

RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT REPORT

For

THE TOBACCO VALLEY

**EUREKA, WEST KOOTENAI, REXFORD,
FORTINE, TREGO AND STRYKER, MONTANA**

OCTOBER 3 – 4, 2007

**In Partnership with : Eureka Rural Development Partners, The Tobacco Valley
Community Development Council, Montana USDA/RD, Montana Business
Assistance Connections, Montana Department of Commerce, Sanders County
Community Development Corp., Montana West Economic Development, Montana
Economic Developers Association and the people of the Tobacco Valley.**

INTRODUCTION

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

Before digging in to the report itself, I would like to thank Montana Department of Commerce (MDOC) for its support of the Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA). It is a partnership between MDOC and MEDA that makes Resource Team projects available across the state.

Special thanks are due to Tracy McIntyre and Rose Kipp, or Eureka Rural Development Partners. Tracy and Rose served as the champions behind this entire project and will continue to be involved with the project through activities detailed in this report. Tracy and Rose had help from other people, agencies and businesses, but without their “Let’s do it” energy, the assessment would not have taken place.

In addition, I applaud each and every team member that dedicated hours of work and travel in order to participate on the team: Bill Barr, Cooperative Specialist for Montana USDA/RD; Carolyn Keller, Grant Writer and Planner for Montana Business Assistance Connection; Steve Simonson, Executive Director, Sanders county Community Development Corp.; Mike Strotheide, President, Montana West Economic Development and Charlie Wright, Western Regional Development Officer, Montana 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!

The stage is now set for the future of the Tobacco Valley. 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 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!

Gloria O’Rourke
Team Coordinator, MEDA

PROCESS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THIS REPORT

According to Montana Department of Commerce program requirements, Resource Team Assessments are to be approved through the community's Certified Regional Development Corporation (CRDC). Billie Lee, CRDC Executive Director for the Tobacco Valley area, gave the "green light" for the assessment. The board of Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA) then approved the project. Eureka Rural Development Partners and the Tobacco Valley Community Development Council served as the *local* Resource Team coordinators for the project. Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA) provided staff support for the coordination of a resource team to assist the Tobacco Valley in evaluating its assets and challenges and in developing suggestions for improving the environment, social and economic future of the area.

Tracy McIntyre and Rose Kipp, of Eureka Rural Development Partners, served as the local contacts and local team leaders for the project. Under their direction, an agenda was developed, logistics arranged, as well as budgeting and publicity for the assessment. Resource team members were selected to visit, interview citizens, businesses and community leaders to develop options for projects for the Tobacco Valley. 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 and received written comments from over 150 people during October 3 – 4, 2007. All notes from all listening sessions as well as those submitted via email or handwritten are included in this report. The team was available for listening to the following groups: Local Officials/Town Councils; people of West Kootenai; Banks/Financial Institutions; Churches; Retail/Businesses; people of Fortine and Trego; Educators; Law Enforcement and Border Patrol; Civic Clubs and Non Profits; Water, Utilities, Co-ops; Students; and Senior Citizens and Health Care.

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

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

Upon completion of the interviews, the team met in a work session to compare notes and share comments. The team then agreed that each team member would

carefully analyze the things said, synthesize what they heard with their knowledge of programs and resources, prepare their notes and suggestions, and forward these items to be combined into this final report to the people in the Tobacco Valley.

A preliminary oral report and a summary of group recommendations were presented to the people of Tobacco Valley the evening of October 4th.

Following the oral report, this formal written report was prepared and is presented to the people of the Tobacco Valley. Copies will be made available in print and electronically. The report is available on the MEDA website at <http://www.medamembers.org/resourceteams.php> A Town Hall Meeting is planned for Monday, December 3rd at 6:00pm, in the Lincoln County High School commons area. The purpose of the meeting will be to briefly review the report, identify projects and set priorities for action.

**EUREKA REGION
MT RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT
OCTOBER 3 - 4, 2007**

Team Member: Bill Barr
Title: Cooperative Specialist
Agency: USDA/RD Montana
Address: P.O. Box 850
City/State/Zip: Bozeman, MT 59771
Phone: 406.585.2540
Email: bill.barr@mt.usda.gov
Web: <http://www.mt.usda.gov>

Team Member: Carolyn Keller
Title: Grant Writer, Planner
Agency: MT Business Assistance Connection
Address: 225 Cruse Ave.
City/State/Zip: Helena, MT 59601
Phone: 406.442.4986
Email: ckeller@mbac.biz
Web: <http://www.mbac.biz>

Team Member: Steve Simonson
Title: Executive Director
Agency: Sanders Co Community Dev Corp
Address: P.O. Box 1326
City/State/Zip: Thompson Falls, MT 59873
Phone: 406.827.6935
Email: simonson@ronan.net
Web: <http://www.sanderscountycdc.org>

Team Member: Mike Strotheide
Title: President
Agency: MT West Economic Development
Address: 490 West Reserve Dr., Suite B
City/State/Zip: Kalispell, MT 59901
Phone: 406.257.7711
Email: mike@dobusinessinmontana.com
Web: <http://www.dobusinessinmontana.com>

Team Member: Charlie Wright
Title: Western MT RDO
Agency: MT Dept. of Commerce
Address: 1121 E. Broadway, Suite 126
City/State/Zip: Missoula, MT
Phone: 406.532.3222
Email: chwright@montana.com
Web: <http://www.commerce.mt.gov>

Coordinator: Gloria O'Rourke
Agency: MEDA
Address: 118 E. Seventh St.; Suite 2A
City/State/Zip: Anaconda, MT 59711
Phone: 406.563.5259 Fax: 406.563.5476
Email: gloria@medamembers.org
Web: <http://www.medamembers.org>

RESOURCE TEAM AGENDA

EUREKA AND THE TOBACCO VALLEY

October 3rd and 4th 2007

Tuesday, Oct 2nd Meet at Ksanka motel 6:30 pm then Dinner/Orientation and short tour of Rexford area.

Wednesday, Oct 3rd	Listening Session Group	Location
8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Breakfast/Orientation	Four Corners Restaurant
9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Short tour of North Eureka area	" "
10:30 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.	Local Officials/town councils	" "
11:30 a.m. – 2:45 p.m.	Tour/Lunch	West Kootenai/N. of Town
3:00 p.m. – 3:15 pm	Break	
3:15 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Banks/financials	Archive Room LCHS
4:10 p.m. – 4:50 p.m.	Churches	" "
5:00 p.m. – 5:45 p.m.	Retail/Businesses	" "
6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.	Tour Fortine & Trego area	Trego/Fortine area
7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Dinner @ Molly Browns	Molly Browns
8:15 p.m. - ?	Meet @ Trego civic center	

Thursday, Oct 4th	Listening session group	Location
7:15 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.	Pastries & coffee with Educators	Archive Room LCHS
8:15 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Law enforcement & Boarder Patrol	" "
9:15 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Civic Clubs & Non Profits	" "
10:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.	Water, Utilities, Co-ops	" "
11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Working Lunch W/students	Von's Cafe
12:30 p.m. – 12:50 p.m.	Break	
1:00 p.m. – 1:45 p.m.	Senior citizens/health care	Senior Center
2:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Team prepares for Town Meeting	Archive Room LCHS
5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.	Team working Supper	
7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Town Meeting/Team presentation	Auditorium LCHS

If you have any questions Please call ERDP @ 406-297-7374

MAIN TOPIC LIST

EUREKA/TOBACCO VALLEY RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT OCTOBER 3 – 4, 2007

The following list is a summary of main topics and issues that result from the Tobacco Valley Resource Team listening to the communities address strengths, challenges and their vision for the Tobacco Valley. This list will serve as the outline for the Resource Team Assessment Report which will be available the second week of November. There will be a Tobacco Valley Town Meeting held the evening of December 3rd to identify and prioritize projects.

MAIN TOPIC: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

☞ Workforce

- Higher Paying Jobs
- Seasonal employees
- Aging workforce

☞ Tourism

- Year round
- Motels, restaurants, hours of business
- Marketing
 - Finding a balance between a sustaining economy and maintaining our quality of life
 - Support of local businesses

☞ Value-Added Opportunities

MAIN TOPIC: HOUSING

☞ Workforce

- ☞ Senior
- ☞ 1st Time Home Buyers
- ☞ Affordability
- ☞ Rental
- ☞ Density
- ☞ Second/Vacation Homes

MAIN TOPIC: INFRASTRUCTURE

- ☞ Planning
- ☞ The “Z” Word
- ☞ Comprehensive Growth Plan
- ☞ Water and Wastewater
- ☞ Annexation – pros and cons
- ☞ Inability to deal with growth challenges
- ☞ Spring breakup

MAIN TOPIC: PROPERTY ISSUES

- ⌘ **Property Tax Base**
 - In relation to affording essential services
 - Inequity of taxation
- ⌘ **Affordable Land**
- ⌘ **Land Use**
 - Access
 - Utilization of resources
- ⌘ **Annexation/taxation without representation**
- ⌘ **Municipal vs. County Services**
 - Response time
 - Quality

MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

- ⌘ **Eureka Senior Citizen Center**
- ⌘ **Need for enhanced medical services**
- ⌘ **Youth center – comprehensive, include swimming pool, recreation**
- ⌘ **County Fair Grounds**
- ⌘ **Justice Center**
- ⌘ **Chamber Building**

MAIN TOPIC: MISC. ISSUES

- ⌘ **“Over-subscription of resources”**
- ⌘ **Resistance to change**
- ⌘ **Community attitude**
- ⌘ **Substance abuse**
- ⌘ **Vandalism**
- ⌘ **“Haves and Have-Nots”**

MAIN TOPIC: WEST KOOTENAI

- ⌘ **Fire Department**
 - Equipment, protective clothing
 - Winter fire fighting need
 - Aging fire force
 - Emergency services
 - Tender/water transport
 - Building to house equipment
- ⌘ **Other Issues**
 - Isolation
 - Lifestyle differences

MAIN TOPIC: TREGO AND FORTINE

- # Upgrade Civic Center**
- # Maintaining schools**
- # Maintaining quality education with declining enrollment**
- # Forest Use Management**

TOBACCO VALLEY RESOURCE TEAM REPORTS

REPORT BY: CAROLYN KELLER

Grant Writer, Planner

MT Business Assistance Connection

225 Cruse Ave.

Helena, MT 59601

Phone: 406.442.4986

Email: ckeller@mbac.biz

Web: <http://www.mbac.biz>

MAIN TOPIC: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ISSUE: WORKFORCE - Higher Paying Jobs, Seasonal Employees, Aging Workforce

All of these issues are major challenges in Montana. Community development executive directors and staff need to collaborate together, locally, regionally and statewide in order to address these issues.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

In Helena, we are focusing on a regional workforce needs assessment of exactly what our regional workforce looks like. We are currently working collaboratively as local workforce investment committee. This committee encompasses our local two and four year collages, local high schools, school superintendents, chamber of commerce, job service/training institutes, community development office and businesses. We will survey local high-growth, high-wage businesses, local workforce and local high-school and college students. Ultimately the goal will be to bridge the gap between workers needed, and available workers. This, in turn will help direct training, high school and college programs, as well as focus business development/recruitment as well as possible worker recruitment.

