

# **RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT REPORT**

**for**

## **PHILLIPS COUNTY, MONTANA**

**September 16 – 17th, 2003**

**In partnership with  
Montana Department of Commerce, Montana Economic Developers Association  
(MEDA), Montana State University - Northern, Sanders County Community  
Development Corporation, USDA/Rural Development, Great Northern  
Development Corporation, PhillCo Economic Growth Council and  
the people of Phillips County.**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Spending two days in Phillips County was a rich and rewarding experience. The entire team felt welcomed and impressed with all that Phillips County has to offer. We have to agree, however, that it is the people of Phillips County that is your strongest asset.

Before digging in to the report itself, I would like to give recognition to Montana Department of Commerce (MDOC) and MEDA – Montana Economic Developers Association. MDOC sponsors Resource Team Assessments across the state. MEDA provides the contractual services that make Resource Teams possible. You can join MEDA and become a part of this economic development network at <http://www.medamembers.org>.

Special thanks are due Anne Boothe of PhillCo Economic Growth Council who served as the spark plug behind this entire project. More thanks are extended to the Town of Saco, City of Malta, Phillips County, Malta Chamber of Commerce and MSU Extension. In addition, I applaud each and every team member that dedicated hours of work and travel in order to participate on the team: Melody Bentz of MSU-Norther, Steve Simonson of Sanders County Community Development Corp., Debra Swanson of USDA/Rural Development and Linda Twitchell of Great Northern Development Corp. 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 Phillips County Resource Team Assessment was truly a team effort on the local level. The welcome and participation from each and every community involved was proof of the incredible people that live in your county.

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

Be sure to attend the follow-up Town Meeting to be held in a few weeks!

Gloria O'Rourke  
MEDA

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

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

Anne Boothe of Phillco Economic Growth Council served as the community contact and local team leader for the project. Anne took the lead in agenda development, logistics, budgeting and publicity for the assessment. Resource team members were selected to visit, interview citizens, business and community leaders; and develop a plan of recommended action for the city. The team members were carefully selected based on their fields of expertise that Phillips County officials indicated would be needed to respond to the problem areas identified.

The Resource Team toured the county and interviewed approximately 90 people over a two-day period from September 16<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup>. The team interviewed representatives from the following segments of Phillips County: the people of Saco, Agriculture producers, local officials, law and emergency officials, educators, bankers, utilities, Senior Citizens, health care, churches, parents, youth, civic clubs, non-profits, retail, business and environmental representatives.

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

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

Upon completion of the interviews, the team met to compare notes and share comments following the two days of intense study. 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 a final report to Phillips County.

A preliminary oral report and a summary of group recommendations was presented to the people of Phillips County on September 17<sup>th</sup>.

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

**PHILLIPS COUNTY, MONTANA  
RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT  
SEPTEMBER 16 - 17, 2003**

**Phillips County Team Member: Melody Bentz  
Title: Director of Grants & Sponsored Activities  
Agency: Montana State University-Northern  
City, State, Zip: Havre, MT 59501  
Ph: 406.265.3526 Fx: (406) 265-3596  
Email: mbentz@msun.edu**

**Phillips County Team Member: Gloria O'Rourke  
Agency: MEDA/MEDS  
Address: 118 E. Seventh St.; Suite 2A  
City, State, Zip: Anaconda, MT 59711  
Ph: 406.563.5259 Fx: 406.563.5476  
Email: [gloria@medamembers.org](mailto:gloria@medamembers.org)  
Web: <http://www.medamembers.org>**

**Phillips County Team Member: Steve Simonson  
Title: Community Development Specialist  
Agency: Sanders County Community Dev Corp.  
Address: P.O. Box 1326  
City, State, Zip: Thompson Falls, MT 59873  
Ph: 406.827.6935 Fx: 406.827.6935  
Email: [simonson@ronan.net](mailto:simonson@ronan.net)  
Web: <http://www.mtmountainmarket.com>**

**Phillips County Team Member: Debra Swanson  
Title: Community Development Manager  
Agency: USDA/Rural Development  
Address: 54062 Hwy 2 West  
City/State/Zip: Glasgow, MT 59230  
Phone: 406.228.4321 Fx: 406.228.8101  
Email: [Debbie.Swanson@mt.usda.gov](mailto:Debbie.Swanson@mt.usda.gov)  
Web: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt>**

**Phillips County Team Member: Linda Twitchell  
Title: Executive Director  
Agency: Great Northern Development Corp.  
Address: 233 Cascade St.  
City/State/Zip: Wolf Point, MT 59201  
Phone: 406.653.2590 Fx: 406.653.1840  
Email: [linda@gndc.org](mailto:linda@gndc.org)  
Web: <http://www.gndc.org>**

**SCHEDULE:****PHILLIPS COUNTY~MALTA~SACO****Tuesday,  
September 16, 2003****Group****Location**

3:30 – 4:00PM	Team Orientation	SACO (30 miles east of Malta on US 2) Meet at the Saco School Library
4:00 – 5:30 PM	Saco Community	Saco School Library
6:15 PM	Resource Team tour Malta	meet at parking lot of First State Bank
7:00 PM	BBQ with Local Leaders	home of Anne Boothe 106 S 1 <sup>st</sup> Ave. Hillcrest

**Wednesday****Group****Location****September 17, 2003**

6:30 AM	Breakfast with Agriculture groups Plus, brief overview of potential BioDiesel project <b>RSVP to 654-1776 before 9/15/03 5:00 PM</b>	Westside Restaurant Highway 2 West
8:00 – 8:40 AM	Local officials, Law & Emergency officials	Community Room First State Bank
8:45 – 9:25 AM	Educators, Banking & Utilities	Community Room First State Bank
9:30 – 10:10 AM	Senior Citizens, Health Care, Churches, Parents	Community Room First State Bank
10:15 – 10:30 AM	BREAK	
10:35 – 11:15 AM	Youth, Civic Clubs & Non-Profits	Community Room First State Bank
11:30 AM – 1:00 PM	Retail, Business & Environmental <b>RSVP to 654-1776 before 9/15/03/5:00 PM</b>	Great Northern Dining Room
1:00 – 4:30 PM	Team prepares for Town Meeting – tour downtown Malta or other businesses/entities as desired/needed.	
5:00 – 6:30 PM	Team working supper	catered in pizza/salad from Rogers Chuckwagon
7:00 – 8:00 PM	Town Meeting	Malta High School Auditorium

**PHILLIPS COUNTY MAIN ISSUES  
SUMMARY OF RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT LISTENING SESSIONS  
SEPTEMBER 16 – 17, 2003**

**INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Wastewater treatment  
Housing  
Streets, sidewalks  
Reutilization of buildings, i.e., hospital, former Big Sky Beef building  
Capitalize on technology resources  
Trash/Garbage – sent to Valley Co.**

**ENVIRONMENTAL**

**Endangered Species  
Mosquito Control  
Public Land use**

**NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Dinosaurs – promotion  
Natural Gas  
Recreation**

**BUSINESS/JOBS**

**Lack of jobs  
Lack of quality work force  
Retain youth with good jobs  
Small business growth  
Retain what we have  
Business and Retention Survey  
Utilize industrial park  
Diversify business options  
Promote attractions and tourism assets i.e., Native American culture, Lewis and Clark, dinosaurs**

**AGRICULTURE**

**Value Added Products  
Irrigation System – need to modernize and update  
Bio-Diesel**

**MOBILIZING COMMUNITY ASSETS**

**Address apathy  
Improved cooperation between organizations, agencies  
Volunteer force – burnout issues and recruitment issues  
Come to consensus with definition of quality of life  
Support and expand non-brick and mortar projects/events  
Lack of direction**

**Utilize aging population to economic advantage**  
**Positive communication to entrepreneurs and interested business owners**  
**Transitional living units – bring people from “street to home ownership”**

#### **AGING AND YOUTH COMMUNITY**

**Boys and Girls Club**  
**Give positive encouragement to our children to stay in Montana**  
**Draw out Senior Citizens to engage in community activities and services**  
**Provide extra curricular activities for non-athletic students – i.e, dinosaur field office access**

#### **BEAUTIFICATION**

**Railroad corridor – noxious weeds**  
**Community beautification**

#### **TRANSPORTATION**

**To health care services for elderly**  
**Freight and transport issues**  
**4 for 2**  
**Market roads**  
**Improve roads**  
**Amtrak**

#### **FUNDING**

**Shrinking tax base and more responsibilities given to the local area**

#### **EDUCATION**

**Adult Basic Education and Advanced Basic Education**  
**Mentoring between Seniors and Youth**  
**Prepare non-college bound students for job applications, resume writing, interviewing**  
**Use programs such as Neighborhood Networks for internet accessibility**

#### **SACO**

**Desperate for housing - rentals, no housing inventory**  
**Elder care facility (may free up housing)**  
**Mosquito control – especially out of town**  
**Beautification**  
**Wind/electric generation**  
**Utilization of natural gas intensive business**  
**Building revitalization**  
**Explore redesign of Saco downtown – encourage traffic to stop**  
**Utilize donated land for a park/rest area**  
**Credit card gas pump capability**  
**Signage**

## MALTA RESOURCE ASSESSMENT

**Report by: Debbie Swanson**  
**Community Development Manager**  
**54062 Highway 2 West, Suite 3**  
**Glasgow, MT 59230**

**Phone: 406-228-4321 Ext 119**  
**Fax: 406-228-8101**  
**Email: [Debbie.Swanson@mt.usda.gov](mailto:Debbie.Swanson@mt.usda.gov)**

### OVERALL RESOURCES AND GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS:

Thank you to the generous people of Malta for their hospitality during the recent resource assessment, especially Anne Boothe for all her hard work and for hosting the picnic in her home.

Being from Glasgow, I came into the assessment with a good deal of knowledge about activities and projects in Phillips County but I also learned a lot about your communities. The assessment process revealed that Phillips County has many strengths and assets available for leveraging economic development activities in your area. Capitalizing on the existing natural resources and tourism opportunities can result in small business opportunities for local entrepreneurs willing to make the effort or existing businesses to expand. Marketing what Phillips County has to offer will be the key to keeping your communities alive.

Business planning and grant writing are hard work and success depends on teamwork. Malta and Saco are lucky to be located in the region served by Bear Paw Development and PhillCo. These entities have resources to help make your projects a reality through technical assistance and various loan programs. MSU-Northern occasionally holds grant writing workshops that are affordable and very helpful to both the novice and seasoned grant writer. There are many other sources for this type of leadership development training. This type of investment in yourselves and in your communities can result in considerable amounts of personal development and networking opportunities in addition to potential funding for local projects.

A terrific resource for all communities and businesses in Montana is the [Montana Finance Information Center](#) website which is hosted by the Montana Department of Commerce. This site provides a summary of information for the most significant financing resources available from state, federal and local sources. The purpose of the website is to assist Montana businesses and communities to achieve economic prosperity. The website address is <http://mtfinanceonline.com>. Topics and/or links include business finance, public infrastructure, housing, tax incentives, local development tribal resources, and technical assistance.

Another good resource for projects of any type is Randy Hansen, Regional Development Officer, Montana Dept of Commerce, Havre @ 262-9579.

The Community Development Block Grant-Economic Development (CDBG-ED) program can be used for a variety of planning activities, including the initial planning necessary to develop a CDBG-ED project, or to prepare an economic development strategy, capital improvement plan or similar planning efforts needed to help communities meet critical needs. The planning grants have a \$15,000 limit and local government must provide a dollar-for-dollar match. The next application cycle opens in June, 2004 which would allow adequate time to conduct public meetings, prepare an application, document the benefit to low-to-moderate income residents, etc.

## **MAIN TOPIC: INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Issue: Malta's Wastewater Treatment Facility needs updating and/or expansion.**

**Recommendations:** Upon completion of the Preliminary Engineering Agreement, pursue most feasible option and all available grant and low-interest loan funds.

If it hasn't been done already, a comprehensive rate analysis should be completed to ensure that the City's water and sewer rates are sufficient to support not only the routine operating and maintenance expenses but also to establish adequate reserves for long-term improvements.

A water metering system should be implemented as it encourages conservation which would substantially reduce the wear and tear on existing water treatment and distribution systems and would result in less wastewater on the presently overburdened system.

### **Resources:**

USDA-Community Programs (formerly known as Rural Utilities Service) has a Water & Environmental Program which provides financial and managerial assistance to rural communities through low-interest (4.5%-5%) loans and grants for water, wastewater and solid waste disposal. Grants, which are based on factors such as financial need, income of the population served and existing user rates, cannot exceed 75% of total project cost.

