It appears, however, that there are content concerns by school administrators.

**Recommendations:**

About one hundred years ago ;-)) I served on the student journalism crew for my high school newspaper. Our school administrators had similar concerns regarding content and editorial authority. We worked around this issue by taking a draft of the paper to a committee representing adults, teachers, administrators and students. The meeting was not lengthy, and usually, everyone was in agreement as to articles and content. Now and then, however, a problem or conflict would appear. When this happened, the article was shelved until the matter could be discussed in more detail. There were “rules” for discussion – such as speaking respectfully, one person speaks at a time, etc.

**Resources:**

Student leaders could work with an English/Journalism teacher and make an appointment to talk with school administrators to begin discussing this issue again.

**Issue: Lack of community attachment – feel disengaged.** Please review Area Community Issues – Box Elder and note the School Spirit information. “Spirited” activities would surely engage the students as well as the community.

**Issue: More emphasis on non-athletic activities**

It is a common problem in our schools today – athletes are recognized in the paper, on the gym floor, and are easily in the spotlight.

**Recommendation:**

If your school does not already have one, create the criteria for excellent students to earn an Academic Letter. This was an issue at Anaconda High School several years ago. If a letter jacket is a symbol of achieving excellence in sports, why can’t a gifted student receive a symbol of excellence (a letter jacket) for excellence in academics? Many schools now have an Academic Letter award in place.

**Resources:**

Talk with your school counselor about initiating an Academic Letter in your school.

**Report by: Evan Barrett**  
**Executive Director**  
**Butte Local Development Corporation**  
**P.O. Box 507**  
**Butte, MT 59703**  
**Ph: 406.723.4349 Fx: 406.723.4672**  
**Email: [ebarrett@bldc.net](mailto:ebarrett@bldc.net)**  
**Web: <http://www.buttemontana.org>**

It was a real pleasure to have the opportunity to share the greater part of two days with the fine citizens of Havre and Hill County. And it was an eye-opener for me – someone who has not been to the area for a number of years!

The breadth and depth of what the area has to offer to its citizens is surprising. The attractiveness of the area and the level of community commitment of the people are all unbelievable assets. You have much to work with in addressing the issues that were brought forth during our visit.

As the last contributor to this written document, I have had the opportunity to peruse the advice and counsel offered by my fellow team members. They have done an outstanding job in articulating possible solutions and suggesting sources of support.

I will not attempt to repeat their advice, but will seek through this report to fill the gaps with information I can provide.

## **MAIN TOPIC: AGRICULTURE**

### **Issue: Value Added Ag**

#### **Recommendation:**

In addition to the information presented earlier, I would suggest that you contact the Montana Department of Agriculture and review the numerous studies that have been completed under the Growth Through Agriculture program over the last 15 years. Many of these studies provide valuable information and ideas regarding value-adding opportunities.

#### **Resource :**

Growth Through Agriculture  
Matt McKamey  
P.O. Box 200201  
Helena, MT 59620-0201  
Ph: 406.444.2402  
Email: [mmckamey@state.mt.us](mailto:mmckamey@state.mt.us)

**Issue: Captive market, lack of competition, Ag shipping/freight issues –**

**Recommendations:**

These issues are interconnected. The root of the problem is the limitation of shipping in the area to one single market dominant carrier, in this case, BNSF. Solutions are macro in nature and will require action on the part of Congress or the Interstate Commerce Commission. I would first check with the Montana Department of Agriculture to see if any actions are pending before the ICC in this regard. I would also suggest contact with the members of the Montana Congressional delegation to see if there is a legislative remedy to the situation. It is unlikely that additional rail can be laid to provide competition, so that competitor use of the existing BNSF rail is the most likely solution, which could be guaranteed by Congressional action. Give it a try. It may not bear fruit, but it is better than just complaining about the difficult situation. Another contact point of this would be the Montana Grain Growers Association in Great Falls.

**Resources:**

Montana Department of Agriculture  
Agricultural Development Division  
Will Kissinger  
Ph: 406.444.2402  
Email: [wkissinger@state.mt.us](mailto:wkissinger@state.mt.us)  
Web: <http://www.agr.state.mt.us>

Senator Max Baucus  
State of Montana  
511 Hart Senate Office Bldg  
Washington, DC 20510  
(800) 332-6106 (202) 228-3687  
<http://www.senate.gov/~baucus>

Senator Conrad Burns  
State of Montana  
187 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg.  
Washington, DC 20510  
(202) 224-2644  
<http://burns.senate.gov/mailform.htm>  
<http://burns.senate.gov>

Congressman Denny Rehberg  
516 Cannon HOB  
Washington, DC 20515  
(202) 225-3211 (202) 225-5687  
[denny\\_rehberg@mail.house.gov](mailto:denny_rehberg@mail.house.gov)

Montana Graingrowers Association  
750 6th St. S.W., P.O. Box 1165, Great Falls, MT 59403  
Phone: 406-761-4596, Fax: 406-761-4606,  
E-mail: [mgga@mgga.org](mailto:mgga@mgga.org)  
Web: <http://www.mgga.org>

**Issue: Inter-modal loading for specialty crops**

**Recommendation:**

Good advice and counsel may be available from the Port in Shelby, which has created an intermodal operation there.

**Resources:**

Port of Northern Montana  
Larry Bonderud  
112 1<sup>st</sup> St. South  
Shelby, MT 59474  
Ph: 406.434.5203 Fx: 406.434.2761  
Email: [shbnet@3rivers.net](mailto:shbnet@3rivers.net)  
Web: <http://www.pnmshelby.com>

**MAIN TOPIC: AREA COMMUNITY ISSUES**

**Main issue: RUDYARD Current Services**

**Recommendations:**

My recollection of these discussions was that it did not involve services like water and sewer, but focused on keeping government and commercial services present such as auto mechanic, a grocery store, theater, etc. In essence keeping something there that creates a Mainstreet with some activity instead of empty buildings.

In this regard, much was said about the positive way the partnership of the county government with several private entities in the center that included the Senior programs, the local restaurant and a hairdresser – all in one building. This presented a “critical mass” (in a small way) that may have made this building, along with the school. The “core” of the community.

Investigation of whether this approach can be replicated or expanded is worth considering. A core public building with modules in it or attached to it could provide an opportunity for small and sometimes challenged businesses to survive in a small community. Because co-locating businesses provides a central “draw” (think of the concept of the shopping center), the customer “traffic” that is essential for commercial survival is present.

I would suggest contact with Larry Gallagher of HUD to see if he can find some cases where this or something similar has been done. He is a great resource.

**Resource:**

Larry Gallagher, HUD  
Office of Field Policy & Mgmt  
7th West Sixth Ave.  
Helena, MT 59601  
(406) 447-1480 (406) 449-5052  
lawrence\_gallagher@hud.gov  
www.hud.gov

## **MAIN TOPIC: BUSINESS AND COMMERCE**

### **Issue: Buy Local**

#### **Recommendations:**

This is a key component of the “Regional Center” concept. I believe that it is about shaping attitudes and marketing is a key to that. People can be persuaded to be loyal to spending their money locally if they understand what is available – and feel like it is a good and almost patriotic thing to do.