RESOURCES:

Big Sky Economic Development Trust Fund, Angela Nelson, Program Manager, (406) 841-2792, anelson@mt.gov, for a capacity building grant.

Workforce Recruitment program, Ruth Benson, Campbell County Economic Development Corporation, 201 W. Lakeway Road, Suite 1004, Gillette, WY 82717
Phone: 307.686.2603, Toll Free: 800.376.0848, Fax: 307-686-7268, E-mail: ccedc@vcn.com



MAIN TOPIC: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ISSUES: TOURISM - Year Round Events and Activities; Motels, Restaurants, Hours of Business, Marketing, Finding a Balance between a Sustaining Economy and Maintaining our Quality of Life; Support of Local Businesses

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Focus on off season events. Identify current tourism related needs and address. Build consensus within business community on designated hours of operation.
- Utilize your local Small Business Development Center (SBDC) to help add value/enhance current businesses. Have a representative work remotely from Eureka two days a month to begin.
- Success begets success. Look at best-case scenarios and compare to your community. If you could be _____ (insert community), who would you be? What, in your eyes, makes them successful? What strategies have they used in their community?
- I had the opportunity to do a site visit with Phillipsburg, with the White Sulphur Springs Chamber. WSS identified Phillipsburg as a successful community that they wanted to model themselves after. While visiting with a chamber of commerce from Phillipsburg, they shared some of their strategies, which included a community champion starting the redevelopment of their Main Street. They explained that it took many years (about 15 years) and that not ALL the businesses have still bought into the process, but with each success, more business owners bought into the process. Each chamber meeting they had an average of 35-40 representatives (from a community of 900) from the school, hospital as well as the businesses.
- Lastly, I would suggest utilizing ‘branding’ the Eureka area as a tool to address tourism and other issues. It is a new way to strategically analyze the community and make direct improvements. Whether Eureka chooses to focus on tourism as a brand will/can be decided. Through this process in Townsend, and East Helena, branding/marketing initiatives and projects have arisen. In East Helena, through the branding process, they decided that they wanted to promote their wonderful school district. They decided to tackle the media as a project, and have resurrected their community newspaper. Townsend has begun to build their tourism and marketing strategies. The process included nominating community members as decision makers, and NOT consensus builders. It allows businesses and community members alike to tackle a strategy that will help them immediately as well as building a long-term goal. The process does not need to be expensive. (see contact below).

RESOURCES:

SEGP Applications Available: The Special Events Grant Program Applications are available online at www.travelmontana.state.mt.us/forms or by contacting Carol Crockett, 406-841-2769 or via email at ccrockett@mt.gov.

Chamber of Commerce
 PO Box 661
 Philipsburg, MT 59858
chamber@philipsburgmt.com
 406-859-3388

Michael Blanck,

Brand Ranch,
702 Madison Ave.
P.O. Box 727
Manhattan, MT 59741-0727
Home/Office:(406)284-4384
Cell: (406)570-8212
mjblanck@brandranch.us
www.brandranch.us

Free or low cost marketing options brought to you by the **Montana's Department of Commerce.**

Contact:

General Consumer Publications (e.g. vacation guide, winter planner) several offer free listings
Bev Clancey, Publications Manager
841-2898, FAX 841-2871, bev@visitmt.com

Group/Meetings/Convention Publications (e.g group tour planning guide-attractions will be listed at no cost)

Marlee Iverson, Group Travel Specialist
841-2895, FAX 841-2871; miverson@mt.gov

Electronic Marketing (for free listings of tourism related business)

Jan Wirak, Web Content Specialist
841-2788, FAX 841-2811, jwirak@mt.gov

Publicity / Photography

Donnie Sexton, staff photographer and publicity manager
841-2897, FAX 841-2871, donnie@visitmt.com

Travel Montana's publicity program works with both national and international travel media to cultivate editorial coverage on Montana in all forms of media (print, internet, broadcast – TV and radio).

Overseas Marketing Programs

Pam Gosink, Overseas Marketing Manager
841-2894, FAX 841-2871, pgosink@mt.gov

In all markets we work with key tour operators, wholesalers, travel agencies and the media to establish Montana itineraries for groups and FITs (Foreign Independent Travelers), while assisting Montana businesses in their marketing efforts overseas. This involves representation at key international travel trade shows, hosting familiarization (fam) tours, cooperative advertising ventures with other RMI states, brochure and video distribution and ongoing personal contact with targeted tour operators, wholesalers, travel agents and media.

For more information on any of these programs, check out:
<http://www.travelmontana.state.mt.us/programs>

MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

ISSUES: Eureka Senior Citizen Center, Youth Center, Additional Medical Services, Justice Center, Chamber Building.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Economic development aids in addressing infrastructure and public facilities. In addition, many of these public facilities grants would also be used for public housing.

RESOURCES:

Resources for Infrastructure

Economic Development Administration:

EDA will provide Public Works investments to support the construction or rehabilitation of essential public infrastructure and facilities necessary to generate or retain private sector jobs and investments, attract private sector capital, and promote regional competitiveness, including investments that expand and upgrade infrastructure to attract new industry, support technology led development, redevelop brownfield sites, provide eco-industrial development, and support heritage preservation development investments such as those promoted by the Preserve America initiative.

www.eda.gov

Contact: John Rogers, EDA Representative 301 S. Park Avenue, Helena 59624, 406-449-5380, edrmtda@aol.com

USDA Rural Development

Community Facilities Grants assist in the development of essential community facilities in rural areas and towns of up to 20,000 in population.

<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt/RBS/CFGrant.htm>

Contact: Bill Barr, 900 Technology Blvd., Ste. B. Bozeman, MT 59718. Phone: (406) 585-2545. bill.barr@mt.usda.gov

Community Development Block Grant Housing and Public Facilities

Contact: Gus Byrom 406-841-2777

Community Transportation Enhancement Program (CTEP)

Ross Tervo, 406-444-9209, rtervo@mt.gov

Lincoln County: Bill Bischoff, 512 California, Libby MT 59923, Phone (406) 293-7781, billb@libby.org

CTEP funds have aided in several community projects. In Townsend, the projects enhanced their side walks on their main street. City/County employees were utilized for a match (in-kind). For creative ways to address local match contact Brian Obert at bobert@mbac.biz.

In addition, in the community of Lincoln, there are using CTEP funds to address building issues at their Community Hall. Because of the PROXIMITY of the building to HWY 200, these funds are able to be utilized for log restoration. Contact Brian Obert at bobert@mbac.biz for additional information.

Resources for the pool:

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Land and Water Conservation Fund Program- for outdoor recreation use- PUBLIC POOL-potentially could be used in conjunction with a community center/public facilities grant
Contact: 406-444-3750

Resources for Jail Facility:

In thinking creatively in order to pay for a new jail facility, it might be useful to get city, county and border control police in one facility. Broadwater County has an agreement with Townsend, to patrol, and has a facility in which they house inmates. This possibly could be a venture city/county would be interested in initiating. For more information on how the Townsend Jail operates and the BENEFITS to the community contact:
Jim Hohn, **Broadwater County Commissioner**, at 406-266-3405) (the County paid for the construction)
(for information on physical layout) Ben Knaff 406-980-2062.

MAIN TOPIC: MISC

ISSUES: Over-Subscription of Resources, Resistance to Change, Community Attitude

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Horizons is a community leadership program aimed at reducing poverty in rural communities of fewer than 5,000 that have experienced significant decline or demographic change. The program's goal is to help communities understand poverty, help them commit to action to change it, and then bring about lasting change in their community. It is funded by the [Northwest Area Foundation](#) and delivered by [Montana State University Extension](#). White Sulphur Springs utilized this program to tap into all the community for volunteers, discuss change and enhance community spirit.

RESOURCES:

<http://www.horizonsmt.org>

Dan Clark, Montana Horizons, Statewide Program Director, Phone 994-1754, Cell 570-4259, email daniel.clark@montana.edu



REPORT BY MIKE STROTHEIDE, CEcD

President

MT West Economic Development

490 West Reserve Dr., Suite B

Kalispell, MT 59901

Phone: 406.257.7711

Email: mike@dobusinessinmontana.com

Web: <http://www.dobusinessinmontana.com>

Note:

The following suggestions and recommendations are based on the interviews and visits to the area with the Tobacco Valley Resource Team. The suggestions are made from my experiences in other states and areas not necessarily in Montana.

MAIN TOPIC: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ISSUE: WORKFORCE

The indications from the groups interviewed that workforce issues were of concern in that they were seeking jobs that afforded higher wages and would keep some of the young people at home. This was identified in several interviews. The main theme was the seasonality of the workforce.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Attraction of new businesses is very competitive but the Tobacco Valley has some opportunities to attract a diversified economic base to employ people with higher wages. The following are only initial recommendations.

- 1.) A clear understanding of the labor pool and their skills are needed by potential companies. I would recommend an employment study conducted of the area to determine the skills of the workforce, the available workforce and the numbers of potential employees that would move to higher paying jobs if they would be available. This study can be conducted by a University or thru private sources. It is usually called an underemployment study. Funding for this study can be derived from a number of sources including the State of Montana.
- 2.) The Tobacco Valley area has already a good workforce in the timber and wood products area. It would seem a good start would be a targeted analysis of the types of value added wood products companies that might be a fit for the area such as wood molding and trim, cabinets, doors, etc. The analysis can be done with the assistance of the State or thru private consulting services. This would be an initial start but the longer term need for high tech companies to diversify the economy will depend on the infrastructure to attract them.
- 3.) Recruiting requires a great deal of outreach but costs often dictate the extent by which a community can outreach. The most effective tool in the attraction arsenal is the use of a good web site. The web has become the main tool for site selection. Developing a good web site with clear, concise information about the opportunities in the valley will provide an excellent resource tool.

- 4.) Attractions marketing with limited budgets are difficult but in partnership with other regional allies and with the State of Montana, the community can make better use of their resources. A migration pattern has been established between Canada and Eureka already. A marketing effort in the form of specific targeted companies that fit the attributes of Eureka would help provide some direct potential. I would recommend working with the State of Montana and piggy back on any promotions or events that are being planned for this market.
- 5.) Development of printed material designed for attraction is key to the overall marketing campaign. The community will need to develop some pieces that are general for mailing but inclusive of specific workforce attributes, transportation access and telecommunication systems.
- 6.) The continuation of the Industrial Park will help industrial growth by providing a location to market. If funds could be obtained, a spec building could be built that will serve as an enticement for a manufacturing location. Over 70% of all companies seeking new locations are looking for existing space.