Contacts: Mitchel Copp, Program Director  
USDA-Rural Development State Office  
Box 850  
Bozeman, MT 59771

Phone: 406-585-2520  
Fax: 406-585-2565  
email: Mitchel.Copp@ mt.usda.gov  
webpage: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt>

Shad Weber, CP Specialist  
1629 Avenue D, Building A  
Billings, MT 59102

Phone: 406-657-6297 Ext 125  
Fax: 406-657-6294  
email: [Shad.Weber@mt.usda.gov](mailto:Shad.Weber@mt.usda.gov)

Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) Renewable Resource Grant and Loan Program (RRGL) and Water Development Program (WDP). The RRGL is for projects that conserve, manage, develop, or preserve Montana's renewable resources. Grants are funded from interest earnings of the Resource Indemnity Trust Fund and loans are funded through the sale of state bonds. Grant-eligible projects range from water meter installation and repair of wastewater lagoons to groundwater studies. Maximum grants are \$100,000 per project. Loan-eligible projects are generally large

rehabilitation projects for drinking water and wastewater infrastructure. The loan term is typically 10 years. Applications for loans and grants are due on May 15<sup>th</sup> of even numbered years. A total of \$2 million is awarded for grants by the Legislature each session. Loans for governmental units are also awarded by the Legislature. The WDP provides financing for water development projects through the use of coal tax severance funds and bond proceeds used to make loans or grants to local governments, etc. Grants are usually limited to \$100,000 and loans are generally termed out for 30 years at an interest rate determined by the bond sales. Projects must be water-related and may be for feasibility work or construction with emphasis on projects that develop water conservation measures.

Contact: John Tubbs, Chief Phone: 406-444-6668  
DNRC Resource Development Bureau  
Box 201601  
Helena, MT 59260-1601

Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) State Revolving Fund (SRF) Loan Programs include the Water Pollution Control (WPC) and Drinking Water (DW) programs. The DEQ provides low-cost financing for wastewater projects under the WPC and for drinking water projects under DW. Both SRF programs are administered by the Montana DEQ with assistance provided by the Montana DNRC concerning financial aspects of the loans. Some of the eligible uses of WPC and DW SRF loans include direct loans for drinking water and wastewater projects and refinancing existing debt obligations. The loans, for 100% of project costs, bear an average interest rate of 4% and the term is usually 20 years.

Contacts: Todd Teegarden , WPC Program Phone 406-444-5324  
Mark Smith, DW Program 406-444-5325  
  
Montana DEQ – SRF Programs  
Box 200901  
Helena, MT 59620-0901

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program is administered by the Montana Department of Commerce (DOC) utilizing funding from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Water and wastewater projects are funded under the public facilities component of the program. The maximum grant is \$400,000 and must benefit at least 51% low-to-moderate income (LMI) residents.

Contact: Gus Byrom, CDBG Program Manager Phone 406-444-2488  
Montana Dept of Commerce  
Box 200253  
Helena, MT 59620-0523

Treasure State Endowment Program (TSEP) is a State-funded program which is also administered by the Montana Department of Commerce. TSEP offers matching grants and low-interest loans for local infrastructure projects. Maximum grant funding is \$500,000. Applications are due in even numbered years and are awarded by the Legislature.

Contact: Jim Edgcomb, TSEP Manager Phone 406-841-2785  
Montana Dept of Commerce  
Box 200501  
Helena, MT 59260-0501

**MAIN TOPIC: FUNDING**

**SMALL BUSINESS FINANCING:**

Resources include:

Montana Department of Commerce @ <http://commerce.mt.gov>. or 406-444-3494

Business Development:

Economic Development Division 406-444-3797  
Manufacturing Extension Center 406-994-3812

Financial Assistance:

Microbusiness Finance Program 406-444-4325  
CDBG Economic Development Program 406-444-0560  
Office of Economic Development 406-444-3146

Minority Opportunities:

Disadvantaged Business and Women  
Business Procurement Assistance 406-444-6337

Department of Agriculture Marketing Program 406-444-2402

US Dept of Commerce Export Assistance Center-Missoula 406-243-2098

Havre Small Business Development Center @ 406-265-9226  
Bear Paw Development Corporation

Montana Chamber of Commerce 406-442-2405  
2030 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Helena, MT 59601  
P.O. Box 1730, Helena, MT 59624

USDA-Rural Development State Office 406-585-2540

Small Business Administration District Office – Helena 406-441-1081

Small Business Advancement Network <http://www.sbaer.uca.ude> 501-450-5377

Montana Finance Information Center <http://mtfinanceonline.com>

Again, the USDA-Rural Economic Development Loan program can provide funds to an eligible RUS telephone or electric utility for the creation of a revolving loan fund for small businesses.

Other USDA programs for small businesses include:

Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) program finances and/or facilitates development of private business enterprises. The grant funds can only be used for technical assistance such as business planning, feasibility studies, and training to enable small, emerging, private businesses to get started or to expand. The grant funds cannot be passed thru to the business. Some examples of the use of this program include: travel and related expenses for participation in trade shows where products are displayed and marketed to a wide audience, technical assistance such as business and financial planning, etc.

Rural Business Opportunity Grant (RBOG) program promotes sustainable economic development in rural communities. Eligible uses include economic development planning, leadership development training, establishment of business support centers, and a variety of other technical assistance uses.

Business and Industry Guaranteed Loan (B&I) program bolsters the existing private credit structure through the guarantee of quality business loans. Guaranteed loans can be made for working capital, machinery & equipment, and real estate acquisition or improvements. Loans up to \$5 million can receive an 80% guarantee from USDA. This is by far, the largest business financing tool for USDA and Montana consistently ranks if the top four states in the nation in utilization of this program. However, it is underutilized in eastern Montana.

Rural Cooperative Development Grant (RCDG) program establishes and operates centers for cooperative development. There is a Cooperative Development Center at MSU-Northern in Havre which can be a great tool for the Chinook area. The CDC is charged with the responsibility of improving the economic condition of rural areas by developing new cooperatives and improving the operations of existing cooperatives. They will provide technical assistance, research and educational services, advisory services and recommendations for improving management and/or processes. Cooperatives aren't limited to agricultural businesses. They can be anything from an arts & crafts marketing cooperative to food processing cooperative. Contact Ty Duncan the Havre CDC at 265-3771 or Bill Barr, Cooperative Development Specialist for USDA in Bozeman at 585-2545.

Little Rockies Arts Association:

Some resources for arts, culture, museum, performing arts projects:

Baker Foundation (R.C.)  
c/o Frank L. Scott, Chairman  
P.O. Box 6150  
Orange, CA 92863-6150  
Phone: 714-750-8987

Brach Foundation (Helen)  
c/o Raymond Simon, President  
55 West Wacker Drive, Suite 701  
Chicago, IL 60601  
Phone: 312-372-4417

Bair Family Trust (Charles M.)

Kongsgaard-Goldman Foundation

c/o First Trust Company  
ATTN: Beverly Jensen, Admin Sec  
Box 3168, Portland, OR 97208-3168  
Phone: 506-657-8124

c/o Martha Kongsgaard, President  
1932 First Avenue, Suite 602  
Seattle, WA 98101  
Phone: 206-448-1874

Microsoft Corp Contributions Program  
1 Microsoft Way  
Redmond, WA 98052-6399  
Phone: 425-936-8080

Harriman Foundation (Gladys & Roland)  
c/o William F, Hibbard, Secretary  
63 Wall Street, Suite 3101  
New York, NY 10005  
Phone: 212-493-8185

## **MAIN TOPIC: AGRICULTURE**

Unfortunately, USDA's farm programs such as CRP (facetiously referred to as the "Community Reduction Program") has been extremely detrimental to small businesses in rural agriculture-dependent communities.

Area producers need to consider projects that will add value to their agricultural products. Establishment of cooperatives can limit the risk for an individual producer by involving other producers with similar products or ideas. The Cooperative Development Center (presently housed in Helena with the Montana Department of Agriculture) or Bill Barr, USDA's Cooperative Development Specialist in Bozeman (585-2545) are great resources. Jan Tusick at Mission Mountain Marketing Cooperative Development Center in Ronan is a great resource for forming food processing cooperatives and for providing assistance with bringing food products to market. She can help with packaging, marketing, bar-coding, calculating recipes exponentially, etc.

**It is always better to build on what you do best rather than tirelessly recruiting new businesses to town!**

The State's Growth Through Agriculture program can provide assistance with marketing, etc., for new and/or expanding agricultural businesses. Contact Quinn Holzer at the Montana Department of Agriculture (444-2402).

Many locally-produced agricultural products could be marketed to a much larger area with some technical assistance such as that available from USDA's RBEG program or the Growth through Agriculture program. In addition to developing markets, resources are available to add value to these products. Examples are hay cubing, bio-diesel or ethanol production facilities, etc. There are also alternative crops that can be considered with the irrigation opportunities in Phillips County. Potatoes and onions are becoming a major crop in western North Dakota. Contact the MSU Extension office in your area. Production of these crops could result in a variety of value-added production facilities and opportunities.

**Phillips County Resource Team Assessment**

**Report by: Steve Simonson**

**PO Box 1326**

**Thompson Falls, MT 59873**

**406.827-6935 fax: 827-4388**

**[simonson@ronan.net](mailto:simonson@ronan.net)**

**MAIN TOPIC: SACO**

**Issue: SACO - Lack of Jobs**

Saco isn't unique in this area or Montana, we're all in this together. The latest census data shows most of Montana, east of the divide is declining in population. The challenge is what the community needs to do to position them to retain people and attract new business to the area.

**Recommendation:**

I've contacted Mike Fladeland, MDU's economic advisor in regard to assisting the community in developing a strategy with us. Mike and his possible connection to Bitter Creek Pipeline remains unclear if its part of MDU or not, but if MDU would become active this would be a great asset for seeking corporate assistance.

**Resource:**

Mike Fladeland's contact info is  
Community Development Coordinator  
Montana-Dakota Utilities  
400 North 4<sup>th</sup> St.  
Bismarck, ND 58501  
Ph: 701.222.7879  
Email: [mike.fladeland@mdu.com](mailto:mike.fladeland@mdu.com)

**Issue: SACO – Develop Gas Reserves**

I'm also thinking the nitrogen gas reserve needs to be developed as an economic driver to provide jobs.

**Recommendation:**

Let's work to see what resources would be needed to refine/process this gas or find an industry that could use nitrogen gas in manufacturing. I think Craig Erickson has some contacts on this.

**Resource:**

Craig Erickson, Bear Paw Development  
P.O. Box 170  
Havre, MT 59501  
Ph: 406.265.9226  
Email: [cerickson@bearpaw.org](mailto:cerickson@bearpaw.org)

**Issue: SACO – Housing**

**Recommendation:**

Larry Gallagher is the master here! Looks like potential to create jobs by providing a senior assisted living center should be developed. Most of Montana is aging, and quite graciously I might add.

**Resource:**

Larry Gallagher, Operations Specialist  
HUD  
7<sup>th</sup> West Sixth Ave.  
Helena, MT 59601  
Ph: 406.447.1480  
Email: [Lawrence.Gallagher@hud.gov](mailto:Lawrence.Gallagher@hud.gov)

**Issue: Soft Quality of Life in Saco**

Issues such as **leadership development** and **mosquito abatement** need to be developed.

**Recommendations:**

How about a home land security grant to develop bio controls for mosquito control alternatives? West Nile Research Lab, Saco Montana, why not!

**Resources:**

Possible partners DHHS, Homeland Defense, and Rocky Mountain Lab for Disease Control in Hamilton as a partner.

**Issue: Community Planning - Saco**

A community needs assessment and action plan with community buy in would get everyone working together for common goals.

**Recommendation:**

Lets vote on the goals/ideas we can address quickly, i.e. low hanging fruit versa longer term fixes such as business development with abundance of natural resources, (gas).

**Resources:**

Follow through with this Resource Team Assessment process to identify goals and form committees to initiate tasks.

**Issue: Utilize Gas Revenue for Saco**

Lastly, community pride and civic improvements can be done with gas revenues.

**Recommendations:**

Let's use it for match on CTEP dollars from County's portion of State gas taxes to develop a pull off park to get folks off the highway. A town plan may include a screened in gazebo for picnickers both traveling through and for the community pride events. County Commissioners can find this for you.

The missing pieces of gas station and lodging are harder to address. Ezzie's Wholesale may not be willing to invest in the cardtroll upgrades necessary to get visitor to stop.

**Resources:**

CTEP – Craig Erickson of Bear Paw Development is experienced with CTEP applications.

**MAIN ISSUE: Malta-Agricultural problems**

I'm personally involved with this issue as ag producers myself.

**Recommendations:**

I am devoting my time, energy, and financial resources into the community with other growers that believe in adding value to our commodity crops.

Opportunities exist within niche marketing for producers. Darrel Menge is your local entrepreneur. Guess what, not everything you try is going to work! **Don't give up, don't give in.** Business diversification is a successful strategy for producers. I'm not suggesting wild ideas, **but calculated planned risk.** We just received word of the funding for the Montana Agricultural Innovation Center that MSU received. This program will allow innovative ag ideas to be evaluated and resources from the University dedicated to all aspects of project development. Personal financial risk also needs to be included. Value adding isn't for everyone, but is a successful strategy for diversification. Bear Paw will be taking the lead in our area on this one, call'em.