First, you need this to be an exciting and identifiable effort – almost like a campaign. You need a good theme. It needs to reach everyone – bumper stickers (about the idea of a regional center and local buying). Signs billboards, store signs, window decals, etc – visible signs. Donated space in the local paper and donated ads on the local radio and cable TV stations (all or partial) will help. Those usually provide a framework for cooperative advertising by commercial businesses.

Primarily this is about branding and selling, using every tool at your disposal.

I have no particular resources for this approach – I just know that it works as well as anything.

#### **Resource:**

Evan Barrett, Executive Director  
Butte Local Development Corporation  
P.O. Box 507  
Butte, MT 59703  
Ph: 406.723.4349 Fx: 406.723.4672  
Email: [ebarrett@bldc.net](mailto:ebarrett@bldc.net)

### **Issue: Economic Development funding**

#### **Recommendations:**

Section 90-5-112, MCA <http://data.opi.state.mt.us/bills/mca/90/5/90-5-112.htm> provides that the local government can levy taxes to support economic development. That needs to be investigated. Is your city or county at the spending cap? That will determine if a public vote is required or whether the governing body can enact the levy by a vote. This is a tool within your own local control.

Additional state funding may be possible depending upon legislative action. The Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA) is proposing state legislation that would create an Economic Development Trust Fund for a long-term source of state funding that could go to local efforts. Paul Tuss is the current president of MEDA and also serves on its legislative Committee. He can provide you information. Further, the community should be making it clear to all Legislative candidates that it wants them to support this and other economic development funding bills in the Legislature in 2005.

**Resources:**

Paul Tuss, President of MEDA

Ph: 406.265.9226 email: [ptuss@bearpaw.org](mailto:ptuss@bearpaw.org)

**Issue:**

**Downtown Revitalization**

**Recommendation:**

Creation of a Tax Increment District to implement an urban renewal plan is the minimum that can and should be done in an effort to revitalize the core “downtown” of Havre. As nice as it is to see growth on the edges of Havre, that is just a small version of the “sprawl” that has plagued larger cities. Revitalizing the core takes a real commitment, a real effort and some financial resources. *The combination of an urban renewal plan and a tax increment district is the proven tool for working with this problem.* I would also throw in that a key to a successful downtown revitalization is the proper use of existing building infrastructure and making sure that there is adequate and customer friendly parking.

This is an extraordinarily complex issue and skilled and experienced help is needed. We in Butte Silver Bow would be willing to share our experiences and even our local government ordinances that create and implement the concept. That can help the local city or county attorney in a great way, as they will not have to re-invent the wheel. Likewise, advice and counsel is available.

**Resources:**

Larry Gallagher, HUD

Office of Field Policy & Mgmt

7th West Sixth Ave.

Helena, MT 59601

(406) 447-1480 (406) 449-5052

[lawrence\\_gallagher@hud.gov](mailto:lawrence_gallagher@hud.gov)

[www.hud.gov](http://www.hud.gov)

Janet Cornish – Community Development Services of Montana

Ph: 406-723-7991 (she was the first Director of the Butte-Silver Bow Urban Revitalization Agency and is now a consultant on these issues – a very excellent and professional source.)

George Everett – Executive Director of Mainstreet Uptown Butte

Email: [director@mainstreetbutte.org](mailto:director@mainstreetbutte.org)

Web: <http://www.mainstreetbutte.org>

Pam Haxby-Cote – 406-497-6467 – current first Director of the Butte-Silver Bow Urban Revitalization Agency email: phaxby@co.silverbow.mt.us

**Issue: Housing (Atrium)**

**Recommendations:**

Having a great downtown building for aggregate housing is a good “core” project for a downtown effort. The first issue is the “market” as housing that sits empty is of no use and ultimately makes a project “fold”. Parking is also essential. For a customer base I suggest working with Northern Montana College – additional good quality student apartments are likely to be needed. This kind of project is very common and there are models available. The best contact on this in terms of both information and programs is HUD.

**Resource:**

MSU Northern

Larry Gallagher – HUD  
Office of Field Policy & Mgmt  
7th West Sixth Ave.  
Helena, MT 59601  
(406) 447-1480 (406) 449-5052  
lawrence\_gallagher@hud.gov  
www.hud.gov

**Issue: Old Post Office for Human Services Consolidation**

**Recommendations:**

This, again, is a classic model done in many areas. Cooperation and coordination with the agencies is essential. Getting the ball rolling on such a plan requires that political leadership (the Governor, the mayor and city council, the Congressional delegation) all agree to help make the project real. That is the best way to send a signal to agencies that sometimes block such efforts – the specific agencies themselves as well as the administrative controlling agencies, such as the Montana Department of Administration and the federal General Services Administration. If you do not have buy-in at the leadership level, these things will not happen. So start there.

**Resources:**

Governor Judy Martz  
Room 204, State Capitol  
P.O. Box 200801  
Helena, MT 59620-0801  
Ph: 406.444.3111  
Web: <http://www.state.mt.us/governor/governor.htm>

Senator Max Baucus  
State of Montana  
511 Hart Senate Office Bldg

Washington, DC 20510  
(800) 332-6106 (202) 228-3687  
<http://www.senate.gov/~baucus>

Senator Conrad Burns  
State of Montana  
187 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg.  
Washington, DC 20510  
(202) 224-2644  
<http://burns.senate.gov/mailform.htm>  
<http://burns.senate.gov>

Congressman Denny Rehberg  
516 Cannon HOB  
Washington, DC 20515  
(202) 225-3211 (202) 225-5687  
[denny\\_rehberg@mail.house.gov](mailto:denny_rehberg@mail.house.gov)

Larry Gallagher – HUD  
Office of Field Policy & Mgmt  
7th West Sixth Ave.  
Helena, MT 59601  
(406) 447-1480 (406) 449-5052  
[lawrence\\_gallagher@hud.gov](mailto:lawrence_gallagher@hud.gov)  
[www.hud.gov](http://www.hud.gov)

Local City Leaders

Local Legislators

## **MAIN TOPIC: EDUCATION**

### **Issue: Trade degrees**

#### **Recommendations:**

In this regard I will only want to add that coordination between management and labor helps these things to happen. That is why, in addition to working with contractor associations, you work with the labor unions that represent the trades. I suggest starting with John Forkan, President of the Montana Building and Construction Trades Council.

#### **Resource:**

John Forkan  
Plumbers and Fitters No. 41

3345 Harrison Ave.  
Butte, MT 59701  
Ph: 406.494.3051

## **MAIN TOPIC: INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **Issue: Sidewalk over Havre Beneath the Streets**

#### **Recommendations:**

My understanding of the problem here is that the Montana Department of Transportation (MDOT) is doing a road project and part of that is curbs, gutters and sidewalks. They are apparently unwilling to pay for the more expensive vaulted version of sidewalks that are needed to protect the Havre Beneath the Streets (HBS) historic situation.

The primary source of resolution of this in favor of the more expensive sidewalks is the historic nature of the Havre beneath the Streets. *Federal agencies are not allowed to take any action that would damage or destroy an historic resource.* If there is no alternative to damaging or destroying, then there must be “mitigation” provided, which is usually in the form of cash that can be used to enhance some other historic property or add amenities such as signage, etc.