MAIN TOPIC: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ISSUE: TOURISM

Tourism is an important part of the economy in the area. Efforts to enhance the marketing of Eureka as a destination will pay dividends in the future.

RECOMMENDATIONS/RESOURCES:

- 1) It was a concern of many that there was inadequate motel space in the area. I would suggest that an effort be made to contact the chain hotels in the region and visit with the franchise owners about considering the community for a location. Another good resource is the chains themselves such as the Holiday Inns, Hamptons Inn Microtel etc. major chains to determine their selection criteria. This is usually a function of their real estate departments. By investigating the criteria that is needed the search can be narrowed and specific hotel chains can be targeted with information related to the Community.
- 2) In the same type of effort that will be used for business attraction, it is also clear that tourism can target the Calgary market with promotions etc.
- 3) While it may not be the most popular suggestion, the election of a sales tax will provide the funds needed for a number of projects including promotion and marketing.
- 4) Other potential projects which may bring some revitalization to the area include activities such as working with organizations such as Artspace which allows artists to live, work

and market products in underutilized facilities. Their web site is <http://www.artspaceusa.org/>.

MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

ISSUE: YOUTH CENTER

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1) The need for a Community Center for youth was evident in many discussions. The difficulty will be in acquiring the funds needed for such a center. There are a number of foundations, government grants which will need to be looked into as sources of funding but most will require some match from the community. A good start would be a feasibility study that defines the project needed and potential sources of funding.

Other General recommendations

- The need for funding in many areas is evident and I would recommend that the city determine if a local option sales tax or “bed tax” was needed to provide funding for tourism development or infrastructure needs.
- There are several “brick and mortar” projects that were mentioned in the verbal and written comments. It would make sense in order to use funds the most effectively to study the projects and which could be combined to provide multiple uses of funds. As an example, is it feasible for the youth center or Senior Citizens center to be on the Fairgrounds property? Is it feasible to develop a multiple purpose facility that will have elements needed for the fair activities and the youth activities?
- I would also recommend that a study of the recycling of products within the region be considered. There are several states and areas that have created a number jobs and created value thru making recycled products.

General Comments

The Tobacco Valley organizations and individuals have done a very good job of identifying their needs and challenges. There were a number of common themes which kept coming up. I believe the commitment and willingness to make changes will serve the area well into the future. In my opinion, the growth experienced has occurred before the area was aware of the impact and is only now coming to grips with the challenges. They have made the right steps and are getting a little ahead of the curve through efforts such as this.

REPORT BY STEVE SIMONSON

Executive Director

Sanders Co Community Dev Corp

P.O. Box 1326

Thompson Falls, MT 59873

Phone: 406.827.6935

Email: simonson@ronan.net

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

MAIN TOPIC: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ISSUE: TOURISM

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Work with Glacier Country tourism region and strengthening “shoulder seasons” i.e. target months of April/May and Sept/Oct. Glacier Country Board is already actively working on this.

RESOURCES:

- Randy McIntyre, Eureka Chamber of Commerce is your local contact.
- TIIP Grant and Special Events Grant, Contact Victor Bjornberg at 406-841-2795.
- Marketing your community and ‘shop local’ ideas, contact Deb Vanderberg, Havre Chamber of Commerce. (406)265-4383
- Investigate the Main Street Program <http://mtmainstreet.mt.gov/>

MAIN TOPIC: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ISSUE: VALUE ADDED OPPORTUNITIES

RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESOURCES:

Contact Craig Rawlings, Small Wood Agent, on small diameter wood and bio mass projects at MCDC (728-9234). Also contact Steve Simonson (827-6395) and Tracy McIntyre on forest stake holders project(s).

Value Added Ag Projects: Contact Lake County CDC, (commercial kitchen) Jan Tusick, Cooperative Specialist at 676-0676.

MAIN TOPIC: HOUSING

ISSUE(S): DENSITY, 1ST TIME HOME BUYERS

RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESOURCES:

- Work with your town planner and Lincoln County on the density issue; utilize their expertise in this area.
- 1st time home buyers-Glacier Affordable Housing
<http://www.glacierbank.com/persRealEstateLoans.cfm>
- NW Human Resources-Kalispell for training workshops.
<http://www.nmhr-dist10.org/>

MAIN TOPIC: PROPERTY ISSUES

ISSUE: PROPERTY TAX BASE

RECOMMENDATION AND RESOURCES:

Check with the state on what current tax policy is or isn't regarding increased valuation of neighboring properties. Contact State Senator Jim Elliot, Taxation Committee and Dan Buck, State Director, Department of Revenue.

Dan Bucks
MT Dept. of Revenue
P.O. Box 5805
Helena, MT 59604-5805
406.444.1900

MAIN TOPIC: PROPERTY ISSUES

ISSUE: AFFORDABLE LAND

RECOMMENDATION AND RESOURCES:

Contact your town or Lincoln County to see if any park land is set aside and available for affordable/senior housing, senior housing co-ops. For expertise in this area contact Julie Foster, Ravalli County Economic Development at 375-9416 and/or Jan Neimeier, Lake County CDC, 676-5901.

MAIN TOPIC: TREGO AND FORTINE

ISSUES: Upgrade Civic Center, Maintaining Schools, Forest Use Management

RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESOURCES:

Contact Montana USDA/RD public facilities program for community center upgrades. Community Facilities Grants assist in the development of essential community facilities in rural areas and towns of up to 20,000 in population.

<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt/RBS/CFGrant.htm>

Regarding forest issues contact Craig Rawlings for information on forest partnerships in stake holder's coalition.

Craig Rawlings, Small Wood Agent, MCDC (728-9234).

REPORT BY CHARLIE WRIGHT

Western MT RDO

MT Dept. of Commerce

1121 E. Broadway, Suite 126

Missoula, MT 59801

Phone: 406.532.3222

Email: chwright@montana.com

Web: <http://www.commerce.mt.gov>

MAIN TOPIC: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ISSUE: WORKFORCE – Higher Paying Jobs

The downturn of resource extraction based employment has resulted in the loss of well-paying jobs. Retaining human capital has become a critical issue because there is no such thing as corporate loyalty today. In fact, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that the average 34 year-old has worked for nine (9) corporations in his/her career and switches job every 18 months.

RECOMMENDATION:

In the *old economy*, people believed that:

- Being in a cheap place to do business was the key
- Attracting companies was the key
- A high-quality physical environment was a luxury that stood in the way of attracting cost-conscious businesses
- Regions won because they held a fixed competitive advantage in some resource or skill
- Economic development was government-led

In the *new economy*, people believe that:

- Being in a place rich in talent is key
- Attracting educated talent is key
- Physical & cultural amenities are key to attracting knowledge workers
- Regions prosper if organizations and individuals have the ability to learn and adapt
- Only bold partnerships among business, government, and non-profit sector can bring about change

What's needed is a fundamental change to the thought process, not only for the business community, but their relationship with educators and the educational system. People's lifestyle choices, successful business practices, customer and community value will be advanced as a result of how the education system retools and stays relevant.

Career Clusters can create a strong education framework that responds to a demand driven employment-workforce system. Partnerships between education and business will allow a valuable learning experience for both. As businesses struggle to find and attract the workforce of the future, they also, need to have real life experiences with the next generation. Learning how to embrace, manage and motivate a workforce raised with a different value structure, a different work ethic and a need for instant and constant information will be the competitive advantage.

RESOURCES:

- [Partners in Education](http://www.partnersined.org/) <http://www.partnersined.org/>

- Career Clusters <http://www.careerclusters.org>
This is the official website for the States' Career Clusters Initiative (SCCI). This website serves as a clearinghouse for Career Clusters research, products, services and technical assistance for implementation of the States' Career Clusters Framework for lifelong learning.
-

MAIN TOPIC: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ISSUE: WORKFORCE – Aging Workforce

Some 64 million baby boomers (over 40 percent of the U.S. labor force) are poised to retire in large numbers by the end of this decade. Industries currently feeling the greatest pain in terms of skills shortages are oil, gas, energy, healthcare and government. Organizations that fail to understand the complexities or recognize the opportunities associated with an aging workforce may risk their ability to stay competitive.

RECOMMENDATION:

In industries already facing labor and skills shortages, forward-thinking companies are recruiting, retaining, and developing flexible work-time arrangements and/or phased retirement plans for these workers (55 years of age or older), many of whom have skills that are difficult to replace. Leading companies in these sectors are turning to mature workers to ensure future growth and productivity. These companies recognize that a maturing workforce can positively impact customer satisfaction and profitability, but not without effective initiatives designed to make it easier for different generations of workers to work better together.

RESOURCES:

[Aging Workforce News](http://agingworkforcenews.com/) <http://agingworkforcenews.com/>

[Economic Consequences of Montana's Graying Workforce](http://www.ourfactsyourfuture.org/admin/uploadedPublications/1034_Oct_Eag_Article.pdf) (PPT also available)
http://www.ourfactsyourfuture.org/admin/uploadedPublications/1034_Oct_Eag_Article.pdf

MAIN TOPIC: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ISSUE: VALUE ADDED OPPORTUNITIES

Reading today's headlines, it's hard to escape the conclusion that Montana's traditional timber industry is struggling, mired in combat with global markets and local environmentalists. But those who are still thriving in the industry say timber has a future in Montana, and that its future is grounded in creativity and collaboration.

RECOMMENDATION:

The growth areas are nearly all in value-added products, i.e., start with a log and end up with a finished product. The big days of industrial logging and cutting dimensional lumber are history. The paradigm of the past was a high-volume commodity business competing with the whole world. The future is a low-volume, high-quality specialty business catering to people who want quality products.

RESOURCES:

[Forest Products Laboratory -- Forest Service -- USDA](#)
[RBM Lumber Specialty Wood Products](#)

MAIN TOPIC: HOUSING**ISSUE: WORKFORCE HOUSING**

No houses – no jobs! As Governor Schweitzer announced in his Labor Day speech, the #1 problem facing employers in Montana is the shortage of affordable housing for employees.

RECOMMENDATION:

While there is no short-term, sure fire remedy to this problem, significant energies are being expended by a number of organizations – private, non-profit, public – to identify and propose initiatives to resolve the situation. It is suggested that private industry, community, and government leaders join forces to seek workable solutions.

RESOURCES:

[MEDA Housing Development work group](#) – view the resource page at <http://www.medamembers.org/housing.html>

[MHN - Housing Development](#)

MAIN TOPIC: HOUSING**ISSUE: SENIORS**

Many senior citizens are living in homes they have owned for a number of years. Due to the recent influx to the Tobacco Valley of wealthy individuals who are purchasing land and building new homes, property values and taxes have risen dramatically – to the point where many long-time homeowners are being stretched to pay their property taxes.

