RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT REPORT

For

MALTA AND PHILLIPS COUNTY
MONTANA

OCTOBER 21 - 22, 2014

INTRODUCTION

It was a privilege for the Malta/Phillips County Resource Team to spend time in your area. Thank you for your hospitality, your time, and for sharing with the team the vision you have for your home.

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

Special thanks are due to PhillCo Economic Growth Council and in particular, Julianne Snedigar, Executive Director. Julianne served as the champion behind this project and will continue her leadership role with the process through completion. Special recognition is due Anne Boothe, Triangle Communications, for support in bringing the team to Malta/Phillips County. In addition, the Phillips County Resource Team Assessment could not have happened without the support of Paul Tuss and Bear Paw Development Corporation which serves as the Certified Regional Development Corporation for the area.

The Phillips County Resource Team Assessment had many sponsors that contributed to the success to date including Phillips County, City of Malta, Town of Saco, Town of Dodson, Zortman Community, Whitewater Community, and the Malta Area Chamber of Commerce.

Finally, I applaud each and every team member who dedicated hours of work in order to participate on the team: Michael Dann, MT USDA/RD; Debra Demarais, MT Dept. of Commerce; Cheryl Curry, Pondera Regional Port Authority; Warren Vaughan, Gallatin County Planning and Community Development; Kathy McLane, Mid-Rivers Communications; and Steve Zeier, Zeier Consulting, LLC.

Each team member’s contact information is provided in the following report. Please feel free to call on any of us for additional information or support. It would be our pleasure.

The stage is now set for the future of Malta/Phillips County. 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 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!

Gloria O'Rourke
MEDA Team Coordinator
PROCESS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THIS REPORT

According to Montana Department of Commerce program requirements, Resource Team Assessments are to be approved through the community’s Certified Regional Development Corporation (CRDC). The CRDC for Phillips County is Bear Paw Development Corporation, with Paul Tuss serving as Executive Director. The local host, PhillCo Economic Growth Council, initiated the request for a Resource Team to visit. Julianne Snedigar and Anne Boothe served as liaisons and coordinators for the team’s visit. Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA) provided staff support for the coordination of a resource team to assist Phillips County in evaluating its assets and challenges and in developing suggestions for improving the environment, social and economic future of the area.

Under the direction of Julianne Snedigar an agenda was developed, logistics arranged, as well as budgeting and publicity for the assessment. Resource Team members were selected to visit, interview citizens, businesses and community leaders to develop options for projects for Phillip County. The team members were selected based on their fields of expertise that local officials indicated would likely be needed to respond to the problem or project areas identified.

Throughout the Resource Team on October 21 - 22, over 100 people attended listening sessions and made comments. All notes from all listening sessions as well as those submitted via email or handwritten are included in this report. The team was available for listening to the following groups: Town of Saco; Agriculture; Healthcare, Nonprofits, Youth Groups, Civic Clubs, Economic Development, Recreation, Tourism, Arts; Natural Resources, Environmental, Oil, Gas, Utilities, Infrastructure; Senior Citizens, Churches, Parents, Young Adults/Families; Law Enforcement, Local Government, EMS; Business, Retail, Services, Realtors; High School Students; Education Administrators, and School Boards and Teachers.

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

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

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

A preliminary oral report and a summary of group recommendations were presented to the people of Phillips County the evening of October 22nd.

Following the oral report, this formal written report was prepared and is presented to the people of Phillips County. The report is available on the MEDA website at http://www.medamembers.org under the Resources tab.

A Town Hall Meeting is planned for January 7th, at 6:00pm at Stretch’s Pizza. The purpose of the meeting will be to briefly review the report, identify projects, set priorities and create working groups for action.
MALTA/PHILLIPS COUNTY RESOURCE TEAM
MALTA, MONTANA

October 21 - 22, 2014

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http://www.zeierconsulting.com

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gloria@medamembers.org
www.medamembers.org
YOU ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT

For Malta and Phillips County

Tuesday & Wednesday

OCTOBER 21 & 22

LISTENING SESSIONS
Various times and locations, see details

7:00-8:30 PM - Wednesday
TOWN HALL MEETING
At Malta High School

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT?
It is a planning process that brings a team of resource providers and economic development specialists to Malta for one and half days to tour the community and listen to its residents and turn what they learn into an action plan to help Malta and Phillips County identify and reach its goals.

WHAT DO THEY NEED FROM YOU?
They need you to answer three questions:

1. What are Malta/Phillips County’s strengths?
2. What are Malta/Phillips County’s challenges?
3. What projects should take place within two years? five years? ten years? twenty years?

Conducted by the Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA), Bear Paw Development Corporation and PhilCo Economic Growth Council in partnership with the Montana Department of Commerce.

Plan to attend the Listening Session(s) that best fit you:

SESSION SCHEDULE:

Tuesday, 10/21
1:00 PM - Saco Listening Session @ Saco Town Hall
4:00 PM - Malta Tour with Team and local officials.

Wednesday, 10/22
Sessions will begin promptly at the time and location specified below...

7:00 – 7:40 AM
Agriculture – Westside Restaurant with no host breakfast

8:00 – 8:40 AM
Healthcare, Nonprofits, Youth groups, Civic clubs, Economic Development, Recreation, Tourism, Arts – Great Northern Lodge Room

8:45 – 9:25 AM
Natural Resources, Environmental, Oil, Gas, Utilities, Infrastructure – Great Northern Lodge Room

9:45 – 10:25 AM
Senior Citizen, Churches, Parents, Young Adults/Families – Malta Senior Center

10:30 – 11:15
Law Enforcement, Local government, EMS – Stretch’s Pizza back room

11:30 – 1:00
Business, Retail Services, Realtors, etc.