Getting an agency such as MDOT to comply will require vigilance and involvement of the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). This will be easier if HBS is a designated or recognized historic property already.

My suggestion is to contact SHPO and talk to them about the situation. I would also talk to MDOT Department Director Dave Galt. In addition, putting some politics to bear on the situation would also be beneficial. In that vein, I would put together a team of local leaders (city government, Legislators, tourism folks) and sit down with the Governor to discuss the situation. Show a strong united front on the issue. Finally, I would talk to the Congressional delegation. Senator Max Baucus is on the committee that puts together the Highway Bill – with up to \$400 million annually over the next 5 years for Montana. Senator Conrad Burns is on the Appropriations Committee. Perhaps they can apply some pressure on MDOT from the top on down through the Federal Highway Administration.

#### **Resources:**

State Historic Preservation Office  
Mark Baumler, Ph. D.  
(406) 444-7715  
Email: [mbaumler@state.mt.us](mailto:mbaumler@state.mt.us)  
Web: <http://his.state.mt.us/shpo/default.asp>

Montana Department of Transportation  
Director Dave Galt  
Ph: 406.444.6201  
Email: [dgalt@state.mt.us](mailto:dgalt@state.mt.us)

Governor Judy Martz  
Room 204, State Capitol  
P.O. Box 200801  
Helena, MT 59620-0801  
Ph: 406.444.3111  
Web: <http://www.state.mt.us/governor/governor.htm>

Senator Max Baucus  
State of Montana  
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Washington, DC 20510  
(800) 332-6106 (202) 228-3687  
<http://www.senate.gov/~baucus>

Senator Conrad Burns  
State of Montana  
187 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg.  
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(202) 224-2644  
<http://burns.senate.gov/mailform.htm>  
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Congressman Denny Rehberg  
516 Cannon HOB  
Washington, DC 20515  
(202) 225-3211 (202) 225-5687  
[denny\\_rehberg@mail.house.gov](mailto:denny_rehberg@mail.house.gov)

## **MAIN TOPIC: REGIONAL HUB**

### **Issue: Retail and Buy Local**

#### **Recommendations:**

See Buy Local above. I would like to add to the previous information that the “branding” of Havre as the regional center, for shopping and other things involves a good slogan – one that can be used to discuss Havre relative to shopping, services like medical, recreation, etc. An example would be something like “Havre – Heart of the Highline”. That, along with a good visual logo, would fit all kinds of advertising – radio, TV, newspaper. Same with bumper stickers, signs, etc. Radio and TV can use this with their call letters (“This is KOJM in Havre, Heart of the Highline”). Repetition is the key to this kind of image. Door decals could be placed on every commercial door in Havre telling the customer to either push or pull the door (“PUSH – for Havre – Heart of the Hi-Line” or PULL for Havre – Heart of the Hi-Line”). Your imagination can add more uses for the slogan and logo, but getting local people in their own advertising, the media itself, to do so will help to “brand” Havre as the center. That can then be used in various appeals such as shopping locally and bringing folks from surrounding areas into Havre.

### **Issue: Perception Change –**

**Recommendations:**

The slogan and logo referred to earlier, along with media and advertising, if done effectively enough, often enough and long enough will go a long way to changing the perception. Advertising works – you just have to think of advertising to *yourself* regarding image and identity. A slogan like “Havre – It’s the People” is accurate and makes everyone feel good about themselves, but a slogan such as that described above could really serve a commercial and community purpose.

**MAIN TOPIC: REGIONAL ISSUES - TRANSPORTATION**

**Issue: Need for competition (See Captive Market/Lack of Competition above)**

**Issue: BNSF Regional asset**

**Recommendation:**

You undoubtedly have a love-hate relationship with BNSF. You love having them there, but want them to be better to you. All I can say here is to keep the balance in the relationship. There are times they will want and need your support and times they will need a “swift kick”. Good luck!

**Resource:**

John Karl Manager Economic Development  
Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway  
2454 Occidental Ave.; Suite 1-A  
Seattle, WA 98134  
(206) 625-6171 (206) 625-6471  
john.karl@bnsf.com  
<http://www.bnsf.com>

**HAVRE HILL COUNTY RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT  
NOVEMBER 18 – 19, 2003  
LISTENING NOTES**

## **KREMLIN-GILDFORD – CHALLENGES**

- Loss of population
- Ditto
- Crop prices
- CRP spending income outside of area
- Ditto
- Lack of volunteerism
- Community does not want to pull together except for tragedy situations
- Not “big enough” to attract people
- Need outlet to promote what they have
- Corporate control
- Dwindling tax base causes challenges in providing essential services
- Only 2 elevators to service the entire county
- Ditto
  - Causes grain marketing issues because they have to sit in line
  - Ditto Ditto
- Kids get a good education and leave the area for “better” jobs
- Farmers are not encouraging their children to continue on the farm – sending population away.
- No control over the weather
- Decline in numbers of children in school
- Employment opportunities that pay more than the minimum wage
- Aging infrastructure

## **HAVRE HILL COUNTY RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT INVERNESS – RUDYARD – HINGHAM CHALLENGES**

- Declining population – due to multiple causes (result of low commodity prices, CRP,
- Ag base decline –
- Hard to make an adequate profit given prices today.
- Kids leave and don’t come back – no opportunities here
- Becoming an old populated community
- Ditto – losing our critical mass
- No one is having babies anymore
- RR crossing kept decent
- Water – poor water pressure
- Sewer system
- Long distance phone calls to call six miles apart (Triangle is working on it)
- Money coming in to hire teachers and run building is not sufficient
- Recreational facilities need to be improved more
- Provide programs to keep kids busy – year round
- Ag issues depressed – no new jobs or business to draw young people
- With aging population – volunteers shrinking
- Sewer system

- Schools – future funding grim
- Loss of infrastructure support as population declines
- Old housing that is decayed
- Jobs and the economy – how do you keep it going and maintain the infrastructure
- Ditto – lack of good paying jobs
- CRP – if people could make a profit they wouldn't use CRP
- Must maintain Ambulance Service (Hingham, Rudyard)
- Churches struggle to remain independent

### **BOX ELDER – CHALLENGES**

- Lack of infrastructure for our small community
- Not inviting for people to start businesses
- Population coming to Box Elder – would justify improved infrastructure
- Need more pavement
- Ditto
- Need a Senior Citizen Center in Box Elder
- Litter – embarrassing
- Activities for kids – basketball courts – are in bad shape
- Drugs and alcohol issues
- Drop out rate
- Lack of education for our kids – secure more funding to have more staff
- Unemployment – can't find work
- Transportation – from reservation into Havre or other hi-line areas for medical services
- Teach children hygiene
- Racism – between tribes, between non-tribal communities, Great Falls people to people on the hi-line, etc.