RECOMMENDATION:

Indexing of property taxes and/or creation of housing cooperatives are two potential options available to senior citizen residents in the area, as is reverse annuity mortgages.

RESOURCES:

[California Constitution - Article 13A](#)
[National Association of Housing Cooperatives](#)
[MDOC ~ Reverse Annuity Mortgages](#)



MAIN TOPIC: HOUSING

ISSUE: 1st TIME HOME BUYERS

Many potential 1st time home buyers are citizens who have lived in the Tobacco Valley all their life – being born, raised, and educated in the area.

RECOMMENDATION:

High density housing (please refer to *ISSUE: Density*, later in this report), a reality in many larger cities throughout the United States, is a viable option. Montana Board of Housing (MBOH) and Montana Homeownership Network (MHN) offer programs to assist 1st time home buyers.

RESOURCES:

[MDOC ~ Housing Division](#)
[MHN - Buying A Home](#)



MAIN TOPIC: HOUSING

ISSUE: AFFORDABILITY

The question is: Affordable for whom? Affordable housing is (nominally) defined as, “Acceptable housing that a household can maintain by expending no more than 30% of the total gross monthly income.”

RECOMMENDATION:

As “affordability” covers a broad spectrum of housing issues, including workforce, seniors, 1st time home buyers, and rental properties, there is a focused effort by key agencies in Montana to alleviate the problem. The following resources are currently developing initiatives and/or proposals for consideration at the next regularly scheduled legislative session. On a national level, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), offers a variety of options.

RESOURCES:

[MEDA Housing Development](#)

[MDOC ~ Housing Coordinating Team](#)

[U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development \(HUD\)](#)

MAIN TOPIC: HOUSING

ISSUE: RENTAL

The shortage of adequate ‘acceptable’ (safe/sanitary) housing appears to be the problem.

RECOMMENDATION:

As has been described above, there are a variety of options that are being explored and/or undertaken to remedy the overall problem of affordable, available housing. State and federal agencies that provide resources to address rental housing issues are identified below.

RESOURCES:

[MDOC ~ Multifamily Program](#)

[MFH Rentals \(USDA RD\) County Selections](#)

MAIN TOPIC: HOUSING

ISSUE: DENSITY

As the value of real property has skyrocketed in the past few years, the dream of owning a detached, single family dwelling on an acre of land is out of the financial reach of many long-time residents.

RECOMMENDATION:

Investigate options, i.e., zoning, mixed housing subdivisions, etc., as well as Habitat for Humanity, and Community Land Trusts to effectively meet the needs to provide housing for low-to-moderate and fixed income residents.

RESOURCES:

[Habitat for Humanity Int'l](#)

[Portland Community Land Trust](#)

[Burlington Associates](#)

MAIN TOPIC: HOUSING

ISSUE: SECOND/VACATION HOMES

It appears that the problem is the impact on the local community as a result of the stated issue.

RECOMMENDATION:

Short of implementing restrictive zoning regulations for housing developments, it is suggested that indexing of property taxes (ala California’s Proposition 13) would provide relative security for current homeowners.

RESOURCES:

- [California Constitution - Article 13A](#)
- [Proposition 13 Then, Now and Forever](#)
- [WELCOME | Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association](#)

MAIN TOPIC: INFRASTRUCTURE

ISSUE: PLANNING, ZONING, COMPREHENSIVE GROWTH PLAN

The need for a comprehensive growth plan stems from a number of related issues identified in the **Infrastructure** and **Property Issues** segments of this report:

Infrastructure

- Planning
- Zoning
- Water and wastewater
- Annexation
- Inability to deal with growth challenges
- Spring breakup

Property Issues

- Property tax base
- Affordable land
- Land use
- Annexation/taxation w/o representation
- Municipal vs. county services (re. response time and quality)

RECOMMENDATION:

Utilizing the Lincoln County “Purpose of The Growth Policy” as a guide, it is suggested that leaders of business, community, government, non-profit, and education in the Tobacco Valley convene a focus group to address and provide options for achieving solutions to each of the issues identified above through the creation of a *comprehensive growth plan*.

The up-front costs of preparing a local needs assessment, a housing study, or capital improvements program often present a serious obstacle for communities who want to apply for CDBG-CD assistance, particularly for small communities with limited resources. The CDBG-CD program is able to play a unique role in assisting Montana communities because of its ability to offer planning grants to local governments for related housing and neighborhood renewal and public facilities activities. The grants can be used for a variety of planning activities including the initial planning necessary to get a project underway, or to conduct other important community planning activities such as preparing or updating a

growth policy, preparing a neighborhood redevelopment plan, a housing study, capital improvement plan, or similar planning processes needed to help a community address critical needs.

Also, Montana Department of Commerce provides technical assistance to local governments, their planning boards and zoning commissions, private sector developers, engineers, and consultants to encourage the development of well planned and attractive communities.

RESOURCES:

[Purpose of The Growth Policy](#)

[MDOC ~ CDBG-CD Application Forms](#)

[MDOC ~ Community Technical Assistance Program](#)



MAIN TOPIC: INFRASTRUCTURE

ISSUE: WATER AND WASTEWATER

The physical issue appears to be a combination of remediating, upgrading, and/or expanding the subject systems.

RECOMMENDATION:

Utilize the resources of a group of professionals from state, federal, and non-profit organizations that finance, regulate, and provide technical assistance for community water and wastewater systems – W₂ASACT (Water, Wastewater and Solid Waste Action Coordinating Team).

RESOURCES:

[Water, Wastewater and Solid Waste Action Coordinating Team](#)



MAIN TOPIC: INFRASTRUCTURE

ISSUES: ANNEXATION AND GROWTH CHALLENGES

RECOMMENDATION AND RESOURCES:

Please refer to *ISSUE: Comprehensive growth plan* (above)



MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

ISSUE: EUREKA SENIOR CITIZEN CENTER

A new Senior Citizen Center is required to accommodate the growing population of senior citizens moving to and/or currently residing in the Tobacco Valley.

RECOMMENDATION:

In public facilities projects, CDBG-CD funds are most often used in combination with other federal, state, or local funds to make basic community infrastructure improvements affordable to low and moderate income families. Public facility projects can also include facilities designed for use predominantly by persons of low and moderate income such as nursing homes, **senior centers**, Head Start centers, or mental health centers. Under federal law, eligible applicants are limited to general-purpose local government, i.e. counties, incorporated cities and towns, and consolidated city-county governments.

RESOURCES:

[MDOC ~ Community Development Block Grant Program](#)

[MDOC ~ Uniform Application](#)



MAIN TOPIC: MISC.

ISSUE: “HAVES AND HAVE-NOTS”

Who’s moving into your community? Are they a source of new talent willing to engage in community affairs? What skills do they possess that could add to the local economy? Do they help sustain economic vitality?

RECOMMENDATION:

Many of the new “Haves” may desire to participate in supporting the community alignment and possess knowledge and expertise that could be of significant value to the objectives of the region. Reaching out to them may reap long-term economic and community benefits.

RESOURCES:

[Boomers Today](#)

[The Baby Boomer Generation](#)



MAIN TOPIC: TREGO AND FORTINE

ISSUE: UPGRADE OF CIVIC CENTER

RECOMMENDATION AND RESOURCES:

Please refer to *ISSUE: Eureka Senior Citizen Center* (above)



MAIN TOPIC: MISC.

ISSUE: FOREST USE MANAGEMENT

Today there are six major, diverse groups that utilize our national forests and each have developed their own agenda regarding the priorities they perceive are paramount to their special interests' "highest and best use" of these lands.

RECOMMENDATION:

As 'management' and utilization of our national forests for the exclusive benefit by any one of these six groups runs counter to the objectives of the remaining entities, perhaps a local (state or regional) option would be to designate specific portions for the primary enjoyment of each of the groups. Accountability for maintaining the long-term sustainability of each group's designated region would be verified through audits by a committee made of representatives from each of these six diverse groups.

RESOURCES:

[Forestry Management and Forest Use Education](#)

[Forest Use and Management - Global Policies vs. Local Knowledge](#)

REPORT BY BILL BARR

Cooperative Specialist

USDA/RD Montana

Bozeman, MT 59771

Phone: 406.585.2540

Email: bill.barr@mt.usda.gov

Web: <http://www.mt.usda.gov>

REPORT BY GLORIA O'ROURKE

Coordinator, MEDA

118 E. Seventh St.; Suite 2A

Anaconda, MT 59711

Phone: 406.563.5259 Fax: 406.563.5476

Email: gloria@medamembers.org

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

INTRODUCTION:

As my colleagues have done an excellent job in reviewing the main issues and providing resources on various topics, I will simply fill in a bit here and there. That is the advantage of reporting last! Special thanks to the people of the Tobacco Valley for your warm welcome and participation in this process. You are so fortunate to have people like Tracy McIntyre, Randy McIntyre and Rose Kipp to assist with these endeavors. They cannot do the job alone – but need your time, participation and enthusiasm to accomplish all that needs to be done. There is an old John Denver song about “what one man can do” – and what that one man (or woman) can do, is change the world. Roll up your sleeves and jump in – to change the world you live in within the Tobacco Valley. It is up to you.

One of my favorite resources is: <http://commerce.mt.gov/comresources.asp> provided by the Montana Department of Commerce. Just visit this site and you will see resources for just about any issue facing your community.

MAIN TOPIC: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ISSUE: TOURISM, MARKETING LOCAL BUSINESS SUPPORT

I believe the Main Street program may be a tool that could address several issue within the communities of the Tobacco Valley.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Main Street program is fairly new to the state, but is making progress and accomplishing great things for small town main streets.

What is the Main Street Approach to Downtown Revitalization?

The Main Street program's success is based on a comprehensive strategy of work, tailored to local needs and opportunities, in four broad areas, called the *Main Street Four Point Approach*:

1. **Design:** Enhancing the physical appearance of the commercial district by rehabilitating historic buildings, encouraging supportive new construction, developing sensitive design management systems, and long-term planning.
2. **Organization:** Building consensus and cooperation among the many groups and individuals who have a role in the revitalization process.
3. **Promotion:** Marketing the traditional commercial district's assets to customers, potential investors, new businesses, local citizens and visitors.
4. **Economic Restructuring:** Strengthening the district's existing economic base while finding ways to expand it to meet new opportunities -- and challenges from outlying development.