**Resources:**

Bear Paw Development Corp.  
P.O. Box 170  
Havre, MT 59501  
Ph: 406.265.9226 Fx: 406.265.5602  
Email: cerickson@bearpaw.org

**Issue: Irrigation**

**Recommendations:**

The status of the irrigation project? Sounds like some (most) of the financial resources need to be reinvested into modernizing the system. How about seeking new crops to irrigate? Safflower, canola are two examples as the new oilseed press will need more local producers to grow feedstock and invest in the cooperative. I'd love to help on this one.

**Resources:**

Steve Simonson, Community Development Specialist

Ph: 406.827.6935

Email: [simonson@ronan.net](mailto:simonson@ronan.net)

**Issue: Retaining our Youth**

I have mixed feeling about our children leaving. My philosophy leans towards allowing them to have opportunities to come back home when and if they're ready. I think they need to get out there and see the world and they'll find how wonderful of QOL they had here.

**Recommendation:** How about an alumni outreach program to contact all former classmates?

**Issue: Land Use and Management**

Growers will always be at the mercy of the weather and elements. CRP, absentee owners leasing hunting ground may have unexploited opportunities. Those lands still need to be managed properly.

**Recommendations:**

Grazing and alternative cropping systems can be enhanced, just a thought! How about growing bird seed forage/cover crops to enhance the birds and could we harvest them for additional profit, leaving some for the birds.

Producers need to be active with influencing governmental policies for endangered species, and wildlife grazing areas on CMR Wildlife Refuge. It's not easy, it will take time, let's see a group organize to regularly attend policy meetings. Sorry nobody's going to do this for you if you're not willing to get involved yourselves.

**Resources:**

Work with your area legislators, City/County officials. Washington DC does listen to its people.  
Montana Ag Experiment Station – <http://ag.montana.edu/>

**Northern Ag Research Center**

Gregg Carlson, Superintendent  
3848 Fort Circle  
Havre, MT 59501  
Phone: 265-6115  
Fax: 265-8288  
E-Mail: [gcarlson@montana.edu](mailto:gcarlson@montana.edu)

Montana Department of Ag-Brent Poppe Ag Development Division – phone406.444.2402 or email [bpoppe@state.mt.us](mailto:bpoppe@state.mt.us)

**Issue: Educators, Bankers, Utilities**

Your high school is a wonderful community asset-WOW! This critical piece of infrastructure is vital to attracting and retaining those who believe in quality education, typically your professional people in the community.

**Recommendations:**

What about approaching the high school for super host training? Establish a JSEC to address employee quality training issues local job service is?

Anne's offering NxLevel classes, as a former student and instructor, what a great resource. Sometimes NOT going into business is the right decision too!

**Resources:**

Anne Boothe, Executive Director  
PhillCo Economic Growth Council  
Ph: 406.654.1776 email: [phillco@ttc-cmc.net](mailto:phillco@ttc-cmc.net)

**Issue: Youth, Civic, Nonprofits**

You have more infrastructures for youth to do in your community than any place I've ever been. There may be some that don't fit into traditional activities, but you're addressing them.

**Recommendations:**

What does it cost to put a thank you in the paper for those that helped and devote their time to organize an event or keep a program going. Chamber lets get these things in the paper. How about a "Volunteer of the Year?" Mrs. Parker has some great ideas for the arts in the community, how can we build support?

Is there a way to "invite" newcomers to help as volunteers-yes. It also vests them into the community and gives them a reason to support area merchants, they're now your friends and neighbors let's invite them. This would be a great activity for church members to reach out too.

**Resources:**

Malta Chamber of Commerce  
Area churches

**Issue: Retail and Business**

Beautication needed along BNSF.

**Recommendations:**

Get John Karl BN's economic guy here and go through issues with him. The dinosaur field station is an under utilized resource that Phillco's working on. A wassonsaurus! WOW!

Your industrial park also has a lot of potential. Need to complete infrastructure, water, and waste water expansion here (see Debbie Swanson's report for contact information.) Support for local projects is important push them together, don't pull them apart.

**Resources:**

John Karl, Manager Economic Development  
BNSF

Ph: 206.625.6171  
Email: john.karl@bnsf.com

**Issue: Transportation**

Transportation needs keep coming up. Are area residents supporting use of Amtrak?

**Recommendations:**

How about paving County roads as opposed to 4 for 2? I was surprised there wasn't much support voiced for widening 2 as our news coverage in the west seemed to make a big deal out of this last session.

**Resources:**

Phillips County Commissioners

**Issue: Building Capacity**

**Recommendations:**

How does a community get the risk takers with good ideas to come forward? Bear Paw and Phillco are huge resources in your County that can leverage public/private investment. How about a business idea fair or an Agriculture innovation fair?

**Resources:**

Dr. Duane Johnson would come over 755-4303 for an ag innovation fair, I'd call him on your behalf. NWARC Creston, Montana.

**Issue: Supporting Local Businesses and Fund Raising**

**Recommendations:**

How about an educational campaign on how the dollars need to stay home at work in your community?

**Businesses, your challenge is educating your employees to ask what the customers are going elsewhere to get and that you are willing to order them in for folks!** What about a jeans day to raise money for the arts in town. I know you all wear jeans so do I, but donate a buck on Fridays for those who chose as a way to show your support, money could go to Chamber for 'buy local' campaign or to support worthy causes, arts, youth activities, riding arena, more!

**Resources:**

Malta Chamber of Commerce  
Employees of Local Businesses

## **PHILLIPS COUNTY RESOURCE TEAM**

**Report by: Melody L. Bentz**  
**Director of Grants & Sponsored Activities**  
**Montana State University-Northern**  
**P.O. Box 7511**  
**Havre, Montana 59501**  
**Phone: (406) 265-3526**  
**Fax: (406) 265-3596**  
**Email: mbentz@msun.edu**

*First of all, I'd like to thank the town of Saco and Malta for sharing with me your hospitality, openness and friendship. First and foremost, during my visit, I learned that the people of your communities certainly have a wonderful passion for where you live and raise your families. You also have a wonderful drive and can-do attitude, which is reflected in your community fundraising and what you've already accomplished. If there's a need, you all pitch in and get the job done. This can only be said for communities that care about their own and the future. You're very warm communities, with great pride who are searching for answers on how to make you're community grow, flourish and be a better place to live and visit – this is very commendable.*

In my report, I've tried to "think out of the box" to give you some grassroots ideas – ones that aren't so technical, but are very doable with some effort. Implementing and expanding on these ideas – and creating some of your own on how to work in partnership within, and, outside the community, I hope, will get you off on the right foot to achieve your goals. I want to let you know, that I am willing to continue to work with you, so please don't hesitate to keep in touch with me. If you ever need assistance with grants or help with any of the recommendations in this report, give me a call!

### **MAIN TOPIC: AGRICULTURE**

#### **Issue: Agricultural Diversity—Ag-Tourism**

##### **Recommendations:**

The people of Saco and Malta indicated that diversification of Agriculture is an issue to be explored. CRP has reduced volume and farmers must look to diversify within or from Agriculture.

Several states have also asked themselves the same question: "How do we diversify from Agriculture to utilize our farms and ranches for other purposes?" One answer is possibly tourism. Farmers and ranchers have a lot of unique types of farming and ranching that are really quite interesting to people, especially people from more urban and metropolitan areas. Farmers and ranchers in Phillips County could start showing off their products and services through tourism-related activities. This is called "Ag-tourism".

Activities designed to attract visitors and generate supplemental income for farmers and ranchers range from conducting tours and selling products directly from the farm to operating a bed and breakfast, allowing horseback riding, Dude Ranches (cattle branding) or holding festivals, Shakespeare in the Parks, or other regional events on the land. Meshing the Ag-tourism concept with

already-established tourism attractions in the area such as dinosaurs and recreation could prove to be a winning combination.

Other states that have embarked on the Ag-Tourism concept indicate that the key stipulation is that tourism-related activities must be secondary to farming. It has to be a working farm or agricultural concern that encourages access to visitors--it cannot be a bed and breakfast with a cow out front. That's not agricultural tourism.

The residents of Phillips County need to "think out of the box" to examine if Ag-Tourism is an alternative that will work for them. Initial steps are:

- Create a committee that will explore Ag-Tourism. Be sure to include interested parties from all sides, i.e., farmers, ranchers, Chamber of Commerce, etc., and don't forget to include youth to get an idea of what would appeal to the younger generation.
- Committee members should take inventory of what products, experiences and services the area farms and ranches have to offer the public at large. Including:
  - Land Resources: What deeded, leased, state/federal properties do we have, etc?
  - Climate: How will climate affect what types of activities you might provide?
  - Developments and Improvements (buildings, facilities, corrals, etc.)
  - Attractions: What do we have that would be attractive to visitors? (streams, wildlife, fishing, livestock, points of interest)
  - Operations & management strengths: Who in the community possess marketing, organizational, historian skills? (see results from community assessment)
  - Activities: Compile a list of activities that you already do within the community or on your operation that would appeal to the general public.
  - Assess what is lacking in your community: gas stations, hotel rooms, shopping, etc., and how you will deal with these challenges when people visit the community (alternative solutions)
- A good practice is to research what other communities are doing and determine what is adaptable to your region (refer to the Resource List).
- Contact the Montana Department of Commerce – The Department of Commerce has indicated in its 2002-2007 Strategic Plan that expanding Ag-Tourism in the State of Montana is a priority. Inquire if there will be a team that will examine Ag-Tourism in the state and ask if a representative from Phillips County can be a member of the team.

### **Some ideas:**

- Start a "Visit Phillips County Farms and Ranches" Campaign
  - Farmer's Markets
  - Tours of farms and ranches (seasonal)
  - Provide experiential learning opportunities such as cattle branding, picking crops, sowing crops, etc.
  - Dually promote Natural Tourist Attractions found in the area.
  - Partner with outlying communities including Canadian neighbors to the North and reservations to the east to promote an expanded area.

### **Suggested Contacts:**

Mr. David Sharpe, Montana State University Extension Service, Office of Community Development, 106 Taylor Hall, Bozeman, MT 59717, (406) 994-2962

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

**Resources:**

<http://www.montana.edu/wwwrdc/> Community Tourism Assessment Handbook

<http://www.sfc.ucdavis.edu/agritourism/factsheets.html> *A great place to start* - a lot of information about assessing your assets, conducting farm and ranch tours, safety and risk management, etc.

[http://www.msue.msu.edu/valueadded/ag\\_tourism1.htm](http://www.msue.msu.edu/valueadded/ag_tourism1.htm)

<http://www.sfc.ucdavis.edu/docs/agritourhandbook.html> Agritourism and Nature Tourism in California – A handbook to help farmers and ranchers 1) to determine their tourism potential and 2) walk through the steps of establishing a tourism enterprise. It is also a resource for people working with California ranchers and farmers. Written specifically for California, but may be adaptable to Montana.

**MAIN TOPIC: AGRICULTURE**

**Issue: Value Added Products**

**What is Value-Added?**

We hear the term "value added" a lot these days in manufacturing. It readily rolls off the lips of those trying to strengthen agriculture here in Montana.

But what does value added really mean?

It means actions that change or combine materials and/or processes to create something of greater worth to particular customers. If you have a bushel of grain and you grind and package it so someone can use it for baking, you have increased its worth. You manufactured and gave added value or desirability to a product for a certain segment of customers.

If you add feathers to fish hooks to simulate real flies, you have changed the value to two simple items. You made something and gave it value to a certain segment of customers.

"In essence, value added is manufacturing, making something into something better,"...

<http://www.mmec.montana.edu/Newsletters/valueAdded.htm>

**Recommendations:**

According to Sharron Quisenberry, Dean of the College of Agriculture in Bozeman, Montana is ripe with opportunities for agricultural entrepreneurs. But, overcoming geographic isolation, low population and high shipping costs often takes some "thinking outside the box." That's where value-added and new products come in. Montana already has quality agricultural products; now, innovative producers are using unique marketing strategies and consumers' fascination with Montana to increase their profits. Others are developing new products for niche and specialty markets.

It is recommended that Malta & Saco assess its agricultural assets, especially those with value-added potential. This committee or group would not only focus on assessment of value-added potential, but

would further define or link value added to the community's economic development goals and objectives. It is recommended that the committee include business owners/professionals, entrepreneurs, farmers/ranchers, government, etc., as well as youth, 4-H youth, budding entrepreneurs or those interested in becoming future business professionals in the development and implementation of their project.

I encourage you to utilize the "New Gates through Old Fences" framework on the Internet at: <http://ag.arizona.edu/arec/va/newgates.html> . Particularly, the economic development model "Preparing a Rural Community for Value-Added Development: Attitudes, Leadership, and Visioning, by Milt Green: <http://ag.arizona.edu/arec/va/prepruralcomm.html> .

Agricultural entrepreneurs and economic development specialists offer some of their tips for adding value to traditional agricultural products and developing new opportunities. Like all small business owners, agricultural entrepreneurs must be creative and willing to take risks.