### **MSU NORTHERN AND HAVRE PUBLIC SCHOOLS – CHALLENGES**

- Reduction and enrollment which leads to reduction in funding
- Transient rate for our schools is above 20% - kids start with us, go somewhere else (change guardianship, etc.) and are often back before the school year is over
- Ag area – CRP and impact to the local economy – businesses that supported large farm operations are no longer here
- Challenge is to provide educational opportunities for kids on an ever declining budget
- Transportation is a huge issue – Amtrak and Big Sky essential air – if they shut down we will be a very isolated community. Amtrak comes up every fiscal year.
- CRP – more CRP acres in our county than in any county. People don't buy insurance, machinery, etc. People take their money and leave town.
- Ditto – CRP
- Lack of support for education from the legislature – we are in survival mode
- 1226 in 1971, 72 – today's count of the high school is 700. District wide we had 2,650 eight years ago to a little under 2000 right now.
- Story is the same across the hi-line.
- Transportation issue is a big one

- Population is aging
- Ag technology has improved which leads to a reduction of population/work on farms
- Jeopardize our future by not funding secondary education
- Harmful shift of funding education to the local tax payers
- Sidewalks over Havre Beneath the Streets – about \$600,000 to repair.
- No commercial bus lines

### **HAVRE CHAMBER – CHALLENGES**

- Havre airport – needs a facelift
- Transportation – constant battle with Amtrak, air, highways, rail
- Remote
- Challenge to get people to understand why we live here – we are not seen as a place to live and stay
- Lack of new money coming into community
- Location
- Convey our Havre Has It notion - to prevent leakage – shopping down the road
- Keeping customer loyalty
- Declining population
- Consolidation of mom and pop farms
- Need for economic development to replace gaps in farm economy
- Lack of tournaments in Havre – hard to recruit them here – perceived that we do not have services
- Transportation – bus service, improve highway
- Freight rates – not competitive
- CRP - has killed us
- We have our skeptics – an idea is raised and skeptics sabotage it – point out all that could go wrong
- Perception that Havre is the end of the earth
- Getting new money
- CRP – has hurt badly
- Stakeholders in our community – it is not someone else’s job to do something
- Continuing to fight to save our education – Northern
- Apathy – it is always someone else’s job to do it, fix it

### **RETAIL/BUSINESS/UTILITIES – CHALLENGES**

- Connectional transportation issues – airport, highway
- CRP
- Ditto both of the above
- Stable and educated workforce – training needed
- Streets and roads in town – need paved
- Infrastructure in general – sewer, water mains, including towns along the hi-line
- Highways and transportation
- Infrastructure – drainage in areas – storm sewers
- Empty buildings starting to decay

- Maintain and promote Havre as regional trade center – get outsiders to come here instead of Great Falls – leakage
- Population decline
- Ditto - less tax payers but pay for same infrastructure
- Ditto – and aging population
- Regional hub
- More jobs
- Qwest – services are not upgraded within the city of Havre
- Community Activity Center
- Lack of medical insurance
- Downtown is deteriorating
- Jobs
- Lack of quality workforce
- Ditto
- Retain our youth
- Perception that Havre doesn't have anything to offer
- Water –
- Get Canadians to stop in Havre
- Public transportation – no bus service, inner city and around region
- Insurance rates
- Transportation costs – lack of competition when moving products or people
- Keep the people involved in the community – aware of what is going on to get rid of negative
- Rural location
- People need to shop local
- Property tax structure
- Too much blight

#### **FARMING/RANCHING/FSA – CHALLENGES**

- High rates to market – freight rates
- High input costs
- Lose value added opportunities – pay freight both ways
- CRP – huge ramifications
- Value added – produce finest quality cereal products – leaves here and is commingled with the lower quality wheat (same with other products, too)
- Value added – need to produce products here
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Don't have ability to get young people involved in farming – economics just aren't there
- Neighbors are living further and further away from me – not getting actual value of product and there has been a push that bigger is better
- High cost of operations vs. low returns
- Location – long ways from markets
- Producer has little control over getting product to market or price

- Not ready for genetically modified wheat – marketplace is not ready for new technologies  
- -producers will be punished for it
- Families are being pulled apart – part of family lives in town, part in country, due to economy spouse works off the farm; undue burden on family unit
- Health insurance costs compound the issue
- Drought
- Cost of water needed to process products, i.e., carrots
- Access to water
- Government effect on our policies – coming down from the federal level – too much reliance on government support
- Dwindling profits
- Railroad forced little elevators to close – can't load 100 cars
- Highways not made to haul the heavy loads the big trucks are hauling with grain

#### **CITY, COUNTY, LAW ENFORCEMENT – CHALLENGES**

- Lack of financing for businesses and non-profit organizations
- Drug problem – particularly meth – transcends into our workforce
- Shrinking tax base – less tax payers to pay for improvements, infrastructure
- Personal property dropped down
- Limited funding – tax revenues frozen by the state
- Infrastructure funding – and St. Mary's Diversion
- Havre doesn't have clout within the state or on a federal level
- The state doesn't know we exist – little support from federal or state level
- The mill is almost half of what it used to be
- More and more costs falling to tax payers
- Assessment offices/appraisers are getting more info from central offices, rather than local offices. Information is not as accurate.
- Schools, too, every year – gets tighter and tighter
- Water districts on hi-line lack good quality water
- East end of Havre – tried to get storm drainage for years – can't seem to come up with it
- New bridge between here and Chinook!
- CRP program has hurt us – land is not under production
- Pressures of everyday life - causes honest people to become criminals
- We do have a drug problem
- Staffing problem in law enforcement – population decreasing, hard to ask for more staff but criminal activity needs to be addressed
- 75 to 80% of inmates are Native American
- Do have a drug and alcohol problem – which leads to higher crime
- Community service people are not showing up as required
- Need stabilized tax base
- 2001 – 15,000 calls for service
- 2002 – 16,600 calls for service
- Workload is increasing – hard to retain funding at current level

- State not done an adequate job with taxation – what is good for Western Montana is not necessarily good for North Central Montana
- Unemployment rate on reservation – 70 – 80% - when unemployed, people don't have insurance, willing to sit out the jail time instead of paying for insurance
- Ditto all of the above
- Funding – for agencies – police department and sheriff office
- Some criminal cases we cannot address because of the cost of paying for experts, investigation
- Problem with seizing vehicles – takes valuable time
- More cooperation with our community businesses needed
- Lack of political clout
- We are at the mercy of weather – have extremes
- Deterioration of public buildings – unable to raise money to fix them – must meet regulations
- Students – drop out rate, drugs, alcohol and suicide
- Drought
- Declining enrollment
- No Child Left Behind – hardship on school districts
- Gas and oil exploration – distance and expense
- Emergency preparedness for outlying districts – isolated schools lack services
- Angry people – don't have money, angry when things don't go well, high tension
- Reduction of population, homes for sale

### **BANKING AND FINANCING – CHALLENGES**

- Rain!
- Need for marketing for our Ag producers – marketing is limited
- Keep competitive prices locally
- Highway – get that traffic to stop
- Aging community – Seniors on fixed income – hard to contribute financially to the community
- Need funding for providing for aging population – staffing, Meals on Wheels
- Finances for non-profits, water/sewer districts, struggling to keep doors open and provide services
- Many people not insured in Hill County – wipes people out financially
- Schools – major funding problems
- Do not have reserve funds we used to have
- Losing farms – big corporations buying up land
- Stricter loan procedures – a handshake and verbal agreement doesn't cut it any more
- CPR – effects Main Street, money leaving town
- Debt people are in is unbelievable – not just a Havre issue, but complicates lending in Havre
- Bankruptcy – last year, had five or six. This year, much higher. Makes it tough for people to get a loan now, because of other customers bankruptcy.