The Main Street Philosophy

The National Main Street Center's experience in helping communities bring their downtowns back to life has shown time and time again that the Main Street Four Point Approach succeeds only when combined with the following eight principles:

- **Comprehensive:** A single project cannot revitalize a downtown or commercial neighborhood. An ongoing series of initiatives is vital to build community support and create lasting progress.
- **Incremental:** Small projects make a big difference. They demonstrate that "things are happening" on Main Street and hone the skills and confidence the program will need to tackle more complex problems.
- **Self-Help:** Although the National Main Street Center can provide valuable direction and hands-on technical assistance, only local leadership can initiate long-term success by fostering and demonstrating community involvement and commitment to the revitalization effort.
- **Public/private partnership:** Every local Main Street program needs the support and expertise of both the public and private sectors. For an effective partnership, each must recognize the strengths and weaknesses of the other.
- **Identifying and capitalizing on existing assets:** One of the National Main Street Center's key goals is to help communities recognize and make the best use of their unique offerings. Local assets provide the solid foundation for a successful Main Street initiative.
- **Quality:** From storefront design to promotional campaigns to special events, quality must be the main goal.
- **Change:** Changing community attitudes and habits is essential to bring about a commercial district renaissance. A carefully planned Main Street program will help shift public perceptions and practices to support and sustain the revitalization process.
- **Action-oriented:** Frequent, visible changes in the look and activities of the commercial district will reinforce the perception of positive change. Small, but dramatic improvements early in the process will remind the community that the revitalization effort is under way.

RESOURCES: Getting Started in Main Street Revitalization

Here are some things you can do to get started right away:

- Visit a nearby active Main Street program and speak with its staff and volunteer leaders about how the program works there and what its benefits are. Ask a Main Street staff person or volunteer to speak to your group of downtown leaders.

- Schedule a public meeting. Invite every group that should have an interest in your downtown's future to meet and discuss needs and opportunities for change. Show the audience The Main Street Approach slide show, interspersing slides of your own downtown.
 - Compile an inventory of your downtown's current businesses. Use an old city directory to list businesses that used to be downtown 10 years ago. Encourage local media to do a story.
 - Tell local government staff and officials how important downtown is to you. Encourage them to pursue public-private partnerships to revitalize your downtown.
 - Put together a task force to plan the next steps. Invite business owners, property owners, local government officials, the chamber of commerce, historic preservation groups, industry representatives, economic development staff and other key public and private civic leaders.
 - Participate in Preservation Week, held every May, by holding an open house of downtown businesses, running a daily newspaper column on downtown history and offering tours, call the National Trust for a Preservation Week information packet at 202.588.6141.
 - Organize a downtown festival to highlight how important Main Street is to the community economically, historically and culturally.
 - [Join the National Main Street Network](#) so you can begin learning from other communities' experiences in Main Street revitalization.
 - If you have questions about how to begin a Main Street revitalization effort, call 202.588.6219 or Montanan Department of Commerce at 406.841.2708.
-

MAIN TOPIC: INFRASTRUCTURE

ISSUE: THE 'Z' WORD – ZONING

The Tobacco Valley Resource Team Assessment is the 35th assessment MEDA has coordinated to date. The “Z” word (zoning) comes up repeatedly in other communities with which we have worked. Dave Cole, Community Development Division, Administrator, Montana Department of Commerce, is an expert (and has the gray hairs to prove it) on this topic. Below is what Dave Cole has advised other communities.

RECOMMENDATION FROM DAVE COLE:

Montana, like other Western states, has a strong tradition of respecting private property rights. As a result, many people dismiss the idea of regulating land uses through zoning, out of hand, without really understanding the protections it offers for private property owners. Zoning is not a radical idea and it's not new. It's been 85 years since New York City adopted the first ordinance in 1916 to assure that people living in crowded tenements had adequate light and air and buildings were built far enough apart to discourage the spread of fire. It's now considered the standard means of implementing community land use plans all across the United States. Zoning has been thoroughly reviewed by both state and federal courts and its consistency with our state and national constitutions is well established in law.

The basic premise of zoning is that, in return for accepting limitations on the type of development allowed on his or her property, the property owner gains predictability about the types of development that can occur around them, as well as the opportunity to comment on the potential impact of proposed adjacent development before it occurs. Contrary to popular opinion, zoning

does provide strong protection of property rights, including due process guarantees, such as an appeals process to a board of adjustment and provisions for court review of zoning decisions.

When the issue of property rights is raised in opposition to local zoning efforts, it is often in the context of the right of an owner of undeveloped land to develop it as he or she sees fit. There is seldom much discussion about the rights of existing homeowners or other property owners to have some protection against adjacent incompatible development that could substantially reduce the value or enjoyment of their property. For most families, the purchase of a home is the most significant investment they make. The basic appeal of zoning has always been based on the predictability and protection it can provide to property owners, and in particular, homeowners, regarding the type of development that may occur near them.

In unzoned areas, property owners have virtually no way to effectively influence the development occurring around them. Some subdivisions have covenants but these do not restrict the type of development that can take place outside the subdivision boundary. Covenants also have the drawback of requiring property owners to retain a lawyer to sue a neighbor to assure enforcement.

During hearings on proposed subdivisions, adjacent property owners often testify against the changes a subdivision may cause in their neighborhood, such as increasing the density of development or proposing a commercial use that they see as harmful to their property values or lifestyle. The public seems to be continually surprised to learn that the subdivision review process can't prevent changes in neighborhood land use or density. The issues of density and intrusion of incompatible uses into residential areas are what zoning is designed to address. It appears that more and more people are beginning to understand this.

A principal benefit of zoning is that it is proactive: the appropriate types of land use and density for an area are discussed and agreed upon by area property owners, in advance, outside the emotional debate involving any particular development. For both existing property owners and subdividers, there is predictability about the basic types of development that are considered acceptable in a particular area. Within zoned areas, the question of what land uses will be permitted and the acceptable density for the area have already been discussed by the public and formalized by the local government.

Zoning can be a very flexible tool. **Communities can tailor their zoning regulations to fit their needs or desires: standards can vary from simple regulations for low density, rural areas to detailed standards for larger cities.** Chouteau County, for example, has adopted a development permit system that doesn't designate land uses at all. Instead, depending upon the land use proposed, it sets minimum development standards for access to county roads, road grades, setbacks from water bodies and roads, lighting, and water supply and sewage treatment.

Across Montana, and, in particular, in counties experiencing rapid growth, we are seeing increasing interest in grass roots neighborhood planning efforts and zoning to regulate land use. It has been said that a neighborhood plan is the opposite of NIMBY: "not in my back yard". Instead, it is a way to say what you want your neighborhood to be like. Support for rural zoning is increasing for the same reasons that zoning is so common all across the country: it appeals to the basic self-interest of most property owners.

The first step is to meet the legal prerequisite for adopting zoning by preparing and adopting a county growth policy in conformance with Montana law. If the County Commissioners, area property owners, and affected state and federal agencies are interested in working together to develop a common vision for how the area should be developed, it could be a “win-win” for everyone involved. A plan for the area could be incorporated in the Lincoln County Growth Policy and appropriate land use controls adopted to encourage the type of development the community wants to see there.

RESOURCES SUGGESTED BY DAVE COLE:

One resource to help prepare a neighborhood land use plan and zoning regulations is the Montana Department of Commerce, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. The CDBG program has a competition for matching grants for community planning each year in April. A CDBG planning grant was used to help prepare the recent Growth Policy for the county.

For further information, you can contact:

Gus Byrom, Program Manager for Housing & Public Facilities
Community Development Block Grant Program
Community Development Division
Montana Department of Commerce
301 South Park Avenue
PO Box 200523
Helena, MT 59620-0523
gbyrom@state.mt.us
(406) 841-2777
FAX 841-2771



MAIN TOPIC: INFRASTRUCTURE

ISSUE: ANNEXATION

This issue, as in zoning, is a very sensitive issue facing the Eureka area. Annexation is being considered to assist with boosting the local tax base. Business owners that would be affected by annexation, however, are not sure that annexation would be beneficial.

RECOMMENDATION AND RESOURCES:

Annexation is not an easy process and needs expertise to be handled as a win-win for everyone involved. Again, as with zoning, this issue has been faced by other Montana communities. Contact the MSU Local Government Center – this is an excellent resource for assistance with this challenging issue:

Local Government Center
Montana State University
P.O. Box 172240
Bozeman, MT 59717-2240

Tel: (406) 994-6694
Fax: (406) 994-1905
Location: Wilson Hall 1156

Director:
Jane Jelinski janejelinski@montana.edu



MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

ISSUE: RECREATION/YOUTH CENTER, COMMUNITY CENTER

During our listening sessions, several people said that it would be wonderful for the Tobacco Valley to have a rec center, community center, complete with an indoor pool, meeting area, youth center, etc.

RECOMMENDATION:

At a recent workshop, I bumped into several people from Dillon, Montana, who were extremely involved in making Dillon's YMCA a reality. I told them that my town of Anaconda was very envious of this accomplishment. They informed me that while the project was a lot of work, it was do-able for any community that wanted to make the dream a reality. They said they would be happy to talk with anyone interested in learning from their experience. Check out their website!

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

RESOURCES:

Marilyn M Benson
YMCA Chairperson
Southwestern Montana Family YMCA, Inc.
PO Box 66
Dillon, MT 59725
406-683-5191
www.dillonymca.org



MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

ISSUE: JUSTICE CENTER

RECOMMENDATION AND RESOURCES:

While my grant search to find funding to build and/or expand on the current Justice Center were not productive, I couldn't let the issue go unmentioned. The Tobacco Valley Resource Team toured this tiny facility and was in awe at all that was being accomplished by the staff in horrible working conditions. Imagine using an old (clean) urinal for extra filing space! Perhaps the same vision that the people of Dillon used to build their YMCA (see above) could be used to build a new Justice Center in the Tobacco Valley. The excellent staff and professionals serving the people of the area more than deserve a safe and quality place to work.

MAIN TOPIC: MISC. ISSUES

ISSUE: VANDALISM

RECOMMENDATION:

It seems that vandalism is an issue that plagues communities of all sizes. Small towns, however, may have an advantage as everyone knows everyone – thus, the vandals tend to stand out and/or are more easily identified when caught in the act.

During our listening session with one group of teenagers, they expressed dismay at the vandalism occurring. It would be terrific to get these teenagers involved in the teen program under Neighborhood Watch.

RESOURCES:

While I am sure you have heard of the old programs Neighborhood Watch, it is still a useful tool today. Plus, there is now a program to involve teenagers. When my family and I lived in Billings, I became the coordinator for our neighborhood. It was a great way to get to know my neighbors and improve communication when something happened in our neighborhood. It is simple and inexpensive – but does take the initiative from one or two individuals to implement the program.