1:00 – 2:00 PM
BREAK - MEDA Team Work Session

2:20 – 3:00 PM
High School Students - Malta High School Cafeteria

3:00 – 3:40 PM:
Education Administrators, School Boards and Teachers - Malta High School Cafeteria

4:00 – 6:30 PM: MEDA Team work session & dinner (private)

7:00 – 8:30 PM
(Wednesday, 10/22)
TOWN HALL MEETING
Malta High School Auditorium – open to the public, all community members are invited and encouraged to attend.

Thank you to our hosts and sponsors:
Phillips County,
City of Malta,
Town of Saco, Town of Dodson,
communities of Zortman & Whitewater
and the Malta Area Chamber of Commerce

If you'd like to become a sponsor or have questions about the sessions or town hall meeting, please contact:
Julianne Sneider, Executive Director with PhilCo Economic Growth Council (406) 654.1776

“The world is run by those who show up!”
Robert B. Johnson
The team’s report covering the main topics and issues listed below will be available online at [http://www.medamembers.org](http://www.medamembers.org) by November 17th. The team plans to return to facilitate a town meeting to prioritize projects and ideas the first week of December.

This list is a summary compilation from the Listening Sessions held in Phillips County, Montana, October 21st and 22nd. Over 100 people either submitted comments or were interviewed and responded to three questions: What are the strengths and assets of Malta/Phillips County; What are the problems and challenges of Malta/Phillips County; What projects would you like to see or what vision do you have for Malta/Phillips County in the next 2, 5, 10, 20 years.

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<tr>
<th>MAIN TOPIC: INFRASTRUCTURE</th>
<th>ISSUES:</th>
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<td>Water/Sewer</td>
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<td>New building for MOI</td>
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<th>MAIN TOPIC: AGRICULTURE</th>
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<td>Educate consumer on value of agriculture</td>
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<td>Land ownership and use</td>
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<td>Feasibility of fertilizer plant</td>
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<td>St. Mary’s Project – funding and jurisdictions</td>
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<td>Explore niche market crops, i.e., Spinach</td>
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<td>Green houses/value added ag</td>
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<th>MAIN TOPIC: BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT</th>
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<td>Creative Finance Mechanisms</td>
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<td>Explore new partnerships, i.e., PhillCo, Job Service, and Bear Paw</td>
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<td>Multi-use Shooting Range</td>
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<td>Car Rental Business – get creative</td>
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<th>MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY PROGRAMS</th>
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<td>More Daycare and Daycare 24/7</td>
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<td>Parks and Recreation – reactivate programs</td>
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<td>Multi-use Community Center</td>
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<td>New Leaders/Community Leaders</td>
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<td>Better structure for Non-Profits to find funding/support</td>
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<td>Re-invigorate Phillips County Community Foundation</td>
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<td>Swimming Pool</td>
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<td>Improvement and upkeep of parks</td>
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INTRODUCTION:

First of all, I would like to extend a sincere Thank You to the people of Saco, Malta, and Phillips County for the warm reception that was given to the members of the Resource Team during our visit. The townspeople are very proud of their communities, and it showed during all of the listening sessions that were conducted. I would also like to thank Juli and Anne for all their hard work and the effort that went into making this a truly enjoyable experience.

During all of the listening sessions that were held, one thing became clear very quickly – the citizens are proud of their communities. Over and over again, we heard the communities had great schools, were a good place to raise a family, had good medical care, and people felt safe in their communities. I was very impressed to learn about the number of people who had left the area and have recently moved back to Malta to raise their families. Young families are the lifeblood of a community and it was inspirational to hear about their coming back home. This speaks volumes about the people who live here and who want to make their communities better for the younger generations, as they will be the next leaders of the community.

MAIN TOPIC: INFRASTRUCTURE

ISSUE: Water/Sewer

During the listening session conducted with local government officials, it was mentioned that some water and sewer lines need to be replaced in the City of Malta but that it is difficult to ask people on a fixed income to contribute to the cost of the needed repairs.

Recommendations:

The City should consider applying to the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) programs with the Montana Department of Commerce for assistance with part of the cost of replacing the water or sewer lines. The CDBG Public Facilities program, located in the Community Development Division, accepts applications for infrastructure projects in even-numbered years for a maximum grant amount of $450,000. Applications are scored and ranked against similar projects received during the application cycle. The CDBG Economic Development program, located in the Business Resources Division, accepts applications on an open cycle basis as long as funds are available and could be a potential source of funds if there are new or existing businesses that will be connected to the new water or sewer lines. The maximum amount of the grant from the CDBG-ED program is $400,000.
The City should also consider applying to the Treasure State Endowment Program (TSEP), located in the Community Development Division with the Montana Department of Commerce. The TSEP program provides grants for infrastructure improvements, ranging from $500,000 up to a maximum of $750,000. Applications are accepted during even numbered years, and are scored and ranked against similar projects received during the application cycle.

The City is located in the area served by Bear Paw Development Corporation, a local Certified Regional Development Corporation. Bear Paw has experience writing applications for both the CDBG and TSEP programs, and would be able to help the City with this process.

**Recommended Resources:**
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**ISSUE:** New building for Malta Opportunities Inc
During a couple of the listening sessions, it was mentioned that Malta Opportunities Inc needed a new building, as the building they currently occupy was old and in need of a great deal of repair.

