



**Celebration of Success - One Year Return Visit
Malta/Phillips County Resource Team Assessment**
Assessment Held October 2014
Projects and Priorities Set March 2015
CELEBRATION OF SUCCESS March 10, 2016



Above: A gathering in Malta to celebrate the success of all that has been accomplished since the Malta/Phillips County Resource Team Assessment was organized by MEDA. Resource Team Assessments are made possible by the sponsorship of MT Dept. of Commerce.

Champions shared Progress on Short Term and Long Term Projects

Issue #1 – Agriculture - Tom DePuydt, Julianne Snedigar and Perri Jacobs

- Presenters updated everyone on agriculture associations in the area and Malta/Phillips County participation. Phillips County Cattlewomen has over 100 members with a focus on youth and school age children. A class was recently held on the generational transfer of ranches and a focus is on sustainable ranching. The Rancher Stewardship Alliance recently received a grant to hire its first employee.

Issue #2 – Hi Line Retirement Center - Howie Hammond & Karl Rude

- Karl Rude and Howie Hammond shared an incredible story of the saving of the Hi Line Retirement Center. The center was saved by the people who donated \$475,000; a strategic plan is now in place and a management company selected. The facility has 46-49 residents now and provides 60 jobs.

Issue #3- New Businesses and Sustaining Businesses - Dina Meneely and Ashley Stuart

- The chamber is now extremely active with Dina Meneely serving as the Director. Some of the activities include: improving business skills, investing in membership with increased training and providing training modules in partnership with Bear Paw Development Corp.; a six month leadership program, adult ed programs, new focus on marketing and tourism along with a Choose Local campaign. The residents of Phillips County are being encouraged to not only shop local, but invest local. PhillCo provided a grant to help 26 businesses improve their streetscape.

Issue #4 -Improve Parks and Recreation - Laura Pankratz

- The newly formed Parks & Rec group is one month old and is building on activities that started in 2010. A bridge project will take place in 2017 that will widen the bridge for walking; crosswalks are going in on Highway 2. City Hall is being used for winter activities and soccer is in the works. In five years the group plans to have in place a trail from the canal to Alkali Creek.

Issue #5 Housing – Affordable and Live-able - Mayor Shyla Jones

- A study of existing housing has been completed and is on the Bear Paw Development Corporation's website. Phillips County partnered with Bear Paw and the communities of Chinook and Harlem for the study. Fifteen lots in Malta are to be surveyed and developed; Cedar View Homes are being remodeled.

Issue #6 -Water and Sewer - Mayor Shyla Jones

- Mayor Jones said the water and sewer system in Malta has great capacity and could be expanded to 1,500 customers. A PAR was completed and a bid to replace breaking water pipes will soon go out.

Issue #7- Marketing Malta and Phillips County - Kathy Bagley

- Kathy reported a group is working with Opportunity Link to develop an arts trail along the Hi-Line. People will be able to enjoy and locate arts as they travel; a mobile app will be available.

Issue #8- Senior Center/Community Center - Lesley Robinson

- The Senior Center, Transit Authority and the Food Bank have a close partnership. The Seniors decided to put their efforts behind a community center and a transit barn rather than planning a new Senior Center.

Issue #9 -MOI - Anne Boothe

- Anne reported on Malta Opportunity which provides the disabled services. MOI received planning grants and is planning a capital campaign in the future. A public meeting will be held soon.

MDOC OFFICE OF TOURISM AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT TRAINING FOR MALTA/PHILLIPS COUNTY

Following the Resource Team Assessment Celebration, the next day, March 11th, a training was held by MT Dept. of Commerce Office of Tourism and Business Development. Topics included Merging Tourism and Business Development Efforts, Examples of Marketing and Branding around the State, Social Media, and using the VisitMT.com business tool. In addition, representatives from the MT Dept. of Transportation gave a presentation on signage. Annmarie Robinson provided information on the Big Sky Trust Fund opportunities.



Jeri Duran (above) instructs on merging tourism and business development efforts.



Julie Walker (above) offered training on marketing, branding, and social media.