These production and marketing tips are for offered to producers who may be interested in value-added products:

- Use the quality of Montana's products as your selling point.
- Investigate partnerships with other Montana businesses.
- Learn about corporate structure and what might be most appropriate for your business: a limited-liability partnerships versus a corporation, etc.
- Grow your business slowly enough that you can stress quality.
- Research your market and know your customers.
- Investigate new markets. There are boundless opportunities in, for example, the ethnic foods and organic foods markets. Be innovative!
- Pursue many small ideas at once, rather than putting all your effort into just one.
- Experiment with different types of unique packaging.
- Tell your story. Consumers are often intrigued by a description of your product and the people who create it.
- Trademark and protect your original ideas. Don't assume that the "big boys" won't copy you – they will!
- Be prepared to invest in your company. It takes money to make money.
- At the same time, know when to bow out if your business is not successful.

## **MAIN TOPIC: AGRICULTURE**

### **Issue: Value Added Products**

#### **Recommendations:**

The Montana Department of Agriculture marketing representatives match Montana products with potential buyers and sellers. They promote Montana's livestock, grain, and other value-added products worldwide through trade shows and delegations.

Small and mid-sized food processors are assisted in development of domestic and international markets. A variety of promotional and educational literature is published about Montana's agricultural industry

including the Montana Agricultural Buyers Directory. The directory is a comprehensive listing of Montana agricultural product suppliers. To get a free copy of The Montana Agricultural Buyers Directory, contact the Marketing Office by phone at (406)444-2402, by mail at P.O. Box 200201, Helena, MT 59620, or by e-mail at [agr@state.mt.us](mailto:agr@state.mt.us).

For more information about forming cooperatives and the selling and marketing value-added products, please contact the following resources in Montana

**Suggested Contacts:**

Montana Department of Agriculture, P.O. Box 200201, Helena, Montana 59620-0201, (406) 444-3144, email: [agr@state.mt.us](mailto:agr@state.mt.us). Physical Location: 303 North Roberts Street, (corner of 6th and Roberts)

Montana Manufacturing Center, 313 Roberts Hall, P.O. Box 173800, Bozeman, MT 59717-3800  
Phone (406) 994-3812, Fax (406) 994-3391, [Email: mmec@coe.montana.edu](mailto:mmec@coe.montana.edu)

Montana Cooperative Development Center, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Helena, Montana  
(406) 444-2402, [agr@state.mt.us](mailto:agr@state.mt.us)

MSU College of Agriculture can help with value-added and new products, call (406) 994-7352.

**Grants & Loans:**

The Montana Department of Agriculture offers several grant and loan opportunities for the agriculture industry <http://agr.state.mt.us/grants/first.htm>:

- The [Beginning Farmer/Rancher Loan Program](#) assists beginning farmers and ranchers to acquire agricultural property at lower interest rates. [Click here](#) for program details, in Acrobat Reader format. [Download an application](#) form.
- The Montana [Growth Through Agriculture](#) program invests in new and innovative agriculture marketing ideas. Application deadlines are January 31, April 30, July 31 and October 31 of each year. The Agriculture Development Council, which consists of representatives from industry and government, selects successful applications for GTA investments.
- [Seed Capital Loans](#) are designed to enhance the availability of capital for agricultural businesses. These funds are specifically intended for the commercialization and marketing of new and innovative agricultural products or processes.
- [Junior Agriculture Loans](#) are designed to assist and encourage members of agricultural youth organizations in financing agricultural projects; especially those unable to obtain financing from other sources. Such projects can involve crop and livestock production, custom farming, marketing and distribution, processing, and other financially feasible projects.
- [Rural Assistance Loans](#) are loans to producers with modest financial investments in agriculture. These loans finance agricultural enterprises to provide financial experience and assist in the economic growth and welfare of Montana agriculture.

## **MAJOR TOPIC: BEAUTIFICATION/INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **Issues: Housing**

**Recommendation:** Malta and Saco are dealing with many infrastructure and aesthetic issues. Sidewalks and streets are below par, and in some instances, sidewalks are dangerous to walk on; there are many unpaved streets, creating a dusty/dirty environment; cosmetically, there are few trees, store fronts need painting, abandoned cars and other unsightly items are scattered about and the city needs general sprucing up. Here are some ideas:

- Implement a city beautification campaign – “Green it UP & Clean it UP” (a suggested theme from the Big Sandy Assessment)
- Form a Downtown Beautification Committee or Neighborhood Revitalization Committee that will develop beautification and clean up action plans
  - Assess areas most in need of beautification & clean up
  - Map out a planting plan; create a spruce up plan
  - Review the asset mapping results and identify those individuals that have the skills you need: gardeners, carpenters, painters, etc.
  - Develop a list of supplies and items that are needed to carry out each plan
  - Have a Spring fundraiser, solicit donations or exchange product
  - Find a nursery or landscape grower that you can exchange locally grown products for their seedlings, trees, shrubs and flowers (bartering)
  - Develop a timeline for completion of each project or activity and continual beautification efforts
  - Form a youth group that is interested in helping address the needs of the community a becoming a part of National Youth Service Day activities.

What is National Youth Service Day? National Youth Service Day has three primary goals: (1) to mobilize youth to identify and address the needs of their communities through service; (2) to recruit the next generation of volunteers; and (3) to educate the public about the year-round contributions of young people as community leaders. Community projects are organized by communities, schools, and local organizations. NYSD project include: help for the homeless, help for senior citizens, school activities, neighborhood enhancements, help for those with special needs, politics and government and the environment.

In Montana, National Youth Service Day activities have taken place in Billings, Bozeman, Browning, Butte, Great Falls, Havre, Helena, Kalispell, and Missoula, through the support of the Governor’s Office of Community Service and the coordination of AmeriCorps members and youth organizations statewide. In 2002, over 300 Montana youth were engaged in projects on National Youth Service Day, ranging from planting evergreens in Kalispell, to cleaning up a baseball field in White Sulphur Springs. I recommend that Phillips County contact the Governor’s Office of Community Service to see how youth can take part in the activities of this very worthwhile organization.

## **MAJOR TOPIC: BEAUTIFICATION/INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **Issue: Sidewalks & Streets**

**Recommendation:** For maintenance and beautification of sidewalks and streets, residents are encouraged to initiate an Adopt-a-Sidewalk/Street campaign to remove weeds, trash, and junk -- and in the winter – snow removal. In the summer, the City could initiate a “Lawn of the Month” or in the downtown area “Business of the Month” contest with prizes awarded to winners, which have been donated from the area businesses/tourist attractions, such as dinner for two, gift certificates, etc. Winners could be showcased on the Chamber’s website and/or in the local newspaper. A traveling trophy in the form of plaques that can be hung outside the business or prominently placed on the winner’s lawn could be awarded. It is suggested that this could be a program of the Phillips County Chamber, who would be responsible for getting a (different) group together each month to judge entries. This is a very inexpensive program that wouldn’t take a lot of effort to coordinate – but it could have a very positive and great impact on the appearance of the community and pride of Malta and Saco’s citizens.

**Suggested Contacts:**

National Youth Service Day (Montana Contact)  
Mary Asbach  
Governor’s Office of Community Service/AmeriCorps  
444-9655  
<http://www.yasa.org/nysd/index.cfm>

Montana Landscape and Nursery Association, Inc.  
President, Mike Hiel, CPP  
Gardenwerks  
PO Box 1235  
Helena, MT 59624  
Office: 406-442-5008  
FAX: 406-443-4565  
[grdnwrks@mt.net](mailto:grdnwrks@mt.net)

**Funding Resources:**

State Farm Foundation  
Pacific Northwest Zone  
1000 Wilmington Drive  
Dupont, WA 98327  
(253) 912-7000  
<http://www.statefarm.com/foundati/foundati.htm>

AT&T Cares Youth Service Action Fund  
Toyasha Albert, grants manager  
Youth Service America  
1101 15th Street, NW, Suite 200  
Washington, DC 20005-5002  
(fax) 202-296-4030  
email: [attcares@YSA.org](mailto:attcares@YSA.org)

<http://www.ysa.org/pdffiles/2003ATTC.pdf>

AT&T Foundation  
(General Grants)  
AT&T Public Relations  
Contributions Coordinator  
1875 Lawrence Street  
Suite 750  
Denver, CO 80202

<http://www.att.com/foundation/programs/community.html>

Nike Youth Action Awards  
Global Community Affairs  
Nike, Inc.  
PO Box 4027  
Beaverton, OR 97076 USA  
<http://www.nike.com/nikebiz/nikebiz.jhtml?page=26>

## **MAJOR TOPIC: AGING AND YOUTH COMMUNITY**

### **Issues: Retention of Youth in the Community – How to Start a Boys & Girls Club**

#### **Problem:**

Rural communities in Montana have difficulty retaining their young adults as many choose to head to cities in search of further education, employment prospects or a lifestyle with greater entertainment. Small towns get smaller with each generation and facilities dwindle for those who remain.

When asked questions about staying or leaving, youth have indicated to resource assessment team members very strongly that they intend to leave their communities at the earliest possible moment in their lives. Their answers emphasize that communities need to address options for encouraging youth to remain in Montana.

**Recommendations:** The community of Malta has self-identified that they would like to start a Boys and Girls Club, but don't know where or how to begin. I have done some research and made initial contacts: The Boys and Girls Club of America (B&GCA) has responded back to an email I sent to them. I also spoke with a representative, Ms. JanRenee Gilmer, who will be sending me a B&GCA Promotion Packet. I will forward this packet to Anne Boothe, once it is received.

Ms. Gilmer stressed, and I would like to emphasize, that the B&GCA does not have money for start-up costs. She also commented, that before a community can establish a Club they must have a sustainability/funding and program plan in place, which has been approved by B&GCA. She also offered the following direction and basic information.

**Steps for Starting a Boys and Girls Club**—the five basic components:

1. **Kids**...the demonstration of need in the community
2. **Location**...we must have an acceptable place to operate
3. **Money**...there must be a consistent long-term, identified revenue stream
4. **Staff**...there must be a Director and staff (as supported by the budget or a committed volunteer staff)
5. **Board**....a Local Unit Advisory Board must be established that supports the program and raises funds

### **Other Information:**

- The Boys & Girls Clubs do not simply place a Club in a community. The community comes to the Boys & Girls Clubs and requests services, with a support plan in mind.
- The community must understand what a Boys & Girls Club is, and is not; and must buy into our governance, philosophy, program, structure, mission, goals, procedures and branding.
- A small part-time Club operation costs about \$20,000-\$40,000 annually. A basic full-time operation can cost much more.
- Collaborative partnerships are encouraged such as a governmental entity (city/county), school district, Tribe, or Housing Authority that will provide a location and funding. One other scenario would be a significant benefactor, such as an individual or foundation that would provide start-up and ongoing funding.

### **Mission Statement of the Boys & Girls Clubs of America:**

"To inspire and enable all young people, especially those from disadvantaged circumstances, to realize their full potential as productive, responsible and caring citizens."

### **Core Beliefs:**

"A Boys & Girls Club provides a safe place to learn and grow, ongoing relationships with caring adult professionals, life enhancing programs, character development experiences, hope and opportunity."

### **Purposes....They Strive To Provide:**

- Recognition, attention and acceptance
- A sense of belonging
- Reinforcement of positive behavior
- A sense of usefulness
- Opportunities for each to succeed
- A sense of competence
- Strong, positive role models
- A sense of influence

### **Contact Information:**

JanRenee Gilmer (JR)  
Boys & Girls Clubs of America  
Southwest Service Center  
2107 N. Collins Blvd.  
Richardson, TX 75080

972-690-1393  
FX: 972-690-0752  
jgilmer@bgca.org

"Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm" - Ralph Waldo Emerson

## **MAJOR TOPIC: ACTIVITIES FOR YOUTH**

### **Issue: Club or Center for Youth**

#### **Recommendation:**

I personally feel that all communities should have some type of center, which rural youth can call their own, and one that provides an alternative safe and fun place for our kids to gather and socialize. The center should incorporate activities that include sports, indoor recreation, cultural programs, access to technology, and outdoor activities. Malta and/or Saco residents should form a committee of people who share a passion to serve and preserve the youth of their community. The committee must also, of course, include children of all ages for input as to what kinds of activities, equipment, and programs will be provided out of the Center. The committee must realize that they will not be only building a center for their youth, but building their community. It is recommended that the committee embark first on a fact-finding mission by asking some basic questions such as:

- What strengths and problems are our young people facing, growing up in challenged rural communities?
- What kinds of school, community, family, and recreational environments can best support the development of our youth?
- What types of activities/programs do our youth want available in the community? In a Youth Center?
- What type of facility is needed? Do we renovate an existing building, or build new?
- Who? How will we staff the building?
- What are the total costs associated with these projects?