**Recommendations:**
The City may want to consider applying for a planning grant from the Community Development Block Grant program, with the planning bureau. The maximum amount of the planning grant would be $25,000. A study could be conducted to determine if the best option for MOI is to rehabilitate their current building or move to a new location. It would determine what needs to be
done to the current building, the costs of any rehabilitation that needs to be done, and possible sources of funds to complete the project. If it was determined that a new building was the best option, the study would also determine such things as where the best location for a new building would be, either in an existing structure or construction of a brand new building, the costs involved for relocation into an existing building versus construction of a new building, and possible sources of funds to help pay for the project.

**Recommended Resources:**
Jennifer Olson, Bureau Chief
Community Development Division
Montana Department of Commerce
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Website: [http://comdev.mt.gov/CDBG/default.mcpx](http://comdev.mt.gov/CDBG/default.mcpx)

**MAIN TOPIC: AGRICULTURE**

**ISSUE: Feasibility of fertilizer plant**
During the session in Saco, it was mentioned that building a fertilizer plant might be possible, due to the natural resources found in the area. However, it was also stated this might just be a ‘pipe dream’.

**Recommendations:**
The Montana Department of Commerce has an Industry Development Program (formerly known as the Energy Division) that could be tapped as a source for providing technical assistance in deciding whether or not a fertilizer plant would be a good fit for this area, the advantages and disadvantages of having a fertilizer plant in the area, and potential roadblocks to the project.

The Town of Saco may want to consider applying to the Community Development Block Grant – Economic Development (CDBG-ED) Program and the Big Sky Trust Fund (BSTF) Program to conduct a feasibility study for a fertilizer plant. The study could answer questions about whether or not a plant is a viable option, the best location for a plant, the potential economic development opportunities that would be available to the community, the costs involved, possible sources of funding for the project, and whether or not the community would support an industry like this in the long term. The maximum amount of funds available from both the CDBG-ED and BSTF programs are $25,000 per program. The Town could apply to both programs at the same time, as long as some local match was shown in the applications.

**Recommended Resources:**
Debra Demarais, Section Manager
Community Development Block Grant – Economic Development Program
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MAIN TOPIC: Business Development

ISSUE: Fertilizer Plant  
During the session in Saco, it was mentioned that building a fertilizer plant might be possible, due to the natural resources found in the area. It was also stated this might be a ‘pipe dream’.

Recommendations:  
As stated above, the Town should consider conducting a feasibility study for a fertilizer plant. If the study proves that a fertilizer plant is feasible, and the Town determines it wants to pursue this idea, the Community Development Block Grant - Economic Development program could potentially be used to assist with funds for items such as land purchase, infrastructure needs like water/sewer lines and access roads, building construction, equipment purchases, working capital, and employee training needs. The maximum amount of funds that could be used for the project would be $400,000. These funds would either be in the form of a grant or a 2% loan to the business, depending on the final use of the funds.

Recommended Resources:  
Debra Demarais, Section Manager  
Community Development Block Grant – Economic Development Program  
Montana Department of Commerce  
301 S Park Ave  
Helena, MT 59601  
PH: 1-406-841-2736  
Email: ddemarais@mt.gov
ISSUE: Business Mentorship Program
During some of the listening sessions, it was mentioned that there was a need for the younger people to get involved and take over the operation of some of the businesses in town, as the current owners retire or desire to sell the business. It was suggested that perhaps a mentoring program could be started with the goal of teaching the younger generation about the business and what it would take to operate the business.

Recommendations:
One possible solution would be for the City of Malta to apply to the Community Development Block Grant - Economic Development and Big Sky Trust Fund programs for a planning grant to conduct a feasibility study into a mentorship program to determine how best to start and implement this type of program. The maximum amount of funds available for the study from both programs is $25,000 per program. The study could identify which businesses in the community might benefit from this type of program, if there would be sufficient interest from others in joining this type of program not only for the opportunity to potentially own a business one day but also is there enough interested people to spend the required time to serve as a mentor to someone. The study could also find potential sources of funds to help pay for the program.

Recommended Resources:
Debra Demarais, Section Manager
Community Development Block Grant – Economic Development Program
Montana Department of Commerce
301 S Park Ave
Helena, MT  59601
PH: 1-406-841-2736
Email: ddemarais@mt.gov
Website: http://cdbged.mt.gov/default.mcpx

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Big Sky Trust Fund Program
Montana Department of Commerce
301 S Park Ave
Helena, MT  59601
PH: 1-406-841-2744
Email: nfaroni@mt.gov
Website: http://bstf.mt.gov/default.mcpx

ISSUE: Re-use of Existing Structures
During several of the listening sessions, there was mention of several buildings around town that were either currently empty or soon would be empty. Citizens were wondering what, if anything could be done with the buildings. Two specific buildings that were mentioned were the National Guard Armory and the old Malta Auto.

Recommendations:
The City should consider applying to the Community Development Block Grant - Economic Development and Big Sky Trust Fund programs to complete a feasibility study on the buildings in question. This study could provide answers to questions such as potential uses or occupants for these buildings, what rehabilitation needs to be done to the buildings to make them once again useful to the community, any costs that would be involved in any rehabilitation that needed to be done, and possible sources of funds that could be used to establish new businesses in these buildings.

**Recommended Resources:**
Debra Demarais, Section Manager  
Community Development Block Grant – Economic Development Program  
Montana Department of Commerce  
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Helena, MT  59601  
PH: 1-406-841-2736  
Email: ddemarais@mt.gov  
Website: [http://cdbged.mt.gov/default.mcpx](http://cdbged.mt.gov/default.mcpx)

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Big Sky Trust Fund Program  
Montana Department of Commerce  
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Helena, MT  59601  
PH: 1-406-841-2744  
Email: nfaroni@mt.gov  
Website: [http://bstf.mt.gov/default.mcpx](http://bstf.mt.gov/default.mcpx)

**ISSUE: Marketing Phillips County**
During several of the listening sessions, the team heard about the desire to better market attractions in Phillips County. Several items were consistently mentioned, such as the Race Track and the abundant fishing and hunting opportunities. It was noted that both the race track and hunting opportunities bring people to the area, but that there was a desire to keep people in the area longer so they could discover other attractions that are offered.