Teen Neighborhood Watch: <http://www.ncpc.org/topics/by-audience/teens>
<http://www.ncpc.org/programs/teens-crime-and-the-community/about-tcc>
<http://www.ncpc.org/topics/by-audience/teens/get-involved/teen-volunteers/>

National Neighborhood Watch program: <http://www.nnwi.org/>

MAIN TOPIC: WEST KOOTENAI (and other emergency service provider areas)

ISSUE: AGING FIRE FORCE AND EMERGENCY SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

RECOMMENDATION:

As in every community, youth often say they have “nothing to do.” Adults involved in fire and emergency services could begin working with the youth now so that once they are 18, they can hit the ground running. A great example of this is a young man in my own community, Jesse Riddle. Jesse was involved in a cadet/high school EMT program, which was canceled due to liability issues. This did not stop Jesse. He took EMT night classes from the Helena College of Technology and one week after he turned 18, took the national exam. In Montana, an individual must pass the national registry exam to even apply for an EMT license. As with Jesse, adults currently involved in providing emergency services can encourage the youth of the area to complete the training requirements before they become

of age. It should be noted Jesse could not go on ambulance calls until he was a full EMT and a high school graduate.

In addition, Jesse Riddle served as a volunteer to the fire department while still in high school. Jesse participated in all of the trainings, but could not go out on a call until he turned 18. Once Jesse turned 18 and graduated from high school, he was ready to serve – and is actively engaged in our community emergency services today.

RESOURCES:

Jesse Riddle
Anaconda, MT
563.5325

EMS Training offered right there in your own Tobacco Valley (was told it is one-of-a-kind in the state.)

TOBACCO VALLEY RESOURCE TEAM
LISTENING SESSION COMMENTS
October 3 – 4, 2007

STRENGTHS – LOCAL OFFICIALS AND TOWN COUNCILS

- Summer - -when the people come
- Natural resources
- Forest went through a process recently and came up with strengths regarding natural resources:
vast by nature, uncrowded by design.
- Undeveloped areas
- Recreation – without crowds
- Timber based resources
- Senior Citizens in the area
- Tracy McIntyre
- **Beautiful place to live – magnificent.**

STRENGTHS – WEST KOOTENAI and Fire Dept.

- Community supports the fire department
- Community itself – getting great support form community membership.
- Lack of commercial activity
- Freedom in the area – not tied to someone’s developed ideas of lifestyle
- Ditto – all of the above our people and the beauty around us
- Ditto – recreational, hunting, fishing, rural lifestyle
- Isolation – we are here because it is quite
- Good support between Amish community and our community
- Amish young children that stay here
- We are a private fire company - - -we cooperate with Lincoln County, but we are private.

STRENGTHS – BANKS AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

- Quality of life – that is why people are moving here
- **The people – are very friendly, unless you rub them the wrong way and then they are very crabby.**
- We have a good economic development group that stays abreast of what is happening in the area – keep their 5 year plans up and try to keep going on multiple projects.
- New construction jobs and service jobs in the area – sporadic jobs

STRENGTHS - -RETAIL/BUSINESSES

- Natural resources
- The people
- Tourism is huge now
- Secondary and vacation homes are huge now
- Forest service

- Recreational opportunities
- When the mill closed, people found other jobs
- Canadian tourists are supporting us now
- Canadians are buying land near recreation areas
- Hometown friendliness
- Vision Net
- Two successful programs for high-risk students

STRENGTHS – TREGO

- Tight knit community
- Everyone works together
- Fire department
- The people
- Friendliness
- Ditto
- Fiercely independent
- Civic Center
- School
- Volunteer fire dept.
- Post office
- Molly Brown's
- Tracy McIntyre and the fire truck grant that is pending

STRENGTHS – EDUCATORS AND COMMISSIONERS OF HIGHER ED

- **Note: the format was changed to accommodate the meeting with the Commissioners of Higher Ed.**
- VisonNet
- Flathead Valley of Community College – very accommodating for business needs – willing to adjust its curriculum.
- Students that are capable are well prepared to go to college
- Dual enrollment, dual credit program with FVCC
- Flathead Builders – great success – dual enrollment program

STRENGTHS – LAW ENFORCEMENT AND BORDER PATROL

- Great place to raise kids – small town atmosphere
- A lot of potential here
- Annual powder shoot
- Annual Rendezvous
- Quilt Show
- Wood Rocks chain saw demonstration/festival
- Close knit- raise money in a day for someone in need
- No one will complain about living here – love the area, but property is too high

STRENGTHS – CIVIC CLUBS AND NON PROFITS

- The people
- Foster care
- The area itself
- Fiber Fest – held at the fair grounds
- Welcoming to outsiders
- Ditto with the people
- Banks and utilities support our events
- Interaction between school and community
- Fundraisers are amazing when someone is in need
- Combined Campaign with the County
- Tobacco Valley Community Foundation
- Fair grounds – has great potential

STRENGTHS – STUDENTS

- Less crime
- Small
- Less fights
- Ride bike without being scared
- Hunting
- Outdoors
- Good clean lakes
- Everyone knows everybody
- Uncrowded
- Clean air
- News gets around fast
- People are more trusting
- Scenery
- Camping
- Grateful for what we have as a community
- Most campgrounds are free
- Not barred every way into woods
- EMS training – great program for high school students - -only one in the state
- Speech group is great.
- 4-H

STRENGTHS – SENIOR CITIZENS AND HEALTH CARE

- Friendly people
- Helpful people
- Volunteers abound for our Senior Center
- Land donation for new Senior Center
- Public transportation bus
- Two clinics here

STRENGTHS – HANDWRITTEN COMMENTS FROM STUDENTS

- If someone is in need of medical attention and they need \$\$\$\$, people come together and raise enormous amounts of money.
- Community coming together for fund raisers to help our town members
- I love the wilderness and lakes we have to fish and hunt near. I would hate for them to be destroyed.
- The country – lots of places to fish and swim, and lots of woods to see
- We have a lot of woods to explore! Fishing and swimming (in the summer).
- I am sorry to say it but I don't really think our town has any.
- Parents and teachers being involved with things.
- Helping everyone out.
- Great school support and spirit.
- It is pretty and I like the close-knit community
- We have a lot of recreational options
- Lots of lakes and free woods for hikes, fishing and hunting.
- The mountains – they are probably this town's strongest point.
- Wilderness
- We are a unified community.
- Everyone knows one another and there is a sense of unity.
- We are well placed with any outdoor activity potentials.
- Feeling of community and closeness that people will organize events for those in need.
- It is small and everyone knows each other.
- There are a lot of things I find good.
- Being an athlete, I love how this town supports troops.
- We have a great community when it comes to fundraising for the needy or for people who need money for hospital visits, bills and accessories. (Benefit for Sarah was a great example.)

STRENGTHS – HANDWRITTEN COMMENTS

- Sunburst program
- A wealth of musical talent
- Good area for recreation
- Good place to raise a family
- Healthy way of life
- Community pulls together
- The businesses
- Friendly people
- Close knit family oriented society
- Someone will help you no matter what, if they can
- Enough native Eurekaans to keep the original, authentic feel of the way things have always been, yet enough new mix of people moving in to bring a new charm to the growth
- The beauty that surrounds the town will never go away
- Major community involvement during crisis situations
- Quality of life
- The people
- Beautiful recreation area
- Lake Koocanusa, other lakes

- On the main corridor to Canada
- Increased availability of medical services and professionals in the medical field
- The willingness of a small group of intelligent people who are looking into and providing information on the future planning of our area. It is not too soon to plan!
- The many talented artists, authors and crafts people who live here.
- The mountainous beauty of the area and the recreational opportunities provided by the ten lakes area and Lake Koocanusa.
- Abundant wildlife
- Uncrowded and pristine areas
- Upgraded museum and downtown areas.
- Location, scenic features, recreational opportunities, sense of community
- Eureka Rural Development Partners
- Location – we are ideally located between a booming Canadian economy and the rest of Western Montana
- Recreational opportunities
- Committed people and organizations in the community
- Strong locally controlled telephone and electric cooperatives
- Large land base that can't be developed so there will always be open space
- In comparison to other areas, a lot of private land that can still be developed
- Outdoorsman paradises
- Room to grow – only if done correctly and we make developers responsible for the impact of their development (roads, services, schools, open space, etc.)
- Tobacco River
- Lake Koocanusa
- Surrounding lakes
- Trains and land for recreating on
- Historical Village and area Chamber of Commerce
- Our events (The Bull Think, Shakespeare in the Park, etc.)
- We have our own charm and unique small –town feeling
- The people of the Tobacco Valley – giving and hardworking
- Lots of great caring people
- Lots of jobs in construction – for now
- Strong churches and opportunities for religious growth
- Beautiful new high school

TOBACCO VALLEY RESOURCE TEAM LISTENING SESSION COMMENTS

October 3 – 4, 2007

CHALLENGES – LOCAL OFFICIALS AND TOWN COUNCILS

- Winter
- On a system that is not working well for small towns in Montana – funding is skewed – people come here and do not pay for things that are here.
- Balancing the need for people to come and support businesses, but yet maintain our uncrowded, wide open spaces.
- Lack of available material for forest products
- Lost our mill in town
- We need tourism because we don't have a lot of jobs
- Lack of senior living/housing
- Inept city/council leadership – they do not plan, don't prepare for the future, don't train, conduct meetings properly.
- Lack of housing and jobs
- Annexation pending – including business locations – business owners will not be able to put people on the council, run for mayor or vote on city elections/ordinances because they do not reside in the city. Offers nothing to business owners.
- Streets, sewers, water, police force all not managed well, so why should we annex and give our leadership more problems?
- The county does a much better job of running things – so don't annex.
- Too many water shutoffs - -and we are not notified.
- **Community is in transition**.....in a variety of ways – and we are not preparing for change in a variety of ways. (Resource management, healthcare, zoning, etc.)
- These changes are tearing and pulling at our community.
- Leadership format is inadequate.....need to adopt the city manager model, rather than a mayoral model.
- Inequities of downtown area taxation.
- Businesses going north so that they do not have to pay taxes abide by zoning issues.
- Very little private land – most is federal or state.

CHALLENGES - WEST KOOTENAI AND FIRE DEPT.

- Distance and isolation – 40 minutes away from Eureka
- Libby dam construction forced this isolation – any help must come across the bridge. **Forget it in winter time.**
- If we have a major fire in winter time, we are on our own.
- Helicopter and ambulance take about the same 30 minutes to get here – and then they have to find you.
- Addressing is a nightmare.
- Age and character of population – retirees.
- Vulnerability to children here – and getting emergency services
- Youth involved in the fire department.

- Because we are a private fire department, we don't qualify for a lot of grants and/or loans
- Federal money being cut – effects us
- Surplus equipment program – does not exist....can't break through the red tape to get equipment
- Ditto all of the above
- Attracting recreational property owners, puts a burden on us to provide even more services.
- Younger clientele coming that wants to vacation and party – when in the middle of a 60 acre lot you can do that, but not when people are on smaller lots. Effects those around you.
- Qualifying for grants – don't have enough fires, don't have enough population.
- Issues across the Canadian Border that will soon effect us.
- Winter water sources

CHALLENGES – BANKS AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

- Affordable housing for the economic base of the workers
- No place in town that has utilities available that is buildable
- Revamp what is known as Legacy Ridge for workforce affordable housing
- Staff and expertise to investigate all of the housing program and options
- Border patrol employees drive in from Whitefish
- Where are new border patrol people going to live?
- Lack of available land to put any density housing on
- Just loss more employees at the mill
- Leadership not equipped to handle current challenges
- Annexation – must be addressed
- Five block area that is the tax base for the entire area....need a bigger tax base
- Concern for property taxes - -an older home between two mansions – gets hit by overwhelming property taxes assessed.