Once the aforementioned questions are answered, a feasibility study is accomplished, a preliminary plan is in place, and, you say: "Yes, we're going to do this!", the next step will be to go after funds to support your ambitions. Any type of club or center will require the community to rally around and raise money to support equipment, facilities, staff, and so much more. I offer the following funding and print resources to help you on your path to success:

#### **Funding Resources:**

Qwest Communications

Mr. Rick Hays

Helena, Montana 59601

(406) 441-7700

<http://www.qwest.com/about/company/sponsorships/foundation/index.html>

Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation

Lawrence R. Simkins, President  
P.O. Box 16630  
Missoula, Montana 59808-6630  
(406) 523-1300  
<http://www.washcorp.com/Foundation>

National Endowment for the Arts  
Learning in the Arts for Children  
Nancy Hanks Center  
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20506-0001  
<http://www.arts.gov/guide/index.html>

Land and Water Conservation Fund  
Parks Division  
Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks  
P.O. Box 200701  
Helena, MT 59620  
Tel: 406-444-3750  
<http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/lwcf/index.html>

Community Technology Centers  
After-school programs, adult basic education, seniors' programs, etc.  
Department of Education  
<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OVAE/AdultEd/CTC/>  
<http://www.ed.gov/> to view all grant opportunities

**Printed Resources:**

Title: Youth Planning Charrettes; Subtitle: A Manual for Planners, Teachers, and Youth Advocates;  
Publisher: APA Planners Press 1999; ISBN: 1-884829-19-8

Invest in the future! Involve young people in planning. Learn how to design charrettes, starting with workshops and ending with lessons learned. This book explores various approaches to involving youth in schools, museums, and citizen groups. It's a complete guide to successful community charrettes for younger participants. (K-8)

Title: Youth Participation in Community Planning; Publisher: APA Planning Advisory Service 1999;  
ISBN: 1-884829-32-5. Today's youth, raised in an era of tremendous change, have an unprecedented opportunity to shape the future of their communities. As they realize their potential to make a difference, more and more young people are making positive contributions to their neighborhoods. Explores how communities have involved children in planning. Several case studies demonstrate how various communities have encouraged young people to solve problems, voice their opinions, and make a difference. Explains how to create effective youth-based initiatives that train young people to identify social, community, or policy concerns, devise solutions, and hone the skills they need to effect change. It details the essential elements of developing a youth involvement project—organizational structure, required resources, suggested activities, and hoped-for accomplishments—as well as some of the potential stumbling blocks. A great resource for developing planning programs that benefit communities and engage a new generation.

## **MAJOR TOPIC: ACTIVITIES FOR YOUTH**

### **Issue: Youth Involvement in the Community**

#### **Recommendation: Getting Youth Involved and Connected through Farming and Ranching**

Farmers and ranchers throughout Montana would like to instill in their sons and daughters the values, importance, and pride they have of farming and ranching. Keeping young people in farming and ranching would also keep youth in the community.

I spoke with Scott Kulbeck with the Montana Farm Bureau Federation's Young Farmers and Ranchers program. Scott, a Native of Big Sandy, said that Montana's communities can get youth involved in farming and ranching through the Montana Farm Bureau's Young Farmers and Ranchers program. Scott indicated that there is financial and mentor support for young potential farmers from the MFBF YF&R program by way of scholarships for young people. In fact, each year at their Leadership Campout in July, participants can win cash for their local programs. In addition, communities can apply for mini-grants from the Montana Farm Bureau Federation in the amount of \$250.00, which can be used as seed money to establish a program or to expand existing programs. I recommend that farmers, ranchers and other individuals in Malta and Saco become more involved with the MFBF Young Farmers and Ranchers program and encourage their children to be a part of this very worthwhile program as well as other national programs such as 4-H and Future Farmers of America.

#### **Resources:**

*Ben & Jerry's Foundation* looks to support groups who are working to help themselves, help their own communities, and help others like themselves through self-empowering, community organizing efforts.

Ben & Jerry's Foundation

30 Community Drive

So. Burlington, VT 05403-6828

Access guidelines and application at: <http://www.benjerry.com/foundation/index.html>

*Monsanto Company* and the *American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture* have announced details behind the fifth annual Commitment to Agriculture Scholarship Program. In order to be eligible for one of the awards, the student applicant must come from a farm family and plan to pursue a career in the field of agriculture. One-time awards of \$1,500 will be made to 100 high school seniors chosen by an impartial selection committee of agricultural educators and industry leaders. The scholarship program is offered by Monsanto in association with the American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture, and is open to high school seniors from all 50 states. Access details on line at:

<http://www.mfbf.org/newnews/monsanto.html>

The *Montana Farm Bureau Foundation* has established a program to provide grants of up to \$200 for use in educational forums or activities promoting agriculture. Grants are available under two different areas. The first will provide funding and is available for classroom projects in the grades Kindergarten – Grade 12. The second will provide financial assistance for programs or projects to those organizations or

groups not directly affiliated with classroom activities. Extra-curricular organizations, groups and clubs fall under the second category. Access information on the web at: <http://www.mfbf.org/newnews/mini%20grants.html> or contact Diana Alkire at [dianaa@mfbf.org](mailto:dianaa@mfbf.org) or 406-587-3153.

**Suggested Contacts:**

*Montana Farm Bureau Federation*, Young Farmers and Ranchers Program, for more information call Scott Kulbeck at 1-888-532-6601.

**MAJOR TOPIC: GENERAL**

**Issue: Grant Writing**

**Recommendations:** Montana State University-Northern annually holds grant writing workshops geared towards the “novice” grant writer. The Grants and Sponsored Activities Office plans to hold another workshop in Spring 2004 and recommends that one or several individuals from your communities attend this workshop. The cost of the workshop is nominal, but has proven to be very beneficial to those who have attended in the past. Northern will also be hosting workshops to help communities launch major capital-giving campaigns, start a community foundation and organize a variety of fundraisers: from golf tournaments to auctions.

Malta and Saco should take advantage of each of these training opportunities as well as the great number of on-line tutorials or printed resources that can be accessed via the Internet or in the local library. In addition, the Montana State University-Northern Vande Bogart Library has a great number of grant writing books currently on its shelves.

**Resources:**

Montana State University-Northern  
Grants and Sponsored Activities Website  
<http://www.msun.edu/alumfnd/grants>

Proposal Writing Short Course  
<http://fdncenter.org/learn/shortcourse/prop1.html>

Funding Opportunities  
Federal/State/Private/Corporate  
<http://www.msun.edu/alumfnd/grants/page7.html>

## **MAIN TOPIC: TOURISM**

### **Issues: Highway 2--Tourism Promotion**

#### **Recommendations:**

The following recommendation I also made to the Havre Area Chamber of Commerce, at their February 2003 Board Retreat, regarding “group marketing” of tourism attractions located along Highway 2. A question that Havre-area attractions have asked is “How do we get people to stop in Havre, rather than just passing through?” (as they make their way along Hwy 2 from Eastern Montana to their final destination of Glacier National Park or beyond).

The idea involves the development and implementation of the “Tourism Passport” concept. Basically, this passport would be a punch card that consumers could purchase at various locations along Highway 2 including gas stations, casinos, chambers, etc. Each punch on the card would be the logo of a participating tourist attraction, for example, Fort Peck Interpretive Center, Havre Beneath the Streets, Malta Dinosaur Field Station, Blaine County Museum, etc. Passports would be sold for a specified dollar amount with proceeds being divided (at a previously agreed upon amount) among the participating attractions as well as the place of purchase. Attractions involved in this project would benefit even if the consumer did not stop at their attraction. The punch card could also include discounts at participating stores, restaurants, hotels and other venues along Highway 2, giving consumers another reason to stop in our communities.

This concept would take careful coordination and is a wonderful marketing tool for organizations along Highway 2. It has great potential to increase interest in the wonderful attractions we have to offer all across Northern Montana as well as increase revenues for local businesses and non-profits.

It is also recommended that the cities of Malta and Saco contact Vicki Munson, a private consultant that specializes in tourism and Victor Bjornberg at Travel Montana.

#### **Contact Information:**

Vicki Munson  
Munson Consulting  
8505 East Shore Route  
Polson, MT 59860  
Phone: (406) 887-2126  
Fax: (406) 887-2128  
Email: [vmunson@cyberport.net](mailto:vmunson@cyberport.net)

Victor Bjornberg  
Tourism Development Coordinator  
Travel Montana  
Montana Department of Commerce  
P.O. Box 200533  
Helena, MT 59620-0533  
Phone: 444-2654  
Email: [victor@visitmt.com](mailto:victor@visitmt.com)

Website: <http://www.travelmontana.state.mt.us>

Melody Bentz  
Director, Grants and Sponsored Activities  
Montana State University-Northern  
P.O. Box 7751  
Havre, MT 59501  
Phone: 265-3526  
Fax: 265-3596  
Email: [mbentz@msun.edu](mailto:mbentz@msun.edu)

**Report by:**  
**Linda Twitchell**  
**Executive Director**  
**Great Northern Development Corporation**  
**233 Cascade Street**  
**Wolf Point, Montana 59201**

**Phone (406) 653-2590**  
**FAX (406) 653-1840**  
**e-mail [Linda@gndc.org](mailto:Linda@gndc.org)**

## **MAIN TOPIC: INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **Issue: Elderly Housing**

The residents of Saco considered the Senior Citizens Center an asset of the community and a lack of senior housing as one of their challenges. There may be some way to use the Senior Citizens Center and the meals available to develop additional senior housing.

### **Recommendations:**

Now that the need and the assets have been identified, you may want to consider a housing plan for the community as the first step to address this challenge. I would recommend you contact PhillCo Economic Growth Counsel or Bear Paw Development to make application to the Montana Department of Commerce for technical assistance funds with this in mind. After a housing survey has been completed and a plan developed it may be advisable to consider how other communities have addressed this concern.

Is the Senior Citizens Center built in a way that apartments could be added? Is there a market for the homes that would be vacant?

### **Resources:**

CDBG technical assistance or planning funds, CDBG public facility funds, and HOME funds are available through the Montana Department of Commerce, visit <http://www.discoveringmontana.org>

Rural Development also has programs in place to assist with funding community facilities.

## **MAIN TOPIC: ENVIRONMENTAL**

### **Issue: Working Conditions and Health Issues Associated with a Heavy Population of Mosquitoes**

The citizens of Phillips County and particularly those in the Saco community were concerned about the number of mosquitoes making working conditions unbearable. They are also concerned that health issues may be a problem with the dreaded West Nile Virus. It has been rumored that researchers needed 500 mosquitoes to test for West Nile and set a trap near Saco. During the time period that they planned to attract the 500 mosquitoes they had trapped 8000. Imagine sorting and testing 8000 mosquitoes.

### **Recommendations:**

This issue is a serious health and safety issue that has an adverse effect on the economic growth of the community and the residents of the area. While it is often difficult to do so, some of the worst problems, provide the greatest opportunities. Would recommend contact pharmaceutical companies who are manufacturing mosquito control equipment or repellants and attempt to establish a test site.

Pre disaster mitigation plans are being written for many of the counties. As this problem is not merely an annoyance but a real problem, it may be possible to use pre disaster mitigation funding available to the county to address this issue. Using chemicals or electrons as a larva site may be an option.

**Resources:**

Department of Environmental Quality  
Pharmaceutical Companies  
Pre Disaster Mitigation Funding  
Center for Disease Control web site: <http://www.cdc.gov>

**MAIN TOPIC: AGRICULTURE**

**Issue: Maintaining a quality of life in agriculture as well as financial opportunities that will allow the next generation to retain ownership of the land and provide the stability of the rural community.**

The agricultural community of Phillips County is concerned about the threats to their way of life and the loss of control over their own destinies as well as those of their children. They are faced with so many issues such as federal regulations governing their businesses that appear to be beyond their control that they have become discouraged. The weather and commodity prices provide challenges as well.

**Recommendations:**

If Phillips County does not have a land use plan or comprehensive plan/growth polices, I would recommend they prepare one and that the agricultural community take an active role in its preparation. This would provide some continuity and consistency throughout the county. It may also provide a local voice in dealing with federal agencies.

As it is often more cost effective to build upon the assets we have, the community should develop a resource listing and actively support the businesses that are presently providing the jobs. Survey those businesses and determine if they are happy in the community, would like to expand or if they have concerns that could be addressed by the local or regional development corporations.

**Resources:**

Bear Paw Economic Development Corporation and its new role as a Montana Agricultural Innovation Center  
Growth Through Agriculture  
MSU Extension and Phillips County Agent  
PhillCo Economic Growth Council

**MAIN TOPIC: MOBILIZING COMMUNITY ASSETS**

**Issue: Lack of Volunteers and Volunteer Apathy**

Phillips County is concerned about the apathy of their citizens. Some feel that they are doing everything and others are not doing enough or there isn't enough coordination between organizations. They are frustrated in their attempts to motivate the local population. Volunteer fire departments and ambulance services are feeling a real crunch in their volunteer work force.

**Recommendations:**

First, pull all volunteer organizations together in a special planning session and establish priorities. While some of the activities may be important such as fire protection and health care, others such as a bake sale for the continued support of homeless prairie dogs may not be. This can be tough but it is better to do a few things well than a lot of things badly. "If you could only do one thing, what would it be?" Be sure to include everyone, those who are volunteering now and those who are not. Often people will not volunteer for things they do not believe in or do not feel qualified to do.