**Recommendations:**
The Montana Department of Commerce has an Office of Tourism that can provide grants and technical assistance for local promotional activities through their Special Events Grant Program. The City should consider contacting the Office of Tourism to discuss their desire to promote some of the attractions available in Phillips County and obtain information and assistance on where to start, what costs might be involved, and possible sources of funds to help pay for the promotions.

**Recommended Resources:**
Victor Bjornberg, Program Manager  
Tourism Development Program  
Montana Department of Commerce  
301 S Park Ave
ISSUE: Multi-use Community Center

During several of the listening sessions, we heard that the community needed a multi-use community center. It was stated that the potential existed to use a building on the edge of town, but that the building was currently being used almost continually as a roping arena.

Recommendations:
The City could consider applying to the Community Development Block Grant - Economic Development and Big Sky Trust Fund programs for a feasibility study to determine if a multi-use community center would be possible. The study could answer questions such as the best location for the center, what different types of activities could be conducted in the building, how large the facility would have to be, and how to best pay for the building along with potential sources to help pay for the building.

Recommended Resources:
Debra Demarais, Section Manager
Community Development Block Grant – Economic Development Program
Montana Department of Commerce
301 S Park Ave
Helena, MT  59601
PH: 1-406-841-2736
Email: ddemarais@mt.gov
Website: http://cdbged.mt.gov/default.mcpx

Nancy Faroni, Section Manager
Big Sky Trust Fund Program
Montana Department of Commerce
301 S Park Ave
Helena, MT  59601
PH: 1-406-841-2744
Email: nfaroni@mt.gov
Website: http://bstf.mt.gov/default.mcpx

Conclusion:
Overall, the citizens of Saco, Malta, and Phillips County seemed very satisfied with their communities and their way of life. Much to my surprise, their ‘wish list’ of future projects did not include items such as big ‘box stores’ or shopping malls, but instead the items that were most often mentioned were a grain elevator and rental car lot.

The need for a grain elevator located closer to Saco and Malta was discussed at several of the sessions. We heard numerous times how inefficient it was to travel to the nearest grain elevator,
only to wait in line sometimes four hours for your turn to deliver your grain to the elevator and hope you made it in time for the grain to be loaded onto the train.

The other item that was consistently mentioned was the lack of a rental car service in Malta. We heard several times that potential visitors to the area, traveling on the Amtrack train would call and inquire as to the availability of rental cars to either travel to Billings or stay in the area to hunt. These potential visitors were directed to disembark in Havre, rather in Malta, as there were no vehicles available for rent in Malta.

While I don’t have an answer to these two very serious problems, I strongly encourage the citizens of Phillips County to continue to try to find ways to solve these two issues. Both of these items have the potential to create great economic development opportunities for the community and it is a shame to see this opportunity wasted.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the citizens of Philips County for the warm reception that was given to all the members of the Resource Team. You made us feel welcome in your communities and I am looking forward to returning to your part of the state.
Main Topic: Infrastructure

Issue: Water/Sewer
Clean water, available water, and sewer systems of capacity are essential to every community’s future.

Recommendation:
Use a TSEP or CDBG Planning grant to determine needs and priorities and once the planning study is finished use the findings to apply for funding assistance.

Resource:
The 2015 Biennium TSEP Infrastructure Planning Grant Application and Administration Guidelines are available at this link: 2015 TSEP Infrastructure Planning Grant Application and Administration Guidelines

Issue: Road Signs
As we all know, signage is key to communicating direction, assets, information, etc. Since funding for signage seems to be a problem and was also identified as the reason for not making progress, perhaps a 5 or 10 year plan to do this would set a course of action.

Recommendations:
Working closely with a signage company and Montana Department of Transportation, a schedule could become a part of the county road budgeting plan. The DES Coordinator could cite the concern as a Hazard or Threat in the THIRA and that could become the basis of future applications for assistance through a variety of granting agencies.

Resources:
Visit with leadership in other communities that have the signage you are seeking. Learn the ropes (and costs) from their experience.

Issue: Trails
Trails and/or bike paths are not just attractive to visitors; they also provide safety corridors, exercise opportunities, and improve a sense of community.

Recommendation/Resource:
These can be assisted by determining a direction and a method of funding with assistance from Samantha Rybicki of Vibrant Futures of Opportunity Link 406-265-3699. They have various materials and information from a workshop they presented in October, 2014.

**MAIN TOPIC: AGRICULTURE**

**Issue: Educate Consumers on Value of Agriculture**

Recommendation/Resource:
It has been said that when people do not have an information source, they fill in the blanks with negative inaccurate information. Work with the city and county to generate an educational chart as to where taxes come from and how they are spent. Montana Stockgrower’s have an excellent resource: Big Sky Boots – the Story of Montana Ranching that would be of help.

**Issue: Feasibility of Fertilizer Plant**

Words from Gary Brester Economist at MSU: “Fertilizer is a commodity and in order to compete one must be able to produce it at the lowest possible cost. To do so one must have sufficient size and scale. To use the newest technologies the capital investment needed per plant is $1 billion and the proposed plant in North Dakota is rumored to cost in the neighborhood of $1.5 billion.” While I do not have recommendations or resources for you on this issue, do consider: Can this be done on a small scale for local use and distribution in an economical way? Is there an entrepreneur and a method of doing this on a small scale?