CHALLENGES – RETAIL/BUSINESSES

- Affordable land
- Increased restriction on land permits – demand for recreation demands have driven the prices beyond the normal person's pocket book
- Took the timber away from us
- Ranching and farming is disappearing
- Calgary is promoting Eureka as “the” place to go
- A drug problem – but not as bad as big cities
- Taxes going up
- People driven out of homes by property taxes
- Not a business friendly community
- Seasonal business problems – finding enough employees, then in the winter you have to lay them off again
- Can't find building lots that are affordable
- County roads are closed for about three months during the year – due to snow
- Public docks on Lake Koochanusa.

CHALLENGES – TREGO

- Incredible prices for land

- Seeing the dead trees - -that we cannot touch – watching it burn now
- Private property owners are to have proper forest management – but due to our environmentalists, our own forest service can't manage the forests.
- Rapid pace of development - -to rapid the last five years.
- Tiny schools in Fortine and Trego, challenge to continue to provide students with quality education
- The “c” word – consolidation, for the Fortine/Trego schools
- Ditto
- Land development is out of control - -learn from mistakes of other towns
- Ditto
- Dead timber going to rot.....
- Ditto
- Same volunteers – burn out
- People are anti-zoning, anti-government regulation
- County Commissioners are difficult to deal with

CHALLENGES – EDUCATORS AND COMMISSION OF HIGHER ED

- **Note: the format was changed to accommodate the meeting with the Commissioners of Higher Ed.**
- Difficult to get an Associates Degree, which is required, while working all day. Classes I need are not online.
- Funding for dual enrollment program
- Access and affordability is critical
- Reaching kids not on college career track – giving them financial assistance to take the courses
- Rock Creek Mine, Troy Mine – workforce shortages – as the mines start at \$50,000 per year. Need mine training.
- We do not have a workforce campaign for recruitment
- The two year colleges need to adjust quicker to meet the business needs for workforce
- Our children cannot afford to live here in Eureka
- Sustaining what exists today for the next generation
- Decreasing funding for K-12 needs

CHALLENGES – LAW ENFORCEMENT AND BORDER PATROL

- Meth problem – being manufactured here
- Potential gang activity –
- Controlled growth
- Declining youth population
- Finding the balance between growth and lifestyle
- Large gap growing between have's and have-nots
- People will not be able to afford the taxes
- **People are rich in spirit but don't have a lot of money**
- Concerns of two separate communities growing – again, the have's and have-nots.
- Those that can afford to shop here, don't shop here.
- Cost of property – sky high; wages are too low.

- Part time residents don't contribute on local issues
- We are in a rut...jobs must start supporting cost of living
- Substandard housing
- Find a balance in bringing money in yet keep small town atmosphere
- Cannot be supported by the timber industry any longer.

CHALLENGES – CIVIC CLUBS AND NON PROFITS

- Oversubscription of resources
- Don't have enough motels/hotels even restaurants to sustain our event crowds – restaurants close at 5:00ish.
- Fairgrounds – county facility – money is always being threatened, and it is used a lot
- Resentment from mill being shut down – changing our way of life – a very difficult thing
- Government red tape regarding our forests – very frustrating
- Zoning – we need some kind of zoning before it is too late
- Judicial system – drug dealers are getting suspended sentences...so they are still in the community.
- This is a perfect location for meth – need to have stronger stance against drug makers/dealers.
- We are a border town – causes drug challenges

CHALLENGES - Students

- Challenge in getting access to woods
- Sports centered school – need non sports activities
- If you don't do sports, that is nothing.
- Don't cut funds for drama
- Underage drinking and drinking problem – need
- I know sixth graders who are alcoholics
- Crack down on people who are causing trouble
- Destructive people- vandals - -
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Graffiti
- Vandalism is really bad here
- Disrespect teachers and adults
- Sometimes we know who is causing the trouble, but we can't do anything about it.
- We can't talk to people for fear of getting in trouble.
- Teachers and school administration doesn't take student's problems to heart.
- Small towns have their ways and it is hard to get them to change.
- Against the rules to be an individual.
- Huge high school party crowd
- Better discipline process
- Some teachers pick favorites
- Sports are favored – including students that play sports

- When I give my opinion, I get the death glare from a teacher
- Job opportunities are terrible
- Taking classes away from us - -
- We don't have alternatives to partying
- Drinking is a huge problem here – not many alternatives

CHALLENGES – SENIOR CITIZENS AND HEALTH CARE

- Want to use high school as walking mall
- Jobs not here for our children
- Funding
- Unless you are a third generation you are “new” here
- Town government – leadership and skilled leadership is lacking
- Growth – do not see growth plan in place 5, 10, 20 years.
- No emergency services
- No services preparing to cover our growing population
- Proper planning for our new Senior Center – need to do it right
- Proper lines are a mess – inaccurate information, need easements

CHALLENGES – HANDWRITTEN COMMENTS FROM STUDENTS

- I believe the cops are twisted; they worry about teens and their activities when you can watch adults making drug deals openly all round town.
- Anything teens do in this town, an adult will find a problem with it.
- A major problem we have is underage drinking. We also don't have the best cops. They seem to be unfair and confused.
- I believe a lot of the scholarships are based on people you know and is also unfair.
- The possible closing of the woods to become a wilderness is something that could destroy our community.
- Drinking and drugs.
- There is a huge problem with underage drinking and use of drugs. Parents are buying for their or other children.
- Unless you like the outdoors or can entertain yourself in a safe way, there are not a lot of things to do.
- All I hear is how the town talks about wanting to do something and having meetings.
- We don't have enough for kids to do.
- Kids and teens not having enough to do and getting into trouble when its really not their fault and for reasons that should be better looked into.
- Too many parties; need to be more serious about school
- In my eyes law enforcement is the biggest problem. They have nothing to do so they pick on people and create problems. There are too many of them and they all have big egos.
- Nothing for kids to do.
- Start basketball leagues or something for kids to do.
- Boredom
- No place for teens/kids to go
- Children do not have enough to do and resort to drugs and alcohol.
- Younger kids are looking up to the “cool” drinking kids and drug addicts.

- Lack of alternatives to parties.
- General dislike and stereotyping towards teenagers.
- The shutdown of roads to recreational spots.
- Not enough to do with free time. It gets pretty boring and I think there needs to be more things to do instead of cruising up and down main street wasting gas.
- The cops.
- Teenagers don't have enough to do other than drinking, partying and going to the bars.
- We have problems with vandalism and disrespectful kids but that falls under the parent's fault for not raising their children better.
- Guns or hunting rifles in vehicles – we are a hunting town and some restrictions are insane and unconstitutional.

CHALLENGES – HANDWRITTEN COMMENTS

- Our community is in need of a public radio station.
- More jobs created, area is seasonal work for most
- Need to create some kind of industry to create more work
- More experienced planning board, county commissioners
- Getting on and off Main Street (Hwy 93) between 8 – 5 Monday through Friday. No stop lights or turning lanes.
- No outlet for the children in the community. The tens just drive around.
- There are no indoor gyms, YMCA, for swimming or racket ball or tennis.
- Midvale water and bringing town and outskirts together
- Zoning and covenants to make sure growth is done correctly
- Drug and alcohol abuse (including underage) causing drinking and driving, etc.
- Tax base
- Affordable housing
- Industry in the area
- Annexing
- Base Industry
- Aversion to boosting tourism
- Aversion to designate more wilderness and protected areas in the 10 lake area for the boos in tourism and activity and dollars
- Promotion and support of many small businesses who are located in the rural areas of the Tobacco Valley – Stryker, Trego, Fortine and Rexford. We are not located on the main street of Eureka and do not get the kind of exposure as in-town businesses, but we are an important part of the valley.
- Lack of representation that strives to resolve problems - -need for community leaders to receive training so that the community can move forward on issues
- Learning tolerance and acceptance of others ideas and desires. Currently there is little tolerance and respect for the ideas of others and there is little effort by community leaders to promote or encourage it. This behavior makes for a hostile living environment for others with differing opinions and makes folks exhibiting this behavior look petty and selfish in general.
- There is a lack of vision or desire for alternative livelihood choices and options. **The result is a community caught in a vicious low income cycle – with the end result that the**

community will become (or already is?) a victim of changing circumstances beyond its control.

- Alcoholism and substance abuse and its resulting behaviors are rampant and contribute to many of the conflicts in the community today.
- Expanding the water and wastewater systems in North Highway 93 to Four Corners area.
- Affordable housing for seniors
- Affordable housing for low to moderate income people
- Parking in downtown Eureka
- Keeping downtown as a retail center
- Additional lodging options for tourists
- Living wage job creation.
- Traffic is congested, specifically in the downtown core and near the Historical Village. We need to be proactive as to how to deal with traffic and discuss redirecting highway traffic.....need to create better ambiance and more pedestrian friendly atmosphere
- There needs to be healthy alternative for kids in Eureka – things to do.
- Too much growth with little or no regulation
- Not enough good jobs to keep young people and families here
- Not enough fun things for teens to do, teen drinking and drug use are serious issues
- Unmotivated students – many have trouble seeing beyond high school and life in Eureka
- Need more stores and restaurants – fix town roads!
- A short-term emergency housing for battered women, and abused children.