- Getting into negative savings situation – interest rate is low – so people are using their disposable income.
- Domino effect with lack of financing, trickles down to other agencies and groups
- New projects are tough to fund – to start from ground zero – need 20 to 30% capital. Otherwise, bank takes all the risk.

### **NATURAL RESOURCES (oil, gas, etc.) – CHALLENGES**

- Not enough snow on the ski area to keep it open
- Drilling crews – for gas and oil – hard to find enough experienced crews to work on the rig. They get trained and leave the state.
- Gas field here since the 70’s – at that time had service companies for oil and gas business. Today – hardly any based in Havre. None of the money stays here, when we have the product here!
- Seismic crews – all from out of Havre. Other gas/oil related labor comes outside of Havre, too.
- Companies that produce the gas, take money elsewhere to spend.
- Landowner relationships – some companies are very good, others not so good in land use care.
- Fertilizer comes out of Canada
- Canadian government is more responsive to producer needs. More flexible.
- Moisture – look into cloud seeding costs for more consistent moisture

### **HEALTH CARE/SOCIAL SERVICES – CHALLENGES**

- Prescriptions are unaffordable – other health care, too
- Difficulty making sure our distant and low income moms are getting care they need
- Access to care for low income people
- Mental health – don’t have enough providers
- Long waiting lists for services - services are here, but not enough providers
- Healthcare not affordable – free or minimal
- Car insurance needs to be affordable too
- Transportation to employment a hardship for low income
- Challenge to get hard-to-serve people employed
- Drug and Alcohol program – housed in annex building. Need a revolving door of counselors to slow down a bit. Hard to keep counselors – salaries are low.
- State must increase funding – hospital gave away \$18 million of free care last year, this year, \$20 million. Hospital is paid less for providing same or more service.
- Social services have taken a horrible beating as far as funding support.
- Health Care is a “right” in everyone’s eyes
- Hospital could cut charges in half if government paid their fair share
- Public transportation – Seniors have a problem getting to health care services
- Shortage of basic daycare
- Mental Health services are not available
- Third generation welfare families that used to have assistance but now do not have assistance – they do not know how to work, hold a job – often don’t have health services that allow them to be healthy enough to work

- Seniors – cost of medication is outrageous
- Long term care – cost drains family resources
- MediCare pays some things, not others – only short term care, and skilled nursing, otherwise patient pays. That is why people are going to Medicaid – people who used to absorb costs are not an expense.
- Sandwich generation – grandparents raising grandchildren
- Personal Care Home – badly needed.
- Access to dental care – not a dentist in town to accept Medicaid. Reimbursement too low.
- Workforce challenge – we try to recruit health care professionals – must pay competitive wages.
- Pharmacists in Montana control how many pharmacists go to school.
- Staffing is a huge issue – people come for clear air, blue skies, but \$\$\$\$ not there.
- Rural hospitals not paid the same as city hospitals, yet expect same care.
- Dental treatment – need to accept Medicaid payments.
- The way the poor are treated when they go for services is shameful.

## **YOUTH**

- Alcohol & Drug problems for youth
- Parks are not kept up well in the lower income parts of town
- Businesses are not sustained here in town, lack of competition
- Lack of opportunities for kids – no reason to stay
- Maintenance of buildings at school
- No where to go on the weekends
- Not enough structured activities or volunteerism opportunities
- No variation for students that are involved in drama and the arts.
- Not enough outside cultural activities.
- Streets need to be improved – specifically beyond Albertson's
- Sports is limited - no intramural sports (only basketball)
- No sense of attachment to the community – no one wants to stay in Havre
- Alcohol and drug problems extend into the adult community
- Many places that sell alcohol – too many bars
- Overemphasis on sporting activities – not enough on cultural activities
- No wrestling room at the high school
- Relationships with Huterites and reservation residents – racism prevalent
- Adults don't feel that there are good youth in the community that do not do drugs and alcohol
- Harassment of Gay/Lesbian students

## **HAVRE HILL COUNTY RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT NOVEMBER 18 – 19, 2003 LISTENING NOTES**

### **KREMLIN-GILDFORD – ASSETS**

- Good internet communications base – DSL
- Affordable housing
- Ditto
- Quality education
- Ditto
- People – great place to live
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Work ethic – everyone participates in everything
- Ditto
- Quality of life – safety, enjoying the Northern Lights, don’t have to worry about what the kids are doing
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Natural resources – Oil & gas, Ag by-products

#### **INVERNESS – RUDYARD – HINGHAM ASSETS**

- Quality of education is high
- Do have programs in school, i.e., speech and debate
- We have the infrastructure (among many towns along the hi-line) to handle twice the people that we have
- Ambulance Service (Rudyard and Hingham)
- Level of care and involvement – can’t live here without getting involved
- We have good neighbors – and they are defined as being ten or more miles away. The small hi-line towns are considered neighbors.
- Kids walking down the street know that there are five grandma’s watching them.
- Low crime rate
- Top notch communication services, high speed internet services
- Good schools – in spite of funding hurdles
- Ditto all of the above
- Highway Patrol comes through several times per week
- Willingness of people to do what is needed
- No rush hour traffic
- Kids in our school are very polite, respectful, well mannered. Says a lot about a community and generations in a community.
- Movie theater
- Bowling alley
- Competition amongst towns – a good thing!

#### **BOX ELDER - ASSETS**

- School is center of community
- Guiding and hunting parties

- Beautiful area
- Increasing water for irrigation
- Terrific school
- The people – some have lived here for 20 years and have given their lives away to service of the community.
- Character Education after-school program
- People that care about kids
- Cooperation between organizations is beginning that hasn't been happening in the past.
- TERC Tribal Emergency Response Committee
- Stone Child College – work closely with them
- Very talented students
- Kids in the schools seem to get along great – teachers hold students to be accountable
- Educational opportunities through school system – kids have top of the line equipment and facilities
- Stone Child College and MSU Northern
- Population influx – good business opportunities
- Remoteness is an asset – not main stream
- Near Bears Paw Mountains and wildlife
- Tourism possibilities
- Good that County Commissioners are here today to listen
- Resource Team Assessment coming is a good step
- Ski Hill

#### **MSU NORTHERN AND HAVRE PUBLIC SCHOOLS – ASSETS**

- Quality of life – very safe environment
- Caring community – have differences but unite in times of need
- University
- Hospital
- Railroad
- Comparatively high paying jobs – just not enough of them
- Ditto on the people and quality of life
- Natural resources we have
- Outdoor recreation – our park
- Ditto the above
- Growth areas – the border patrol is moving in and active
- Oil and gas – may bring in some new jobs and \$\$\$
- Willingness to work – we have hard workers
- People are willing to volunteer
- A very fine Senior center
- Evelyn is a treasure – she makes things happen for our Senior Centers.
- Senior Center prepares food for jail.
- Lots of activities at the Senior Center- and Evelyn helps with Medicaid/Home Health issues
- Our school system is good