Next, don't wait for them to volunteer, actively recruit people who could be qualified or learn to be qualified for various positions.

Finally, it is important that those in charge of the various programs maintain a positive attitude and provide a purpose for the program. Organizers and leaders must treat the volunteers like they would their best employees. Let them know they are appreciated, don't work them to death. One of the department heads at the Department of Commerce regularly tells his subordinates, "Thank you for everything you do", on a regular basis. Just watch someone's face light up when you honestly pay them a complement on their work.

As a final thought, provide training sessions for organizers and leaders within the community. Bring in outside resources that are entertaining but provide sound information.

**Recommended Resources:**

Might want to try a free monthly newsletter: <http://www.volunteerpower.com>

**MAIN TOPIC: AGING AND YOUTH COMMUNITY****Issue: Keeping the Young Persons in the Community**

Phillips County was concerned about the retention and/or attraction of young families. The best and brightest are leaving and, even though they may want to, they are not returning. They are also concerned that many of the elderly do not feel a part of the community and prefer to stay home rather than be actively involved in the available activities.

**Recommendations:**

First of all, support federal legislation such as the Homestead Opportunity Act that provides incentives for young people to once again settle the bread basket. This is a big problem that can't be solved overnight by a few.

Secondly, support young person owned businesses through the SBDC, back to Montana programs, Micro loan programs, etc.

**Recommended Resources:**

SBDC Program

Council on Aging

MicroBusiness Program

**Report by:**  
**Gloria O'Rourke**  
**MEDA/MEDS**  
**118 E. Seventh St.; Suite 2A**  
**Anaconda, MT 59711**  
**Ph: 406.563.5259 Fx: 406.563.5476**  
**Email: [gloria@medamembers.org](mailto:gloria@medamembers.org)**  
**Web: <http://www.medamembers.org>**

Melody, Steve, Debra and Linda did a terrific job thoroughly covering the Main Issues that the people of Phillips County shared during our team Listening Sessions. I have only a few resources to add. I would also like to share with you an encouraging article titled "6 Myths About the Future of Small Towns" by Milan Wall and Vicki Luther, Heartland Center for Leadership Development.

## **6 Myths About the Future of Small Towns**

**by Milan Wall and Vicki Luther, Ed.D.**

**Heartland Center for Leadership Development**

These myths represent common misunderstandings that are part of today's debate about rural community survival. What gets ignored in the debate are those examples of thriving small communities where leaders ignore dire predictions and push ahead to make a difference, even when times are tough. The mythology surrounding small towns often works against the most productive approaches to rural community development. Approaches that work emphasize locally based ideas and self-reliance, focusing on what can happen when people of vision work together to get things done.

### **MYTH 1 Towns that are 'Too Small' have No Future**

Mythology about small towns says that there is a certain population number that can support a community and no less. That number may be 2500 or 1000 or 500, depending on whose "expertise" is being quoted. The truth is that there is no magical number at which a town can survive. Research has shown that even very tiny towns, with populations as small as 100 and less, manage to survive through thoughtful planning, entrepreneurial genius and hard work. No community should perceive itself as "too small" to survive. In fact, small towns can use size as a competitive advantage. As with a small business, the smaller community can retain a certain flexibility. Without the disadvantages of city bureaucracy, it can respond faster to new trends and changing marketplace opportunities. Like a small business, it can seek its own unique niche.

### **MYTH 2 A Community's Location is Key to its Survival**

Dependence on proximity to a major highway, a large metropolitan area or a significant natural resource is typical of industrial-age thinking that believes a community's success hinges on location. This type of thinking may have been more important in the past, when industry and agriculture employed most rural job holders. Today, however, with growth in the service, information, and government sectors, the old industrial age factors have lesser importance. Now, the key is "what community leaders do with what is available." This translates as attitudes and behaviors of people in leadership. In other words, in an "Information Age," leadership, not location, is the most important factor in

community survival.

### **MYTH 3 Best Strategy for Economic Development**

Recruiting new industries is still the strategy of choice among many small towns and economic development experts, even though study after study suggests that industrial recruitment, alone, is not a realistic long-term answer. Too often, small towns have wasted all their time, energy and money trying to attract new industry, only to learn that they should have been working harder to keep the employers they already have. Small towns that throw all their eggs into the business recruitment basket are taking a big risk. They're competing for a few expansions or relocations against thousands of other small towns just like themselves nationwide. They should be working on a broader strategy that emphasizes growing from within, first, and, then recruiting from the outside.

### **MYTH 4 Small Towns Can't Compete in the Global Economy .**

Too many people seem convinced that small towns can't compete in a global economy. Yet small towns throughout America are home to an amazing variety of highly sophisticated, entrepreneurial successes. Many rural communities have small manufacturers that are producing high quality products for a unique marketing niche, which extends beyond the local area to a regional, national or even international market. With access to toll free incoming telephone lines, cross-country package shippers, and the Internet, businesses can compete in the global marketplace. Because they are located in a smaller and often less complex local business environment, they may be able to compete by moving quickly to take advantage of fast-moving marketplace opportunities.

### **MYTH 5 The "Best People" Leave Small Towns as Soon as They Can**

The continuing decline of population in most rural areas remains a problem. But this fact is often described in inaccurate and unproductive ways. Too often, even rural people use the term "brain drain" as if it meant that anyone with brains would get out. They act as if the "best and brightest" should leave to seek better opportunities in the cities or to get a higher education, never to return. It is true that many people find opportunities elsewhere, but it's also true that many capable people stay in small towns or return to them. As small town leaders, they make priceless contributions to local quality of life, giving time and attention to civic affairs, service clubs, school events and family matters. State and local leaders should stop acting as if the "brain drain" means that no talent is left.

### **MYTH 6 The Rural and Urban Economies are Not Interdependent**

Another myth about rural communities says that larger metropolitan areas are more important than smaller communities in our nation's economy. It's not really news that rural industries such as agriculture, mining or land management are playing a smaller role in the rural-urban economic mix. This doesn't mean, however, that cities and counties could maintain their quality of life without farm products, coal, oil and the natural resources available to the city and country person alike. Many city residents are nostalgic or sentimental about small towns, but they often forget that our essential raw materials need dynamic rural infrastructures to get from rural to urban markets.

Understanding myths like these is key to stopping their negative influence on community survival. Focusing on the positive aspects of small towns and maintaining a creative outlook on all development strategies will insure community vitality for years to come. Total community involvement and a strong sense of pride can put an end to the myths and pave the way for successful rural community living.

## **MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY**

### **Issue: Sense of Community and Volunteerism**

#### **Recommendation:**

One way to develop a better sense of community is to encourage volunteers to step up and become involved in community projects. Do use the Volunteer Survey Information Sheets that were collected during the assessment to tap shoulders and ASK for assistance. More often than not, people would volunteer – but they have not been asked.

Another important issue is to **encourage the volunteers you currently have:**

1. Ask first if they'd like to be publicly acknowledged, then include them in an event
2. Send a letter to their supervisor at work...tell the manager how much you appreciate their hard work and special qualities.
3. Write an article in your newsletter
4. Have a board or staff member call them to advise them of how much they are appreciated
5. Send a visitor with a flower
6. Have a board member or other special person invite them to an executive lunch in a special place
7. Invite them to a special event or dinner...and honor them there
8. Write an article about their work in your neighborhood or city newspaper
9. Call them to talk and get their ideas
10. Give them more responsibility - but watch for burnout!

#### **Resource:**

A terrific website for recognizing volunteers is

<http://www.baudville.com>

### **Issue: Support Volunteer efforts through Faith-based Opportunities**

Phillips County should tap into a relatively new source of funding that could ease the load on volunteers. Tap into Faith Based funding to assist with the work you are already doing. Also, investigate faith-based funding for providing child care, transportation or many other services that may be lacking in Phillips County.

#### **Recommendation:**

More and more communities are learning how to tap into Faith Based fund to create programs that meet specific community needs. I have listed two sources below – one Montana based and the other in

Washington, DC. The following restrictions do apply: *Compassion Capital Funds cannot be used for direct services to needy individuals or families nor to replace/supplant existing funding available for similar activities. Funds cannot be used to support 'inherently religious' activities and/or practices such as religious instruction, worship, prayer or any form of proselytization nor can they be used to purchase any religious or scriptural materials.*

### **Faith and Communities Engaged in Service (FACES)**

FACES helps national service grantees and programs to reach out to these organizations and assists such organizations in learning about opportunities available through the Corporation.

#### **Resources:**

[Colleen Minson](#)

[Sarita Hill Coletrane](#)

1000 Connecticut Avenue, NW

13th Floor

Washington, DC 20036

800-355-1200

[faces@ncpc.org](mailto:faces@ncpc.org)

<http://nsrc.etr.org/article/view/236/1/10/>

#### Montana Faith Based Cooperative:

The Montana Faith-Health Cooperative was officially formed in June of 2001, and planning, development and implementation of the state-wide collaborative effort is being directed by a [Steering Committee](#) consisting of representatives from the faith community and health care establishment. One project of the Montana Faith-Health Cooperative is the [Montana Faith-Health Demonstration Project](#), funded through the [Compassion Capital Fund](#) (see [Restrictions](#) below), [Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services](#). The overarching goal of the project is to provide technical assistance and sub-awards to assist Faith-Based and Community-Based Organizations in the delivery of health and [social services](#) to poor and needy individuals and families. In addition to making sub-awards, the Montana Faith-Health Demonstration Project will be providing funds to support the following ongoing programs: Parish Nurse training and Congregational Health Ministry training through the Parish Nurse Center, Carroll College; continuing education through the Northern Rockies Institute of Theology; and prisoner-community re-entry through Teach, Encourage, Assist and Model (T.E.A.M.) Mentoring, Inc.

Additional information about the Montana Faith-Health Cooperative can be found at

<http://faithhealthcoop.montana.edu/aboutus.html>.

#### **Issue: Medical/Health Care**

#### **Recommendation:**

Utilizing retired medical practitioners, a cooperative business can be formed to deliver in-home medical services in rural areas. The training and resources are provided by the “home” medical facility or hospital which contracted the cooperative to deliver services on an out patient basis, services which could otherwise not have been provided. If a group is interested in forming such a business, or in learning more about how it works, assistance with implementing this model can be provided. See Bill Barr’s contact information below.

Also, I would suggest becoming a part of an organization called Partners for Health. They provide a newsletter that is full of resources, grant information, partnership ideas, etc. At the very least, visit their website at <http://ruralhealth.montana.edu>.

**Resources:**

Contact Bill Barr, USDA-Rural Development, Cooperative Development Specialist, 406-585-2545.

Partners for Health Newsletter  
MT Office of Rural Health  
MSU-Bozeman  
P.O. Box 170540  
Bozeman, MT 59717-0540  
Ph: 406.994.5553  
Email: [dyoung@montana.edu](mailto:dyoung@montana.edu)  
<http://ruralhealth.montana.edu>

**Issue: Transportation for Senior Citizens**

There are two grant programs that would be applicable to Phillips County's needs. The grants, one Federal and one State, compliment each other beautifully. The Federal grant provides equipment only while the State grant provides operational funding.

The Federal Grant, referred to as Section 5310 program, provides funds for strictly capital assistance, i.e., purchasing a vehicle for the elderly and disabled. For example, a Senior Citizen Center could apply each year for capital assistance – funded at an 80% federal 20% local match. A group can apply for a bus, van, whatever the transportation need may be.

The 2001 Legislature voted in a new state transit program called TRANSADE – which stands for Transportation Assistance for the Disabled and Elderly. This program provides operating assistance in the form of state money to agencies that are providing services for the elderly and disabled. A community/county now has the option of applying for Federal funds for equipment and for state funds for operating costs of that equipment.

The vehicle could be used to transport youth or non-elderly or non-disabled passengers if additional seats are available. You must first make sure to give preference to serving the elderly and disabled.

MT Department of Transportation holds grant application workshops in the fall – usually in October. Applications are usually due in February. Notice of the workshops is sent to every Senior Citizen Center in the state – or just call David Jacobs to get placed on the mailing list.

**Resource:**

David Jacobs  
Montana Department of Transportation  
2701 Prospect Ave.  
P.O. Box 201001

Helena, MT 59620-1001  
ph: 406/444-6120  
fax: 406/444-7671  
E-Mail: [dajacobs@state.mt.us](mailto:dajacobs@state.mt.us)

Tod Schoenrock  
Community Transportation Association of America  
1341 G St NW, 10th Floor, Washington DC 20005  
Phone Tod: 202.624.1736  
Email: [schoenrock@ctaa.org](mailto:schoenrock@ctaa.org)  
Fax: 202.737.9197  
Web: <http://www.ctaa.org>

Montana Transit Association  
President Steve Earle  
406.543.8386  
[Searle@mountainline.com](mailto:Searle@mountainline.com)

## **MAIN TOPIC: BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

### **In General:**

Participate in MEDA. The Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA) is an association of economic development professionals. MEDA is made up of lead economic developers, business specialists, government employees, and staff members of affiliated non-profit organizations, which promote and foster economic development activities in Montana. MEDA, a non-profit organization, is high on networking and mutual assistance that would be of benefit to Phillips County. Learn more about MEDA by visiting their website at <http://www.medamembers.org/>.