**Issue: St. Mary’s Project – funding and multiple jurisdictional issues**

Start now and do it piece by piece. Do not attempt to eat the entire dinosaur in one bite.

Recommendation:
I like how we have tackled our North Central Montana Regional Water system. Lacking funding enough to build the entire system, and uncertain of the future, we have identified segments that can be built out as interim solutions that will provide interim water to the various entities that are most in need with small amounts of excess water from neighboring systems. The systems are built out as funding becomes available, with the entire system plan as the basis for the build.

Resources:
Larry Bonderud is the President of the Board and with his guidance the plan has evolved over the years and we are now serving three members and will be serving one more by the end of the year and another by the end of 2015. The St. Mary project could model this project. Contact information: Cheryl Curry - (406) 271-7237 Email: pcpconrad@3rivers.net; Larry Bonderud – (406) 434-5222 Email: larry@shelbymt.com

**Issues: Niche Crops, Green Houses, Value Added Ag, Organic, Local Grown**

Recommendation: Group these together for study
There is opportunity to study the feasibility of development of this niche market by applying for a planning grant to help fund a feasibility study. Typically a planning grant will require a 1/1 match
from the community. Your local economic development organization should be able to apply for this on behalf of the community.

Resources:
- Feasibility Study
  Growth Through Ag Cat 1 Economic Development Project-.$1/$1 match for up to $50,000 grant and up to $100,000 loan. Online application Due January 30 @2:00pm
  https://fundingmt.org/index.do

- Matching funds may have to be raised through donations from interested organizations in the community or by local community grants such as BNSF, NorthWestern Energy, Town Pump, and etc.

- The Montana Food and Agricultural Development Network helps Montanans innovate and grow businesses that produce and commercialize food, agricultural and renewable energy products and processes- creating wealth and jobs in our communities and on our farms and ranches. The centers support economic development by ensuring that more of the state's food, agricultural and energy dollars circulate in Montana. The network provides training, coaching and technical assistance, including: Product development, testing and analysis, regulatory compliance training, food processing, business planning and development, market research, business networking, access to financing, cooperative development, education on industry dynamics and technologies. The center may be able to provide additional assistance and research for the project. Check with Bear Paw Development Corporation- Food and Ag Development Center, Tiffany Melby 406-265-9226

**MAIN TOPIC: BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

**Issues: Re-use for Existing Structures – Armory, Empty Store Fronts, Old Malta Auto**

Recommendations/Resource:
The potential for Re-use of facilities can be studied with the use of a Preliminary Architectural Review (PAR) or other planning grant through the Montana Department of Commerce. Funding for 2015 should become available in the spring. Types of projects that would typically be eligible for CDBG planning grants are:

- Historic and architectural preservation studies and analysis, including downtown redevelopment and/or revitalization plans.

- Plans for the adaptive re-use and redevelopment of vacant industrial areas, including “brownfield” areas where reuse may be complicated due to the presence (or potential presence) of a hazardous substance, pollutant or contaminant, and any subsequent studies or plans for remediation required.
• Preparation of Preliminary Architectural Reports (PARs) for Housing or Public Facilities projects (other than drinking water, wastewater, storm water, or solid waste facilities) consistent with requirements set forth in either the CDBG Public Facilities Application Guidelines or the CDBG Housing Application Guidelines.

The Guidelines and application may be obtained by contacting Planning Bureau staff at DOCCDBG@mt.gov or by telephone at (406) 841-2770.

MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Issues: Senior Center /Food Bank Structure Needs

Recommendations/Resources:
As there is a strong existing partnership between the Senior Center and Food Bank, by grouping these together there may be opportunity to come up with a renovated structure or a new structure that can accommodate multiple uses. By using the statistics of income levels for the assisted groups, i.e.: Seniors, disabled, low income; there may be qualifying assistance grants available that target Low and Moderate Income groups for benefit.

Types of projects eligible for CDBG assistance include:
  o Community Facilities that are designed to provide services that are used predominately by LMI individuals. They may include county hospitals, nursing homes, senior centers, food banks, Head Start centers, mental health centers, neighborhood, or short-term transitional housing facilities.
  o Community facility projects designed to provide temporary, short-term, or transitional housing facilities such as emergency and homeless shelters, shelters from domestic violence, youth shelters, and shelters for the mentally ill, are eligible if owned or operated by local governments or private, non-profit corporations.

Non-profit entities may acquire title to public facilities, when such facilities are owned and/or operated by non-profit entities and are available for use by the general public during all normal hours of operation. For More information on CDBG grant funded projects check out:

Issue: Better Structure for Non-Profits to Find Funding/Support

Recommendation/Resources:
Contact the Montana Non-Profit Association for information and consider joining for information and training and general support on managing your non-profit organization.
http://www.mtnonprofit.org/GS/

Issues: Improvement and Upkeep of Parks; Parks and Recreation – Reactivate Programs

Recommendation/Resources:
These two issues should be grouped together and managed with the reactivation of the Parks and Recreation Department within the City of Malta. Consider the appointment of a new board and then hold a community meeting to set some goals for the coming year as to park improvements and some neighborhood recreation programs. Reach out to the young families and stay-at-home moms. Consider a community organization adopt each of the parks and do two clean up days per year and take on a planting or maintenance project in “their” park so it doesn’t all fall to city crew and city budget.
MAIN TOPIC: BUSINESS RECRUITMENT AND EXPANSION

ISSUE: VALUE ADDED AG OPPORTUNITIES

RECOMMENDATION:
The Agricultural Community of Malta on numerous occasions identified the need for producers to increase the ability to process and market value-added products. The agricultural food product would be raised, produced, and distributed in the local region in which the final product is marketed. Local distribution and sales of the raw agricultural food product results in increased value to the commodity, would expand the market, and increase financial returns.