- Local leadership – have a great local leadership program – Havre is blessed with dedicated local leaders
- Youth leadership program from Chamber of Commerce
- Great air of cooperation amongst the entities in town from County Commissioners, to Mayor, to City, to Bear Paw Development. Led to several partnerships.
- School provides meals for HeadStart – cooperative effort.
- Interdisciplinary action team with County groups to talk about our most At Risk kids.
- Healthy kids – Healthy community group – involves chamber and health groups
- Cooperative agreements with telecommunications
- Cooperative agreement with Havre/Hill County library
- Proof of all of these cooperatives is that no one in town is afraid to call someone else and get together to discuss an issue and make things happen.
- Havre Public Schools is fortunate to have a partner like MSU Northern. Invaluable to us – something not every community has.
- Terrific high speed access
- Great place to raise children
- Boys and Girls Club – also, now starting after school education program (overall membership is over 700)
- School district buses kids to Boys and Girls Club
- Havre Health Committee
- Not just one focus in town – say, just to elderly – we are well rounded in
- Parents, for the most part, are supportive, involved, and active. Good quality of parenting.
- Geographic location – we set in the middle of the state – 30 miles from a boarder – East and West come to us.
- Havre Beneath the Streets – attracts tourists
- Terrific music program!
- Montana Actors Theater
- Have a Senior Citizen van to transport Seniors within the community and outside of the community
- Veteran’s bus (VA Van) takes vets to Helena

### **HAVRE CHAMBER BOARD – ASSETS**

- Havre Encourages Long Range Planning HELP
- Size of Havre
- Airport
- Sense of cooperation
- Chamber of Commerce – Debbie does a great job
- Chamber board has worked hard to increase level of cooperation with other entities in town
- Cooperation – incredible support for Boys and Girls Club – donations and support outstanding
- So much to do here! Dig for fossils, Bears Paw mountains, Fresno, lots to do! – college games, etc. Shopping is here, too.

- Ditto on the support that the Chamber receives – community is always willing to give toward a project.
- Community always rallies to support the community.
- HAVRE...it's the PEOPLE is very appropriate.
- Our Montana character has made us a great community
- Ski hill, Fresno, we have a lot to offer
- We were gone for five years – and saw a lot of improvement since we have come back
- Bear Paw Development
- Great relationship with our city/county government
- Town Square
- Family lived in this area for almost 100 years now – it is home
- Maybe not enough people, but we have a lot of the right people.
- Have some momentum going now to change the image/activity of Havre
- Many opportunities for this area
- MSU Northern and all that it offers
- A treasure in culture and historic things in this area
- Some diversity in the economy
- Northern Ag Research Center
- College, hospital, public education, lawyers, CPAs, banks – we have all of the professional services that other communities may not have
- Ditto all of the above!
- Great medical facility
- We have the people, the professionals, the politics
- Growing minded community
- Diverse churches in the community
- Expanding college curriculum – continuing ed, too
- Beautification efforts
- Good retail community – expanding
- College – new chancellor – more progressive now, making tough decisions that were needed long ago

#### **RETAIL/BUSINESS/UTILITIES – ASSETS**

- Public School system and accessibility
- Northern
- The people
- College
- People
- Ditto
- Railroad
- Spirit of hard work and cooperation
- Support for the arts
- Quality of life
- Our history and attractions for tourists
- HRDC and other human service groups

- Diversity of the area – college, railroad,
- We maintain our economy – fairly flat line – fairly stable
- Hospital, medical care
- Solid level of safety – good place to raise kids
- Regional trade center
- Services – have a lot that bigger cities have – but non a smaller scale
- Medical facility
- Gradual steady improvements
- Medical – we are a regional medical center for 100 miles
- Long term care center
- Business community is adaptable to changes – resilient
- Recreation facilities
- Location within the state
- Great facilities – we have the facilities without the big city problems
- Reservations
- Education system
- Commercial air line service
- Hospital, adaptable business community
- Natural resources – gas
- Reservation
- Railroad – huge asset
- HRDC
- Housing program - help people stay in their homes so that they can stay here
- Strong work ethic
- Services for disabled
- Amount of giving that businesses do
- Business community that is solid – bought into northcentral MT
- Financial institutions – can finance change
- Leadership – community leaders to government officials
- Wonderful city groups and service organizations
- Slow return of some of our youth
- Boys and Girls Club
- Financial institutions – owned on local level, too
- Border Control, security
- Amtrak
- Good government cooperation
- Exceptional people – different from other parts of the state – friendly, work together
- Good strong local businesses in place – anchor businesses
- Lots of athletic possibilities for sports
- Quality contractors and service organizations, sub contractors
- Hunting and fishing
- Wonderful county park
- Degrees that the college provides – Mechanical technicians, Nursing and Teachers

## **FARMING/RANCHING/FSA – ASSETS**

- Ability to raise high protein products
- There are people with money around here
- Railroad
- Large labor pool – people are under utilized
- Variety in the community – can find a job (may not be good paying)
- Quality of production
- Ditto on railroad
- Not limited to just one industry – if one is depressed we do have another to help with sustainability
- Tremendous land base – real expansion potential
- Have local products we can develop
- Farm programs are helpful – especially through the drought
- Our people – resourceful and talented
- We have real character (and some characters, too)
- Hands of Harvest – cultural tourism corridor
- The people – and their resources
- Experiment Station
- Northern
- Our minds – just need to think of ideas and act on them

## **CITY, COUNTY, LAW ENFORCEMENT – ASSETS**

- Great drug task force – covers an area of six counties. Three people that make more arrests than staff of eleven in Lake County.
- Work ethics above reproach
- Caring community
- Excellent school system
- Too much to do in Havre – social, cultural, religious – amazing how much people do to make it work
- People who volunteer do volunteer at 110%
- Ditto
- People should be proud of services they receive based on the costs
- Hill County is lean – and provide same services they always provided
- Collaboration between city, county, school districts – little “passing of the buck”
- Not a lot of infighting
- Good progress made with streets, sidewalks, parks, business fronts
- Holiday Village is trying hard
- Leadership is fantastic
- Oil and gas industry – brings jobs into this area that the rest of the state does not have
- University with large hospital
- Amtrak
- Good contractors, good technical assistance
- Ditto – Havre is wonderful community
- Great hockey facility

- Uncle Sam's finest city in America!