TOBACCO VALLEY RESOURCE TEAM LISTENING SESSION COMMENTS

October 3 – 4, 2007

PROJECTS – LOCAL OFFICIALS AND TOWN COUNCILS

- Eliminate property tax and initiate a sales tax
- Find niche markets for our natural resources
- Senior living/housing
- Investigate a water and waste management co-op to address the water needs rather than annexation of the 93 corridor.
- Investigate changing leadership format to City Manager model, rather than mayoral.
- Prepare for an orderly growth for the next 20+years.
- New Senior Center north of town

PROJECTS – WEST KOOTENAI

- A place to house our equipment
- Ditto – imposing on private individuals right now.
- Find unique ways to build our unique fire department (private)
- Expansion of emergency medical services – we support Eureka ambulance service but we have no emt's in this area. We are first aid only.
- Forest Service is looking at putting in a boat dock – will effect our fire department and community.
- Emergency medical needs will probably become a greater need than fire needs.
- Equipment – we have 3 fire engines – one gets mothballed in winter. But we don't have a way to transport water to an incident. Currently have 750 gallons of water on the truck. A used tender would cost \$50,000. (Like a portable fire hydrant.)
- Equipment – we can't aggressively attack structure fires – need to put this in operation plans, too.
- Protective clothing is needed, training, etc.
- Ditto –
- Personal gear – gloves, boots, jackets, - \$1200 for gloves alone. \$2,000 to outfit one fire fighter with gear.
- Find winter water resource -

PROJECTS – BANKS AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

- Housing that is affordable for the current workforce
- Legacy Ridge – revamped for workforce affordable housing
- Workforce, senior and rental housing
- Improved medical services
- Livable wage for people in the area
- Address annexation problems
- Expand our tax base

- Revise how property taxes are assessed – to accommodate older homes in the same area as new mansions.
- Repair our streets – county roads are good, but repair our streets

PROJECTS – RETAIL/BUSINESSES

- Better tax incentives
- Water cooperative
- Creatively looking at getting infrastructure into land to make it more affordable to build on
- Ski slope and/or cross country tracks to bring people here in the winter
- Year round tourism - not just three months
- Community pool
- Capture Alberta tourists more often – especially in the winter
- Public recreation area on the reservoir would be terrific
- Bring power to the west side of the reservoir
- Aquatic Center
- Improve medical care and facilities
- Light industry – good paying jobs for 40 people would be wonderful –
- High Tech jobs – because no need for shipping and roads

PROJECTS – TREGO

- Proper forest management - sustainability
- Allow salvage of timber
- Want to see people live here and live comfortably – use our resources wisely
- Need a game plan for what we are going to develop where
- Learn from how other communities have managed growth – preserve what we have and yet allow for growth
- Volunteer recruitment and/or appreciation
- Find funds to support our civic center - -kitchen, electrical (it is a non profit)
- Ditto
- Find funds to support our fire department – new truck (looking like it might happen with a grant that is pending)
- Fire Dept. serves Fortine and Stryker – needs funding for building completion (costs keep rising)
- Ditto
- School – needs paint, playground upgrade,
- Find a music program teacher (have the funds)
- Share teachers/performers for arts, etc. with Eureka
- Co-gen plant – generate energy for this area
- Value added timber products, some avenue to utilize the wood that we have available - -October 23rd meeting for this purpose
-

PROJECTS – EDUCATORS AND COMMISSION OF HIGHER ED

- **Note: the format was changed to accommodate the meeting with the Commissioners of Higher Ed.**

- Extend more education programs via distance learning
- Promote two year colleges
- More programs on the high school level and two year college level that accommodate students not traditional 4 year college bound
- Mine training for Troy Mine and Rock Creek Mine employees
- Housing for workforce people
- Consider pricing our out-of-state tuition the same as in-state students – as once students graduate 60% tend to stay in the area - -would improve our workforce
- Continue to connect K-12 with the higher ed institutions - -need to flow together
- More funding for K-12 students

PROJECTS - -LAW ENFORCEMENT AND BORDER PATROL

- Change the property tax laws so that an older home's property tax is not raised sky high because a multi-millionaire purchased land nearby.
- Shop local campaign – find a way to keep our people shopping here as much as possible.
- **Wages must support cost of living here**
- Improve and rekindle community spirit – i.e., homecoming was not well supported this year, see several other events dwindling a bit
- Find another economic base other than timber, to help our community sustain itself
- **Investigate who already comes to Eureka and why....then bolster those opportunities.**
- Put historical village to more active use.
- **Fight apathy**

PROJECTS – CIVIC CLUBS AND NON PROFITS

- Better utilize the fair grounds
- Address lodging needs for the summer months
- More year round events
- Learn from other towns that have started small and what tools did they use (such as zoning) to have smart growth; perhaps only in city limits or in subdivisions
- Educate the people about zoning
- Enforce the laws on the books for meth.
- Improve drug awareness
- Encourage new leadership to run for public office
- Leadership training – do have funds available

PROJECTS – STUDENTS

- More Liberal Arts, Acting, Plays.....more access to arts activities that are free
- More activities for non sport students
- More for kids to do besides vandalizing or partying – we need something constructive to do
- Youth center is starting – want to get a warehouse and put in a stage, skating, open on weekends and after school hours. Games, pool tables, - a place for kids to go and hang out.
- In youth center – could open to some businesses – have a small food court.

- Youth center is a need – with a variety of activities enclosed - -supervised and safe.
- Provide alternatives for positive things to do – positive social things to do.
- Emergency room is needed
- Need a local doctor
- Share our EMS program with other schools
- Better discipline in the schools - -students don't take things seriously.
- Drama group like Port Polson Players
- More electives made available
- Do what Columbia Falls does – offer another class after school
- More leadership programs for kids - -
- Mores sports – like hockey, soccer - -for older kids
- New equipment in order to have tournaments here
- Public library needs to be expanded
- Instead of saying No, No, No give us alternatives
- Place to hang out - with computer access – able to view movies there
- Need an open library – with computer access –
- Open school more – more access after hours
- Forest roads closed

PROJECTS – SENIOR CITIZENS AND HEALTH CARE

- Open high school for walking mall for senior citizens
- Attract and retain our youth
- New skilled leadership – willing to take on our growth challenges
- Affordable housing
- Tourism – including the 6 month tourists from Canada
- Tap into tourism resources – possibly through a resort tax
- **Growth Plan** for the next 5, 10, 20 years – comprehensive for infrastructure, emergency services, traffic,
- Something to generate income – resort tax or sales tax
- No zoning
- Recycling center needed
- Seeking direction for our new Senior Citizen Center – need advice – identify needs you must have and want in the center. Will also be a multi-use center.
- Waterlines need replaced - breakdown one or two times per month
- Need new sewer lines- -better access – people have a hard time affording to replace their personal sewer lines
- Need our property lines cleared up! People don't know where their lines are. Need easements.
- Affordable Senior Housing
- City can't take on additional projects without handling current needs

PROJECTS - -HANDWRITTEN COMMENTS FROM STUDENTS

- More places for teens to hang out – shop, eat and just more stuff to do.
- Projects that make our community look better. The replica of the mountains below the L hill – it looks terrible and is not kept up or designed well.

- More work on the river walk and possibly a public are for kids to be – skatepark, etc.
- A good movie theater
- More activities for kids to do
- A place for kids to go to have safe fun
- Skate park
- Rec center that we could go to really late at night to play pool, foos ball, watch movies, hang out.
- Some place to go in free time – like a club, dancing and such...swimming pool?
- Swimming pool
- Bicycle sidewalk
- Pick up the trash and build bike trails
- Something for the kids to do to keep them out of trouble
- Fix the road up Graves Creek.
- Skate park
- Teen fun Center
- Contact Key Club and get more of us involved
- Skatepark, more places for kids to hang out.
- Rec Center, a place for kids to go, including middle school kids and younger grades.
- More places to eat lunch
- Waterslide
- A pool for people to work out in
- Teen lounge or recreational facility
- Pool hall, maybe even have tournaments there.
- We need more activities for all people to do – more competitions and the like.

PROJECTS – HANDWRITTEN COMMENTS

- Establish a public radio station:
 - The Sunburst Community Board is constantly struggling to get information out to the community for everything from our concert series to information regarding Families in Partnership
 - As an educator, communication skills is an area we can develop further with a student apprenticeship/class that works with the radio station
 - School sports and other activities could be communicated more thoroughly from a radio station – even broadcasting games.
 - Eureka has a wealth of musical talent that could be featured on such a radio station.
- Would like to see this area become an intense golf community. This will in turn bring more people. This will increase the call for more housing which in turn will help sell the vacant lots that are on the market. This will also bring a call for more construction working people that will need housed. People generate a financial stable community.
- Stop lights and turning lanes.
- Something for the children to do.
- Animal control.
- Golf courses completed.
- More community involvement

- Bio-mass at the school completed and showing returns
- New subdivisions completed
- Stop lights.
- Constructive activities for teens – skatepark
- City limits annexed to Four Corners
- Some type of zoning
- Diversified workforce/make a good wage
- Have a community that has been well thought out in regard to subdivisions and new building
- Have a community that can retain its warmth and small town flavor
- To have a community that can work together to tap into tourism and the huge population of the Flathead Valley. We could become a mecca for some people desiring to get away from the Flathead and spend the entire day visiting all the unique shops, businesses and small eating places on the way from Whitefish.
- I would like to see the design and adoption of a good development plan and well thought out growth policy. I advocate a growth policy that focuses on maintaining the current aesthetics of the valley by limiting development to specific locations, designs and types. The policy should also include a means of protecting existing water rights, in addition to providing affordable housing opportunities to the less fortunate.
- 2 years: water and wastewater expansion to Four Corners, New Senior Citizens Center, assisted living center for seniors, sale of old fire hall and its replacement with nice commercial building.
- 5 years: more lodging for tourists, downtown parking and retail center, creation or attraction of living wage jobs and more affordable housing project for low to moderate income people
- 10 years: civic center, more retail Eureka streets upgraded
- 20 years: expansion of downtown area to include First Ave. East
- 2 year projects: Zoning, traffic and road plan, community swimming pool for kids
- 5 year projects: Further downtown development – more pedestrian friendly, trails, parks intermingle with businesses; integration of river as a major part of this community –expand river trail, create more riverside parks; further promote Farmers Market and expand for a street fair – booths for local artisans, live music, etc.; Schools – keep them in repair, no overcrowding, add where we can to improve our kids education experience; Bridge across Tobacco River connecting 93 to Old Hwy (existing bridge is nearing capacity of use and with the developments up in the hills, this is very timely); Location – possibly at the very south end of town.
- 10 year projects: Redirect Hwy 93 around Downtown Core; Schools – we need to always keep our tabs on them as this can get very far behind if we do not keep up with the needs.; Review of existing zoning: if we can implement zoning within the next 2 years, we will need a major overhaul and review after it has been in the works for awhile; skateboard park; expanding our trails and parks system; ice skating arena; larger library.
- 20 year projects: Eureka will grow by leaps and bounds and within the next 20 years whether we want it to or not, so lets be proactive in making it a very livable city where we enforce our strict zoning; It is better to create zoning that allows for growth at a more slow and steady rate than at the crazed land-grabbing rate we see now. Since there is no zoning in effect, we do not have any say or control of the long term effects it has on our community.
- Open a teen center that is well supervised and has a wide variety of activities for evenings and weekends
- Construct bike paths and walking paths along highways
- Build a community recreation center with an indoor swimming pool

- More parenting classes, especially for parents of older students, aged 10 to 18.
- I believe that we need to make volunteerism a part of the curriculum for our students in school, so they will know what is needed to be a good citizen and keep communities running
- The projects I would like to see done in the next 2 years is the beginning of starting a group home for the handicapped. This could if done right be tied into an emergency housing for abused children and battered women.