- The community would be able to make decisions based on need by talking to neighbor ranches and assessing which needs have priority.
- Is the foundational goal to construct and maintain a plant packing facility?
- Would a co-op organization benefit the community?
- Study the feasibility and or requirements for a grain elevator?

A USDA Rural Development Planning Grant would facilitate economic planning activities to determine the viability of a value-added venture, and may include costs for an independent feasibility study for say a grain elevator and development of a marketing and business plan. A USDA Rural Development Working Capital Grant would contribute to the operational costs directly related to the processing and/or marketing of the value added product. Grants are awarded on a competitive basis, and are solicited through a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) each year.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES: USDA Rural Development Value Added Producer Grant (VAPG) and or Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt

ISSUE: BUSINESS RECRUITMENT

RECOMMENDATION: Malta recognizes the necessity to maintain the small rural community but still have the variety of businesses to allow the townspeople to frequent the local vendors like a car dealership. The community should have a business plan or a business committee that would create, document, and even negotiate the desires and direction of the town.
• The town could organize a committee of various individuals who could participate in the 1-year, 5-year and 10-year plan to give depth to the needs of the community. It would detail the infrastructure including water/waste water and storm water needs; medical competency; performing arts aspirations; vendor variety; education growth, etc.

• Hiring an individual to be the community events coordinator who collaborates with all organizations, businesses, and groups could create a unity amongst all peoples and consolidate efforts. This person could also be responsible for the tourism packets to be distributed; neighborhood information for new families locating in Malta; work with neighboring communities to support their events and include them in Malta. This position could also be the volunteer coordinator.

• Consider sending out a community survey to the town with questions that pertain to needs and desires of future businesses.

• Create a business organization where the area businesses form a group to encourage each other and inform the various merchants of the products offered. Networking and sharing information could be used to enhance the Chambers direction in future decisions.

USDA Rural Development Business program is utilized to improve, develop, or finance business, industry, and improve the economic and environmental climate in rural communities. The Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) program provides funding to facilitate development of small and emerging rural businesses. The Rural Economic Development Loan (REDL) provides zero interest loans to local utilities which pass through to local businesses for projects that will create and retain employment in rural areas.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES: The Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG)
www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt

ISSUE: FERTILIZER PLANT – SACO or MALTA

RECOMMENDATION: Malta and SACO recognize the availability of certain natural resources that could be used to produce fertilizer. USDA Rural Development Business program is utilized to improve, develop, or finance business, industry, and improve the economic and environmental climate in rural communities. The Rural Business Opportunity Grant (RBOG) program provides funding to facilitate feasibility studies and to identify and/or analyze business opportunities that will utilize local material and human resources.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES: The Rural Business Opportunity Grant (RBOG)
www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt

MAIN TOPIC: WORKFORCE

ISSUE: HOUSING
RECOMMENDATION: Affordable housing is a state wide issue. Malta has the inventory of numerous vacant and for sale properties but not the variety to meet family size and financial needs. The clean town, excellent recreational resources, and beautiful surroundings of the area will not entice families to move to the area if they can’t find and afford the housing. Financing for high end properties requires conventional financing. The very low, low and moderate income families can utilize the USDA Rural Development housing programs. The Direct loan does not have a down payment and is facilitated by a possible government subsidy. The Guaranteed loan is processed by a bank utilizing the RD program. Property can be new construction, existing, modular and new manufactured homes. There are income and loan limits to be considered.

The repair or rehab of existing properties can also be a burden on the elderly. The 504 Program can assist home owners repair items that are deemed health and safety hazards. This program has a loan and grant option. The home owner has to be 62 or older and living in the home to be eligible for up to a $7,500 grant; loans are available for qualifying applicants. This program can enable the home owner to get need repairs like a new roof; heating system, windows and deteriorating floor coverings repaired for the safety of the borrower.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES: www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt

MAIN TOPIC: NATURAL RESOURCES

ISSUE: RENEWABLE ENERGY RESOURCES: HYDO, WIND, SOLAR

RECOMMENDATION: Renewable energy and energy efficient projects can come in many varieties. Talking with a few of the Agricultural individuals the idea of utilizing the programs of many agencies to provide assistance to agricultural producers was not a new concept but not well none of the expanse in eligible technology.

The Rural Development Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) helps eligible applicants install renewable energy systems such as solar panels or anaerobic digesters, make energy efficacy improvements such as installing irrigation pumps or replacing ventilation systems, and conduct energy audits and feasibility studies.

This program has two areas: 1) Renewable Energy Projects that include biomass (bioenergy production or anaerobic digesters), geothermal (electric generation and direct use), hydrogen, solar, wind, hydroelectric, and flexible fuel pumps. 2) Energy Efficiency Improvements Projects include any energy savings measures to businesses or agricultural operations including but not limited to replacement of inefficient equipment, retrofitting, insulation or any recommend improvement identified in the energy assessment or energy audit.

The minimum Renewable Energy System Grant is $2,500 up to a maximum of 25% of eligible project costs or $500,000 whichever is less.

The minimum Energy Efficiency Improvement Grant request is $1,500 up to a maximum of 25% of eligible project costs or $250,000 whichever is less.
Projects can include converting to solar power to generate a livestock well pumping station; replacing boilers in a business, etc.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES:  [www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt)

MAIN TOPIC:  POLICE, FIRE, AND EMERGENCY

ISSUE:  LACK OF EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT

RECOMMENDATION:  Community Facilities Programs provide loans, grant and loan guarantees for essential community facilities in rural areas. Priority is given to health care, education and public safety projects. Typical projects are hospitals, health clinics, schools, fire houses, community centers and many other community based initiatives. They can also be used to fund new equipment such as vehicles, RADIOS, and specialty rescue/law enforcement tools.