### **BANKING AND FINANCING – ASSETS**

- In home health services
- I am lucky my banker still talks to me.
- Size – we are a close knit community but not so big we are city-like
- Bond between all the business owners, government officials and bankers is good
- The people – Havre...it's the people!
- People come together and work together – want to build the town.
- We can service the whole hi-line!
- Bear Paw Development, Chamber, banks – are willing to do the right thing
- Some western Montanan's moving back here because we are still like the "old" Montana
- Have good service organizations – a few agencies do a lot of work, cover a lot of needs
- About 35 recreational opportunities in the Havre area – shooting range, mud drags, dinosaur hunting, etc.
- History of entrepreneurs
- It really is the people!
- We have E services
- Bear Paw Revolving Loan Fund – cooperation with local lenders is essential – huge plus for our areas

### **NATURAL RESOURCES (oil, gas, etc.) – ASSETS**

- People have jobs as a result of the gas/oil/natural resource supplies
- Income to farmers, ranchers, people that have mineral rights
- Reserves – continue to find virgin reservoirs almost every time we drill a well
- Canada supplies a lot of the oil and gas equipment, a lot of other industry supplies as well, such as lumber.
- Supplies tax income that we depend on

### **HEALTH CARE/SOCIAL SERVICES – ASSETS**

- All services are available
- Really devoted workforce to this area – people work for less \$\$\$
- The people.
- Program to help people without insurance is beginning.
- Services are here.
- Good cooperation between agencies
- Frontline services available here. If we need additional assistance – we can find it.
- Good cooperation
- Ditto – work well together with other community agencies
- Can provide services to kids at low or no cost re: vaccines, flu shot
- 1% of workforce is assigned here – Most have chosen to live here.
- More churches
- Enjoy being able to talk with local leaders without going through that darn recording machine.

- A lot of volunteerism – individuals make the difference.
- Willingness to collaborate – various assessments going on – we are willing to work together
- It's the people.
- Ditto good networking and collaboration
- Become friends with our clients
- Businesses are always willing to support the hospital
- Hospital itself is a tremendous asset – other towns would give their teeth for it!
- Full time Chamber of Commerce – assist communities that do not have a chamber
- Chamber board is excellent, willing to work.

**HAVRE HILL COUNTY RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT  
NOVEMBER 18 – 19, 2003  
LISTENING NOTES**

**KREMLIN-GILDFORD – PROJECTS**

- More opportunities for the kids
- Playground equipment at the park & schools
- Motorcycle park
- Improve railroad crossing
- Parking at the courthouse & entrance on the west side of the building
- Water supply issues
- Internet effort to recruit individuals that can work from home
- Polish the image of the state so that
- Sports complex in Havre – Multipurpose facility
- Develop downtown into quaint shopping areas with coffee shops
- Industry into the hi-line area to draw people out to the smaller communities
- Value added something – ex. Wheat Montana, Pasta Montana, etc. but keep it local
- Improvements to city/county airport terminal & hanger facilities
- Hill county become the economic hub for the area rather than Great Falls
- More signage for the communities to pull people in off of the highways – beautification

**INVERNESS – RUDYARD – HINGHAM PROJECTS**

- Continue to use school facility to get people together (scrap booking, quilting)
- Consider consolidation of schools
- Address abandoned, old houses issue
- Streets improved
- Sewer lagoon – sewer lines – need some replacements. Gildford has some leakage, etc.
- Fund the schools and keep them alive in spite of declining population
- Get out the word about the great place this is to live – rent is cheap, housing is cheap, weather is not horrible, we have everything here!
- Capitalize on good telecommunications
- See schools consolidated – my son wants a normal classroom, with more than 5 classmates.
- We are no longer big enough to stand-alone – need to sacrifice some hometown pride for the greater good.
- Cooperative Development Center – want it back in Northern Montana – Triangle Telephone has offered facilities.
- Small-scale ethanol plant – technology is here to make it work, we have the product – need start up money.
- Elevator in Rudyard – turn into an elevator to handle value added crops specifically, i.e., malt barley.
- Hook up with Butte with different rail system – tired of BN telling us what we are going to get for our wheat.
- Rocky Boy NorthCentral Water project has to happen!
- Cost + Production for a reasonable profit.

- Bathrooms on ball field upgraded – already on the sewer system – need improvements
- Buildings that are empty – need resources to bring businesses in to provide the goods that they need.
- Want to always know that we will have a grocery store. May need to look into a cooperative if the good people running the store now need to make more of a profit.
- Cooperative development opportunities – have the mentality to work together.
- Pool open year round – located in Hingham – is located in the school – need better insulation for year round use.
- Creatively use buildings (i.e., if a school has to close) to bring a business or cooperative center into that newly vacated building.
- Alternate energy – wind!

### **BOX ELDER – PROJECTS**

- Make it clear where someone would go to start a business – insurance, cell phone, retail stores – wide open market
- More pavement
- Building for Senior Citizens in Box Elder
- Begin a good recycling program – keep the reservation clean
- Improve basketball courts
- Find programs that assist with lowering the dropout rate
- Teach children hygiene – how to shower, brush teeth, comb hair, etc.
- Have get-togethers to meet people to reduce prejudices, racism, etc.
- Keep government officials informed as to what is happening in our communities
- Market the Ski Hill – if you can ski Old Baldy – you can ski anywhere!
- Eleven room addition for our younger students in progress
- Transition education facility for “dropouts” that want to return to school.
- Basketball courts – need to replace ones we pulled up to put school grounds on
- Need more playground equipment
- Kids need something to do
- Unify the community – by completing a project together
- Regional water system – keep on top of it – big projects in the works
- St. Mary’s diversion must be maintained and preserved – has canals and siphons - \$100 million project – constructed in 1909
- Community beautification – look more inviting for people to come here
- Parenting – lack of parenting for younger kids – breaking down somewhere
- Integrate parents with the teachers improved
- Business development needed – let people know they can come here to do business and make it
- Senior Citizens Center
- Bus in and out of Great Falls/Havre for medical needs
- Cultural center – been stalled – but talked about for years
- Use the cafeteria of the school – for the Senior Citizens
- Graveyards cleaned up of weeds, litter, etc.
- Road crew to blade properly – need gravel, too

- Can buy Air Base house from Malmstrom for \$1 but costs \$30,000 to move it. Have set up now for expanded school use – have plans for permanent building.

### **MSU NORTHERN AND HAVRE PUBLIC SCHOOLS – PROJECTS**

- Value added Ag utilized – improve our profit line!
- Build the university support to get more jobs to our area
- Change the funding for education – so complicated we can’t explain it to tax payers “we are closing a school and your taxes will only go up \$... so much” makes no sense
- Explore North to South partners – in addition to east and west.
- Repair sidewalks over Havre Beneath the Streets – how can we fund \$600,000 project? (Have some CTEP funding)
- Further development of projects currently underway
- Alternative Middle School setting, Students Taking a New Direction – alternative to expulsion and suspension.
- After school programs, summer programs receive more focus and exploration
- Go through one year without reduced funding.
- Change mindset about sales tax – we pay taxes in other states when we visit there.
- More summer school programs at all levels
- Ditto on education programming – trying to meet No Child Left Behind requirements.
- Create situations where Havre becomes more of a hub – rather than Great Falls or Medicine Hat.
- Special event center – a multi purpose facility for trade shows, sports, etc. (again, part of the hub idea) now conducting feasibility study. Need creative minds for financing the project, should it be feasible.
- Ditto
- Assisted living facilities
- Continue great music program – add more of The Arts
- Applied Tech Center completed at MSU Northern – need matching funds. Legislature gave \$2million if it could be matched – EDA has committed one million, still looking for other million.
- Bring back the Cooperative Development Center