### **Issue: Business Retention**

Phillips County realizes the importance of keeping the existing businesses – and expanding on their current success.

### **Recommendation:**

Utilize the Butte BEAR program. BEAR stands for Business Expansion and Retention. A BEAR program is designed to help existing businesses remain and expand in a community. A BEAR interview team is beginning in Butte, Montana. Part of the program involves:

1. Interview of companies in the area. Information gathered is placed into a web-based database.
2. A team of resource providers will analyze the data to identify potential programs and resources to assist the company.
3. The business owner or operator is then offered a menu of available resource programs from which they may seek assistance. The composite database can also be used to pro-actively create

reports for the appropriate community leaders that will help them to improve overall business climate.

I spoke with BEAR coordinator Rick Edwards of Northwestern Energy. He said that a team from Southwest Montana could visit Malta upon request.

**Resources:**

Contact Kim Snetzinger of Economic Development Resource Center  
ELC Rm. 332; 1300 W. Park  
Butte, MT 59701  
Ph: 406.496.4480  
Email: [krobinson@mtech.edu](mailto:krobinson@mtech.edu)

Rick Edwards email: [Rick.Edwards@northwestern.com](mailto:Rick.Edwards@northwestern.com)

**Issue: Buy Local, Shop Local**

Simply put, education can be the key to improving local support for your local businesses. Put up signs or fliers with the statistics of just what it costs locals to drive out of town for “bargains.” The information below was provided by Al Jones, SouthCentral Regional Development Officer for Montana Department of Commerce.

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

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

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

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

**Resource:**

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

**Issue: Business, Jobs, Economic Development, the Whole Shebang**

**Recommendation:**

It is imperative that resources are found to continue the efforts of PhillCo Economic Growth Council. This council and all that it has accomplished would cause other communities to turn dark green with envy. In my opinion, a community that does not have an economic development organization is in hospice care; if action is not taken to assist a community to thrive, it is on its deathbed. Phillips County needs to realize the treasure that it has and whole-heartedly fund this effort.

To increase funding for PhillCo, consider options such as a port authority mill levy, and stronger county and city support.

**Resources:**

Contact Evan Barrett of Butte Local Development for the “how to” of becoming a port authority.

Evan Barrett, BLDC

P.O. Box 507

Butte, MT 59703

Ph: 406.723.4349

Email: ebarrett@bldc.net

**Issue: Retaining Our Youth**

**Recommendation:**

One outcome of Resource Team Assessments is a unique online business recruitment tool. Julie Foster of Montana Jobs Network created the Come Home Montana project to put local communities in touch with “youth” that wants to return home. Visitors to the site can view a list of community assets, challenges, and their vision for the future to assist them in making a decision to return to their community, start a business or participate in an existing Montana business or organization. Phillips County can use the information gleaned from this Resource Team Assessment to place community information on the website.

**Resources:**

Visit <http://www.comehomemontana.org>.

Contact: Julie Foster

Montana Jobs Network

4655 Watt Lane

Stevensville, MT 59870

Ph: 406.777.7185

Email: jmfoster@montana-jobs.net

**MAIN TOPIC: EDUCATION**

**Issue: Prepare non-college bound students for job applications, resume writing, interviewing**

Local employers stated that some applicants seeking employment cannot properly fill out a job application form. Apparently, the Malta school system does have this skill in the curriculum.

**Recommendation:**

Have a “mock” Day of Hire with local students. Ask several local business owners to join the students for lunch and critique mock application forms.

**Resource:**

Local businesses and appropriate students

**Issue: Internet Accessibility****Recommendation:**

Visit <http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/mfh/nnw/nnwaboutnn.cfm> to learn about Neighborhood Networks. Neighborhood Networks is a community-based initiative created by HUD in 1995. Through innovative private/public partnerships, Neighborhood Networks establishes multiservice community learning centers that bring computer access and lifelong learning to low- and moderate-income residents living in HUD Multifamily insured and assisted housing. There are several successful Neighborhood Networks in Montana. Faith Hill of the Helena HUD office would assist you in making it happen in your neighborhood.

**Resources:**

Faith Hill, HUD  
Power Block Building  
7 West 6th Avenue  
Helena, Montana 59601  
Phone: (406) 449-5050

**MAIN TOPIC: NATURAL RESOURCES****Issue: Judith River Foundation/Dinosaur Field Station**

From what I understand, Malta completed the CTAP process in 2002. The project was to convert the entrance of the museum into a tourist information center and also improve the exterior of the museum. I believe a proposal was submitted to Congress through Senator Burns for \$1,000,000 for a new facility.

**Recommendation:**

Montana Economic Developers Association is now contracting with Tony Preite to serve as a Federal Liaison for projects. Anne Boothe serves on the MEDA board and could request assistance from Tony to encourage a positive federal response for this project. The MEDA board must approve the project before Tony can begin work.

**Resource:**

Anne Boothe, MEDA board member

**In closing:**

Many, many thanks to the people of Phillips County for your open-armed welcome to the resource team. I look forward to working with you all in the future!

**PHILLIPS COUNTY RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT  
LISTENING SESSIONS  
SEPTEMBER 15, 2003**

**SACO- CHALLENGES**

- Lack of job opportunities – people want to return or are semi-retired. Nothing here
- Ditto – need something to bring people here
- Housing
- Ditto – if have a house, not livable
- Ditto – lack of housing, not much to rent, lack of all!!!!
- Mosquito- severe problem! – Due to irrigation process – need more drainage
- Ditto – Mosquitoes are bad out of town – not in town.
- Big or small businesses come to town – need jobs. Prefer small businesses.
- Location – too far from markets, high freight rates
- Need businesses and housing
- Hard to find sprayers to spray for mosquitoes.
- More consensus in the community – have great ideas but we don't get together
- Too few people to do all the work
- Ditto
- Keep our café open
- Hard to get responsible employees
- Transportation issue – so far from markets
- High utilities cost – keep climbing
- 70% elderly (quite elderly) – major housing problems for them – if we can't care for them, they have to leave.
- Family farms are disappearing, our children leave
- Place for youth to go – have had a youth center in the past – did not last. Came down to not enough people to keep it going – and most kids had too much to do.
- Beautification of area – develop the pride that starts it
- Lack of civic pride
- Hang on to businesses we do have!
- Lack of lodging for tourists
- How to get tourists to stop
- Parking off of highway 2 – front streets
- People stop to get gas – and gas is not available

**PHILLIPS COUNTY RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT  
MALTA AGRICULTURE – PROBLEMS**

- Inconsistent market and prices for products
- Jobs & kids leave the area – need to keep products here longer
- Endangered species issues – public lands versus environmental concerns, i.e., prairie dog, sagegrass listings
- Population declining – makes it tough for community to continue thriving
- Trade with Canada – good thing/bad thing. Has NAFTA hurt us?

- Keeping irrigation projects running – cost of maintenance to 100 year old project
- Recruiting & maintaining front street businesses, need to add new businesses and hold on to existing ones
- All eastern MT communities are in the same boat – network with other communities with similar concerns – regionalize
- Too much comment on having more highways (4 for 2) in MT. Concentrate on rural areas. More pavement for gravel roads to get products to market.
- Irrigation system needs entire revamping. Need more dependable water supply. Many irrigation districts are tied together with a Joint Board of Control. Need irrigation – liveblood of system. Working with Fort Belknap Community on a compact.
- Irrigation water comes from St. Mary near Glacier. There is concern whether the water distribution is equitable.
- Need to find things to bring people into the community so kids don't continue to leave.
- Homestead Opportunity Act introduced by Byron Dorgen, ND. Intended to provide incentives to encourage young people to stay in the rural areas. Could benefit all of eastern MT.
- Need to figure out a way to bring young kids back to live and survive in this area.
- Endangered species problems on National level. A lot of Federal lands being leased in the area for grazing. Leases can be reduced by eliminated resulting in less grazing due to over protection of endangered species. Results in lower productivity in that area.
- Federal grazing leases are being restricted especially in CMR area. Feds intend to completely reduce grazing on CMR and other federal lands. US Fish & Wildlife Service is hard to work with.
- 49% of land in Phillips County is federal or state land/public land.
- Land sales are not for production purposes – recreational uses are more prominent. Absentee ownership.
- Agreements that were made 10 yrs ago aren't being honored. Management changes are causing problems between gov't & landowners.
- Victims of big business – we need to encourage small businesses, tourism.
- Reliant upon weather, nature, etc.

## **PHILLIPS COUNTY RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT**

### **MALTA LAW AND EMERGENCY OFFICIALS, LOCAL OFFICIALS, – PROBLEMS**

- Emergency services are very shorthanded in the Malta area – need volunteers from Malta to become EMTs
- Money is a problem for emergency services
- Saco is in need of a rig
- With multiple events in the area, we do not have enough law enforcement to cover them all.
- More things to do but no more money or people
- DES – homeland security has bogged a lot of us down re grant applications and paperwork
- Same volunteers volunteer for everything – if money comes down – no one to train
- Fire Dept with the county – has plenty of volunteers – but limited money to serve the entire county.
- Do not have individuals who have the time to apply for grants.
- Meth labs – invading Montana

- Declining population leads to declining revenue
- Challenge is to maintain what we have
- Need to increase philanthropy
- Dwindling population – but caseload rises – especially with felony cases that take more man hours
- Down to seven officers to cover the whole county and the city of Malta
- Loss of tax base – 30%
- Difficult to attract qualified professional employees for various services
- No jobs to bring back the younger people
- Old money is gone – people die and their children are not here – money is gone.
- Lack of volunteers – and recruiting and retaining volunteers
- Need more time to get training done – need younger people as well.
- Phillips County trash problem addressed. Malta has a landfill, but all other communities pay for trash to go to Valley County.
- Lack public transportation other than Amtrak

**PHILLIPS COUNTY RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT  
MALTA EDUCATORS, BANKING & UTILITIES - PROBLEMS**

- Less population stresses school funding support
- Harder to recruit teachers now more than ever
- Harder to attract board members – don't want their business to suffer
- Local facilities such as school and health care not used to their max
- Hard to retain quality staff in our schools
- Good paying jobs – not generational any longer – wait two generations for a job to open
- Youth looking for a quick path to the top – not willing to work for years to get there – and/or, opportunities are not available
- No true over-night delivery – keeps out businesses that need specific delivery
- Keep Amtrak alive
- People do not apply for the business loan money available
- City of Malta does need wastewater expansion

**MALTA SENIOR CITIZENS, HEALTH CARE, CHURCHES - PROBLEMS**

- Lack of membership in sr. citizens organizations, less socialization
- Lack of activities for disabled & lack of people willing to spend time with disabled
- Matching resources with needs, i.e., school facilities/21<sup>st</sup> century grants/activities
- 30% of population > 55 yrs of age
- Three yrs ago, senior center membership was 140 & now its down to 68
- Religious community: ability to maintain services – service to rural communities
- Combining religious communities results in losing something but consolidation is necessary sometimes
- Typically, baby boomers aren't joiners – they are more independent. Sr Citizen organizations, fraternal organizations, etc., membership is down everywhere.
- Transportation from community to community is a problem – long distances involved.

- No additional funding for Opportunities organizations but their costs have substantially increased. Difficult to continue same level of service with less funding.
- Funding follows clients if they move to another area. Few disabled applicants want to move here – they will move to wherever their families live.
- Good Sam home census is very low – community can't afford to lose this facility
- Concern with keeping senior transportation available & concern with continuation of meal delivery programs
- Difficulty in recruiting health care professionals

### **MALTA YOUTH, CIVIC CLUBS & NON-PROFITS – PROBLEMS**

- Lack of support from elected officials in promoting non-profit activities
- Apathy
- Lack of participation in classes to improve quality of life in dealing with drug/alcohol issues
- Place for kids to go and things for kids to go that don't fit into traditional afterschool sports
- Need volunteers
- Lack of support for various events that we try to get off the ground....need hard workers
- 17% of junior high kids not involved in school activities – don't want them left out
- Get people into the mindset of "Let's Grow!" –improved attitude
- Losing businesses – need local support for local businesses
- Decide if the rainy day fund is needed now...perhaps the rainy day is here!
- If it is not brick and mortar – it is not economic development...need to change that attitude
- Educate community regarding economic development so that we can try new ideas and projects
- People who are active in the community do not feel appreciated.
- Local officials seem to not be aware of events and/or promote them unless it is their idea.
- Place for kids to go – like a Boys and Girls Club
- Dealing with high numbers (mostly due to new labeling rules) of Chapter One or specialty programs

### **MALTA RETAIL AND BUSINESS – PROBLEMS**

- Declining population
- Ditto
- Weakening of the downtown area
- Aging population – majority over 55
- Out migration of youth
- Quality workforce – more so than declining workforce
- Jobs
- Decline of Ag, fewer people on the farm
- Lack of training, lack of education so that people could work the jobs available
- Youth getting educated but not those needing new skills
- Lack of communication between organizations in the area
- Keep young people here
- BNSF improve their area – weeds and ugly
- Merchants need to provide better customer service
- Pool of employees is shrinking

- Keep businesses open as a convenience for customers
- Need EMT's

**HAND WRITTEN COMMENTS: - PROBLEMS**

- Getting community into "let's grow" mode (need positive change of attitude.)
- Diversity in agencies, community leaders, and population.
- Support of small local schools for Tournaments in Malta.
- More respect for diversity of ideas, race, religion, etc.....
- Provide a strong core curriculum grounded in the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic at the elementary level.
- Economic downturns, resulting in fewer students, less revenue for school, greater tax burdens.