    Community Facilities Direct and Guaranteed Loan Program
    Community Facilities Programs can make and guarantee loans to develop essential community facilities in rural areas and towns of up to 20,000 in population. Loans and guarantees are available to public entities such as municipalities, counties, parishes, boroughs, and special-purpose districts, as well as to non-profit corporations and tribal governments.

    Community Facilities Grants
    Community Facilities Programs provides grants to assist in the development of essential community facilities in rural areas and towns of up to 20,000 in population. Grants are authorized on a graduated scale. Applicants located in small communities with low populations and low incomes will receive a higher percentage of grants. Grants are available to public entities such as municipalities, counties, parishes, boroughs, and special-purpose districts, as well as non-profit corporations and tribal governments.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES:  [www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt)

MAIN TOPIC:  LOCAL SCHOOL

ISSUE:  REPAIR AND UPGRADE TO SCHOOLS, NEW ROOF FOR THE OLD GYM and NEW ROOF FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

RECOMMENDATION:  Community Facilities Programs provide loans, grant and loan guarantees for essential community facilities in rural areas. Priority is given to health care, education and public safety projects. Typical projects are hospitals, health clinics, schools, fire houses, community centers and many other community based initiatives. They can also be used to fund new equipment such as vehicles, radios, and specialty rescue/law enforcement tools.

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**RECOMMENDED RESOURCES:** [www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt)
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MAIN TOPIC: INFRASTRUCTURE

Issue: Road Signs
- Travelers do not easily see that there is more to Malta on the other side of the tracks. Signage is poor.
- Cost of signage considered high by the City in comparison when compared to other more pressing needs.
- Increased revenues from Highway 200 travelers desirable

Recommendations:
- While cost may seem high to some when there are other more pressing issues at hand, the overall value needs to be taken into account including value to the local businesses in their ability to attract new customers. Additional business attraction can equate to increased tax revenues overall which would compensate for the expenditure.
- Seek multiple estimates for signage.
- Prioritize signage needs beginning with signs that will be located to best attract travelers to the charms of the rest of Malta and the advantage in stopping. Address those signs first that have the best chance of providing optimal success.
- Help market and promote the ‘new’ hot springs resort at Sleeping Buffalo and put rack cards of things to do and see in Malta or Saco at the resort. Use the Tourism Region’s resources for help paying for the rack cards.

Issue: Trails
A concerted effort has been made by a limited number of people to create hiking trails that are attractive and useful but more are needed and the cost is high.

Recommendations:
- Host several community walking trail activities that encourage area residents to enjoy & appreciate the existing trails as Linear Parks. Use this opportunity to engage more people in the design and promotion of these trails.
- Consider designing Walking Adventures For Road Weary Travelers: “Are your buns becoming stale from too many hours on the highway?—Stop and experience the walking adventure trail system of Malta!” featuring history, culture, scenery or even holiday specials. Build on the theme that has already been achieved with the gorgeous walking trail behind the museums along the scenic river flowing past town.
- Promote the idea via billboards and/or rack cards
- Give a gift of a Malta logoed rubber band pistol good for shooting mosquitos while walking—kids will love it. Perhaps Malta logoed insect repellent wipes for an adult gift or tourist souvenir.

**Recommended Resources:**
- Russell Country to help pay for billboard and rack cards
- Bear Paw Development Corp.  [http://www.bearpaw.org/](http://www.bearpaw.org/)

**Issue: Rental Housing**
Identified lack of rental housing while limited but adequate available housing for purchase. Until recent years, available housing was relatively stable, however in recent years, there has been an influx of young families moving to or back to the area (62 young families in a community of 1700) as well as increased border patrol officers and transitional housing needs have grown.

**Recommendation:**
Hospitals, law enforcements, school systems work together to build transitional housing units where each entity commits to a defined number of units. For instance, the school commits to four of the apartments for teachers, the hospital commits to six of the units for hospital employees, etc.

**Issues: EMT/FIRE**
- HazMat/First Responder Training
- Updated communications equipment
- Vehicle storage space/ambulance barn

**Recommendations:**
Prioritize needs – such as PPE equipment, ambulance, barn for fire truck that includes training room, etc.

**Resources:**
Visit with Bear Paw Development Corporation about these resources:
- Homeland Security Grants
- BNSF
- MDU Resource Group Foundation (includes Fidelity Exploration) is a good resource for this type of project

**MAIN TOPIC: AGRICULTURE**

**ISSUE: Educate consumer on value of agriculture**

**Recommendations/Resources:**
There are many presentations through the Extension Service that are exceptional; engage FFA; 4-H; hold educational presentations during the county fair. Consider holding community discussion meetings and host an AG tour.
**ISSUE: Feasibility of grain elevator**

**Recommendations:**
Engage local coops and partners including all area grain producers. Ask the hard questions such as are there enough grains produced to sustain a 100+ car train? What is the cost of building out the elevators vs Return on Investment? As you know, without the cooperation of BNSF the elevator is a mute issue. BNSF must be shown the value of this added entity for BNSF’s efforts to increase multiple product (Manifest Trains) in Montana vs the single product (Unit Trains of ND).

Initiate a Feasibility Study (see below)

**ISSUE: Feasibility of Fertilizer Plant**
Utilizing the ready availability of natural gas and nitrogen makes this a very interesting project that warrants identifying necessary partners and a feasibility study.