### **HAVRE CHAMBER BOARD - PROJECTS**

- Provide face lift for Airport – it is the first thing people see
- Look for other avenues for economic development - other directions to increase economic development in our area
- Discover what we can do to attract people to our town
- Fairgrounds much more developed – and USED
- Ditto – the fairgrounds idea was Sue’s – not her husbands ☺
- Enhance what we have and think outside the box
- Assist Rocky Boy’s Reservation in current growth – it will reflect on Havre, Hill County and North Central Montana.
- If anyone says they have nothing to do – please call the Chamber!
- Exploring additional training segments at Northern such as the current plumbing training
- Multi Purpose facility – would bring in some outside money

- First Street project continues to make progress
- Multi-purpose center – progress continues to evolve – could use for ag events, and serve as a true multipurpose facility
- To be constructed in 2005 – Bear Paw Battlefield interpretive center – 40 miles from Havre near Chinook – how can we leverage it, promote it?
- I want my streets paved
- Amen and many dittos above
- Atrium – turn into a downtown housing project – people living downtown creates need for downtown services
- Visitors Center - haven't given up on it
- Economic development project that actually succeeds – some base jobs created and successful over the long haul
- Ft. Assinaboine – the fact that those buildings are still standing is a phenomenal tourism resource – tie in with Chief Joseph Battlefield and Buffalo Jump. Make it more accessible.
- Four lanes on highway two – goes to Great Lakes – and is four lane on other parts of the road – would benefit college, transportation capacity, etc.

#### **RETAIL/BUSINESS/UTILITIES – PROJECTS**

- Revitalize downtown
- Get Canadians to stop here again
- More community involvement to remove negative attitude
- Multi purpose center – Havre Dome
- Regional delivery of education services
- County and city work in unison with Northern to upgrade – we must support Northern
- Value added ag products
- Sustainable retail business opportunities in Havre
- Strengthen businesses we have
- Revitalize downtown – the Atrium
- Tax increment finance district for downtown
- More transitional facilities for Native American population as move off the reservation
- Multiple purpose facility
- Double college enrollment
- Hill County and City working together – can make MSU Northern a better place
- Applied Technology Center – still needs funds
- Use college to keep kids in state – learn construction and electrical skills
- Integrate technology into older buildings and attract new business
- New bridge!
- Four for two
- Secure regional water source – St Mary's Diversion
- Establish a port authority to assist in economic development
- More public private partnerships working together – not at odds – get the best out of both of them
- Native American studies program at MSU Northern

- Upgrade fair grounds
- Havre to become the Houston of alternative energy – wind, research on other sources at Northern
- More trades training at Northern – starting with plumbing
- 24 hour port to Canada
- Industrial Park

### **FARMING/RANCHING/FSA – PROJECTS**

- Prepare local investors for a project – they have the money – need to get people together
- Mechanism to be responsive to look at developments, i.e. canola used for medical tubing
- Get people together to form a think-tank; bring ideas to the table and start to build on them; use student ideas, too
- Bring MCDC back to Havre
- Work with NARFI – North American Rural Futures Institute – to identify trends and “out of the box” ideas
- Form a Havre/Hill County and Bear Paw venture capital fund
- Develop local beef initiative – a system that interplayed between consumer and producer. Allow people to match up to their needs (hormone free, etc.; want a quarter beef, etc.)
- North Central Montana – could use a meat processing plant – spin-offs would be great
- Alternate place to sell your grain – prices need to go up
- Need to IP our grain, retain value ourselves
- Intermodal loading facility – go to separate buyers – reduce bulk commodity – Shelby has done a lot of research on it.
- More ag related groups in school – i.e., FHS chapter in high school

### **CITY, COUNTY, LAW ENFORCEMENT – PROJECTS**

- Revitalize downtown area
- Ditto
- Working on enhanced 911
- Address high percentage of Native American population incarcerated
- Need assistance to support Drug Task Force
- Improve cooperation with community businesses –
- Legislation to make sure communities get their non-tax revenue returned
- St. Mary’s project – must be done!
- Natural resources – take advantage of the wind
- Taxes – address clean-up efforts
- Highway project – four for two – more people would travel this way
- Airport – buildings are embarrassing when you fly people in you want to impress – actual airport is good
- Economic development for low income home – could be broadened for clean up?
- Havre Dome – Multi Purpose Facility
- CDBG funds – used to improve area and infrastructure
- Northern Tier radio transmission lines – building radio line from east end of MT to west end of MT – all law enforcement can communicate over radio

## **BANKING AND FINANCING – PROJECTS**

- Get traffic on highway to stop – open a 24 hour port north of town to increase traffic pull
- Personal home care
- Improve highway 2 – would improve tourism
- Look at re-opening businesses – like Rocky Mountain Vacuum
- Facility to lure tournament events.
- Ag – Center for Rural Affairs in Nebraska – if you are a retiring land owner and have no children interested in farming, will match with young people wanting to farm. Facilitate transition.
- Ditto events center – maybe people could come to us for a change!
- Recruit Canadians to shop here again
- Personal Care Home is needed
- Hockey Rink – took a lot of work, \$\$ spent wisely. Make it acoustically better. Continue to improve the rink.
- There is not a location nearby to receive treatment for alcoholism. Investigate possibility of a program to operate here in Havre. Multi-county area?

## **NATURAL RESOURCES (oil, gas, etc.) – PROJECTS**

- Streamline our system so we are more responsive and supportive to new ideas
- Infrastructure improved, needs upgraded
- Communication improved – to make things happen.
- Power generation hub
- Fertilizer plant – reduce freight costs
- Put gas fire turbine facilitator near wind generation for redundancy –
- Bring service support companies back – make it easier for the support businesses for oil and gas to set up shop here.
- Use rail to ship products in, manufacture here, then ship out.
- Chinooks melt the snow – have a snow machine to create snow for ski area
- Get a group together (Chamber, Northern, Job Service) to meet with oil and gas folks to determine what the workforce needs/training are.
- Hard to get poles to put up lines – new products like resin poles, could be investigated here
- Dinosaur industry – people pay to spend five days on a dig, plus lodging, meals
- Gems available – could build industry around those interests and skills

## **HEALTH CARE/SOCIAL SERVICES – PROJECTS**

- Transitional service/cooperative effort for people moving off the reservation, to get them into the workforce and into proper housing. Sad when people have to go back to the reservation because can't survive in our community.
- Community Health Agency – intent of agency is to work for services for low income.
- Health care and dental care for EVERYONE.
- Large or cornerstone business comes into town – with higher wages. Need opportunity for people to learn work skills.
- Youth Build project – get a house for renovation – get an instructor and have youth learn as they build.

- Visiting nurse service is desperately needed
- Medication management needed
- Personal Care Home needed
- Para-professionals utilized – perhaps on clinical level before going to a physician
- Transportation – needed for handicapped people that are under 55
- Competitive wages
- More activities for kids. Special events for kids.
- HRDC and early HeadStart program – in the works
- Grow a workforce that wants to work
- Every entry level organization is looking for employees
- Havre High auditorium – good lights, good speaker system, good acoustics
- Transitional folks – trying to do something different – need structure support for creating a home and a family.
- Diabetes outreach program
- Guardian Ad Litem program for elderly
- Health insurance coverage for non-profits
- People that want to work – can't find jobs – somehow we have to get employees in touch with employers.