**PHILLIPS COUNTY RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT  
LISTENING NOTES – STRENGTHS AND ASSETS  
SEPTEMBER 15, 2003  
SACO- STRENGTHS**

- Grocery store
- Hardware store
- Motel
- Sr. Citizen Center – provides meal three days per week
- Key/card gas
- Gas wells in the area – 1500
- Good water system
- Railroad goes thru town
- Seed Company
- Excellent school system
- Bright students
- The school keeps our community going – volleyball, basketball, etc.
- Great kids
- Wheat, barley and cattle production
- Ambulance service is very good
- Several nurses in town
- Open gym two days/week in the summer
- Loaded with fiber for telecommunications.
- Our people –
- Have our own gas system, gas wells
- Natural resources – provide most of our jobs
- Low cost of living in this area
- School is the pride of our community
- Some community leaders are excellent and give so much support
- Businesses that we have here are good
- Natural gas – selling it now and bringing \$\$ into the city – good supply for future
- Town pulls together when needed
- Geo thermal water - hot springs
- Wildlife
- Good grocery store
- Good meat market
- Good hardware store
- Great hunting and fishing – seasonal
- Golf course – 10 miles out
- Dinosaur area
- Do have access to railroad
- PHILLIPS COUNTY RESOURCE– in spite of high costs
- Highway 2

- Ditto – people drive right by us everyday.....we have a lot to offer – make reasons for people to stop
- Wind!
- We do have match funding available.
- Churches are active

### **MALTA AGRICULTURE – STRENGTHS**

- People – want to be here.
- Lifestyle is attractive to people from other areas. Cost of living is low.
- Absentee workforce. Kids would move back in a heartbeat if there were jobs here. We're seeing older people move to town but doesn't help out the schools, etc.
- Trying to get kids to stay in MT but we, as adults, tell them they have to go somewhere else to make money. Kind of hypocritical but need to convince them that the quality of life makes up for the lower wages, etc.

### **PHILLIPS COUNTY RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT**

#### **MALTA LAW AND EMERGENCY OFFICIALS, LOCAL OFFICIALS, – STRENGTHS**

- Foundation - \$80,000
- Little Rockies Arts Association
- Very close knit community that wants to help and assist
- Location – a crossroads for traffic from Billings/Canada/ and for railroad
- New airport
- Try to be positive-
- PhillCo
- Motor Sports opportunities
- Do have enough people to run the Fire Dept.
- DNRC and funding source for Fire Dept.
- People are willing to help – just need to spark more volunteers
- Great support from City Council for Fire Dept.

### **PHILLIPS COUNTY RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT**

#### **MALTA EDUCATORS, BANKING & UTILITIES – STRENGTHS**

- School Board that hangs in there
- Voters that support us
- School resources and dollars brought in that circulate in the community
- School system provides good jobs with good benefits
- Student achievement – very high
- Staff achievement – very high
- School brought in over \$300,000 in grants – will increase in the future
- Tight community –
- UPS services – if you have enough bulk to get the lower prices
- Three supportive banks in town
- Infrastructure is here and ready for growth

- Empty buildings are available for growth

### **MALTA SENIOR CITIZENS, HEALTH CARE, CHURCHES, PARENTS – STRENGTHS**

- Malta Opportunities
- New hospital facility
- Old hospital building will have potential for future economic development project

### **MALTA YOUTH, CIVIC CLUBS AND NON-PROFITS – STRENGTHS**

- Phillips County Coalition for Healthy Choices
- 83% of junior high kids are involved in school activities
- Phillips County Community Foundation
- Hospital Foundation
- Mustang Foundation
- Rodeo – brings thousands of people to town
- Motor Sports
- Team roping events, gospel jamboree, boots and saddle events, youth rodeos, Mustang Stampede
- Trafton Park Arena
- Phillips County News
- Class Reunion of 48 & 49 – felt yards and community improved in appearance
- Little Rockies Arts Association
- Northeastern Art Network association – group together to be able to afford artists
- 4-H, Schools, Churches
- KMMR and PCN – invaluable asset
- Malta Athletic Club – funds raised go back to youth activities, tournaments, etc.
- Havre Day Camp
- The people are our best asset.
- Parenting classes, smoking cessation classes
- Stable medical community
- New airport
- Dinosaur Field Station
- Dinosaur specimens – the best in the world!

### **MALTA RETAIL AND BUSINESS – STRENGTHS**

- Good rest home
- Three doctors in town
- Lots to offer
- Pockets of positive attitude
- Medical staff and school staff
- PhillCo Economic Growth Council
- Industrial Park
- Dinosaurs – capitalize on them
- Quality of life, good people

- Short commute
- Cheap to live here
- School –
- Some local businesses give great local service
- Passion for reviving the community
- Isolation of community can be a strength
- Hard working people and board members and volunteers
- Friendly people
- World class dinosaurs –
- Hard working Chamber of Commerce
- New hospital and medical facilities
- New airport and Amtrak
- Huge potential for growth!
- Quality of life doesn't get much better than in Malta.
- Natural gas resources and other natural resources
- Terrific Chamber of Commerce working group
- Family Matters – took lots of volunteer support and funding!
- City government and city workers are wonderful – work hard.

#### **HAND WRITTEN COMMENTS: - STRENGTHS/ASSETS**

- Schools, hospital, arts association, reasonable cost of living, and caring people.
- A lot of excellent ideas.
- City and County governments put in lots of time and energy, good water sewer and protection services.
- PhillCo and Chamber of Commerce offer hope and direction!!
- Voters and Board members did outstanding job of supporting tradition of excellence by supporting annual mill levies.
- New public facilities have added a positive note to history.
- Together with community, can accomplish great things.
- School strongly supported by the community.
- Family Consumer Science program makes great effort to reach out to community groups.
- Key Club organization involves itself in community projects.
- Excellent parental support.

**PHILLIPS COUNTY RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT  
LISTENING SESSION - PROJECTS  
SEPTEMBER 15, 2003**

**SACO- PROJECTS**

- Need value added products, i.e. extract gluten from wheat,
- Use Saco as a test site to address mosquito control
- Keep the café open – get a group together
- Assisted living center – could ease housing problem as well
- Beautification projects
- Promote low cost of living to get people to the Saco area
- Identify the historic culture of the area and promote it, i.e., Little Shell Tribe – work with Indian people to identify and promote the area
- Keep current businesses open and thriving
- Investigate credit card option for gas stop
- Improve entrances to town – create charm
- Investigate wind energy options and alternate energy
- Attract students by offering a dormitory/housing setting
- Industrial Park completed – stabilize current businesses
- Clean up the town
- Get the donated land we have developed with a park and/or rest area
- Use natural gas to heat/supply green houses or other projects such as aqua-culture
- Elder Care facilities
- Re-design downtown Saco – use computer generated program to re-vision what it could be
- Convenience Store/Gas Station
- Electricity – get costs down by providing our own electricity,
- Involve people that live outside the area – they keep Saco going

**PHILLIPS COUNTY RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT  
MALTA AGRICULTURE – PROJECTS**

- Improvements to irrigation system.
- 15 new businesses and manufacturing & processing plants in next 15 yrs
- Electrical generation facility built – take advantage of natural gas in the area.
- Ways to process local products here instead of shipping raw products out.
- Vertical integrated value added products.
- Cheaper nitrogen
- Build on natural resources to create opportunities so kids will stay or move back. Starting new businesses won't do it alone – need to capitalize on natural resources and/or locally produced products.
- Let young people take over. Older people will not let go so kids have to go somewhere else to make a living.
- Value-added to commodities that are produced here.
- Car dealership with car rentals.

- Feedlot/alcohol fuel plant. – Need 60,000 cattle to be feasible. Takes 10 million bushels of feed material. Manure forms methane – ethanol is produced .... Lots of capital is required.

#### **PHILLIPS COUNTY RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT**

##### **MALTA LAW AND EMERGENCY OFFICIALS, LOCAL OFFICIALS, – PROJECTS**

- Phillips County trash problems addressed – economically.
- Improve long distance education – so that we can have skilled workers
- Get us some jobs!
- Expand port hours
- Expand Motor Sports opportunities

#### **PHILLIPS COUNTY RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT**

##### **MALTA SENIOR CITIZENS, HEALTH CARE, CHURCHES, PARENTS – PROJECTS**

- More professional jobs available – otherwise law enforcement work load is increased
- Utilize technology that is available
- What if the ambulance doesn't come? Promote need for volunteers
- Grant sources for EMS – an ambulance barn
- County has upgraded equipment.
- Utilize natural gas

#### **PHILLIPS COUNTY RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT**

##### **MALTA EDUCATORS, BANKING & UTILITIES – PROJECTS**

- Bring back our best and brightest students – stress lifestyle is as important as material goods
- Increase use of tele-conference/video conference ability
- Beautification – trees planted on the main streets
- Begin a local adult ed program again – learn from past mistakes, communicate more
- If we provide the jobs people will come back
- Banks in town have funding for just about any project/business – get the people to apply!
- Wastewater expansion project
- Small Business Development Center in Bear Paw Development in Havre utilized – will get people and funds matched up

##### **MALTA SENIOR CITIZENS, HEALTH CARE, CHURCHES, PARENTS – PROJECTS**

- Involve elderly in education system – mentoring, tutoring, reading assistance programs.
- Better nutrition/health programs for youth
- Community Center for youth
- New bowling alley
- Keep services that presently exist – access to health care services
- Transportation opportunities for elderly to medical appointments out of town
- Utilize old Senior Citizen bus for tourism opportunities – trips to dinosaur sites, etc.
- Churches to have handicap accesses

## **MALTA YOUTH, CIVIC CLUBS & NON-PROFITS – PROJECTS**

- Purchase Hospital building to use as a multiple purpose facility – bowling alley, etc.
- Support local businesses
- Re-think how the county and city work together
- Increase non-bricks and mortar projects – such as Rodeo and Motor Sports events
- Get behind events and support them!
- Have a Performing Arts Center which would include a dance studio and an art gallery.
- Promote writers, poets, adults or students seeking to share talents with others
- Improve communication within the area so that we are all aware of events
- Difficult time hiring youth – because they are too involved in school activities
- Volunteer after-school programs at the Dinosaur Field Office
- New building dedicated to education with the historic/earth dinosaur sciences
- Continue to partner with Ft. Peck and Canada
- Drag strip opened
- Skateboard Park
- Mustang Foundation grow in scholarship funds tenfold.
- Nationally advertise the dinosaur attractions here. Great Plains Dinosaur Museum.
- Great attendance at all community activities
- Boys and Girls Club
- NASA contact to allow students to send an experiment into space
- Input for other events to be held at the Arena

## **MALTA RETAIL AND BUSINESS – PROJECTS**

- Value added ag
- Satellite College here from MSU-Northern – professional development training facility
- Bring our kids back
- Improve communication between groups so that we are tapping into the brain power and enthusiasm we do have
- Support local businesses
- Wow our customers with service so they come back!
- Support local businesses, new ideas and identify workforce
- Schools need to address needs of kids that will remain in the community – high school business classes need to catch those that will stay and prepare them for job interviews, applications, etc.
- Promote world class dinosaur location
- Trees planted along Front Street, period lighting, specific downtown beautification
- Expansion of Dinosaur Field Station – education center, etc.
- Any business that would create seven to ten jobs
- Target industry study to find out what businesses could use our natural gas products
- Entrepreneurship – support and educate individuals with ideas and projects
- Huge opportunity for service industry – electricians, plumbers, etc.
- Change the perception that we are a dying community
- Superhost is coming October 29<sup>th</sup>.
- Have customer service training in the high school.

- Train the business owner to train their employees regarding customer service – keep the training going.
- Educate local people as to the cost of shopping outside of the area.
- Business Retention and Expansion Survey – using MT Ambassadors and MSU-Bozeman

**HAND WRITTEN COMMENTS: - PROJECTS ACCOMPLISHED YEARS TO COME**

- Get large employers and light industry.
- Technology based businesses here and booming!
- Upkeep projects funded through this assessment in the community once.
- Grant money are funded and utilized where will money come from to maintain these same projects.
- Support of school and leadership.
- More forward thinking on investment for people bringing in economic development.
- Grants from non-local sources, maintain or improve these numbers.