**Recommendations:**
Partners should include Montana Dakota Utilities Resource Group that includes Fidelity Exploration; Montana Department of Agriculture; Montana State University Research resources; USDA Rural Development; Value-Added Agriculture Development Center; coops such as Milk River Coop

Initiate a feasibility study that includes these components:
1) Current production and the use of produced products: consumption patterns and trends; new uses for products; regional consumption patterns; markets; discuss competitive advantage – what makes the fertilizer more desirable or more saleable than that of competitors?
2) Production feasibility – production site – does the potential site have the desired characteristics and available utilities, transportation facilities, etc., for the proposed production facility?
   Utilities – use and availability, costs, local competition; water & sewage power & fuel
3) Transportation requirements including road service to the site; rail
4) Labor availability – utilize transportation van going out within 50 miles of the facility to bring in potential farm family laborers and deliver them back home. Offer medical benefits. Work with a housing pool (refer to housing section)
5) Market feasibility
6) Technical Feasibility
7) Financial Analysis – the purpose is to indicate the venture’s potential and timetable for financial viability and can serve as an operating plan for financial management of the project.
8) Management Feasibility
9) Economic Impact of the Project
10) Identify any limits or constraints
11) Create a Business Plan

**ISSUE: Explore niche market crops, I.E., Spinach and Asparagus**

**Recommendations/Resources:**
Utilize the resources available at the USDA Ag Research Center in Sidney and Northern Ag Research Center in Havre regarding specialty crops and rotational crops. The Ag Research Centers have been making strong efforts to test and develop specialty crops and rotational crops that work in our climate. Utilize the Specialty Crop Grant for a project that introduces a viable crop into the area.

**ISSUE: Greenhouses/Value Added Ag**

**Recommendations/Resources:**
Utilize USDA Value Added grant – I’ve written one for $300,000 and was awarded it so I am familiar with the program. Department of Ag Specialty Crop Grant has received additional funding. See list of resources below.

**Recommended Resources:**
RAILROAD
Bryan Reilly
Regional Manager Economic Development MT
BNSF Railway Company
1555 Campus Way, Suite 102
Billings, MT 59102
406-256-4038
Bryan.reilly@bnsf.com

Tony Golden
Economic Development Specialist
Jones Lang LaSalle
1555 Campus Way
Billings, MT 59102
406-256-4086
312-821-6589
406-360-6364 cell
tony.golden@bnsf.comwww.joneslanglasalle.com

HOUSING:
Gus Byrom
Program Manager – Housing & Public Facilities
Community Development Block Grant Program
gbyrom@mt.gov
406-841-2777
301 S. Park Ave
PO Box 200523
Helena, MT 59620-0523
406-841-27701
http://comdev.mt.gov
Debra Demarais
Section Manager
Community Development Block Grant – Economic Development
BUSINESS RESOURCES DIVISION
ddmaraais@mt.gov
406-841-2736

Montana Department of Commerce
Maureen Martin
Bureau Chief
HUD Section 8 Program Home Program
maureenm@mt.gov
http://housing.mt.gov
301 S Park ave, Ste 240
PO Box 200545
Helena, MT  59620-0545
406-841-2826

Erik Amundson
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Helena Field Office Director
406-447-1488
Erik.amundson@hud.gov

STATE OF MONTANA PARTNERS

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Governor’s Office of Economic Development
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406-444-5634

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STG Business Development Specialist
406-841-2250
Arobinson3@mt.gov

Jennifer H. HOlson
Community Grants Bureau Chief
Community Development Division
jeolson@mt.gov
MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

ISSUE: Daycare and Daycare 24/7

Recommendations/Resource:
From the MonDak Economic Development Team comes this idea: coop daycare. A town in North Dakota that is not in the range of the Bakken has created a coop daycare where several business went together to establish and operate a daycare facility. They have developed a prototype that they are willing to share. Also, contact Montana Cooperative Development Corp for Montana program support.

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MAIN TOPIC: BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

Issue: Business Mentor Program
There are a handful of online and national resources aimed at helping communities starting business mentoring programs - and some of those resources are already available in the Malta area (such as SCORE) - but to provide something meaningful for Malta businesses I think you’re going to have to create your own. In this section I explain what we’ve done with the Bozeman BEAR team, which has turned into a de facto business mentor program. I recommend reaching out to your local Job Service and BEAR team and seeing if they would be willing and interested in implementing one of these two models; if they aren’t, don’t let that stop you! This is something you can create yourself as long as you have a third party willing to facilitate introductions.

Bozeman Business Expansion and Retention (BEAR) – An Example
The Bozeman BEAR team’s business mentor model was created through trial and error over a three year period. The normal BEAR model is to have a small group of core volunteers primarily from the business community who work with a coordinator (most often someone at Job Service, the Small Business Development Center, or a local economic development organization) to visit with local businesses and provide them with feedback and connect them with resources. In Bozeman, we expanded on this general model and began consciously building a team three years ago whose individuals spanned the majority of business needs we were running across: HR, accounting, management, finances, strategy, marketing, sales, web presence, manufacturing, etc. The nature of Bozeman’s economy lent itself to this easily - many consultants live in Bozeman and many of them have been willing to become a part of the BEAR team as ad hoc consultants.

At the center of this team is the BEAR team coordinator. I have included the “Bozeman BEAR operating manual” describing the process in detail below; to briefly summarize here, the BEAR coordinator is responsible for interviewing local businesses and then introducing the businesses to team members who can help them with their needs. Individuals on the BEAR team have all signed non-disclosure statements and agreed to provide two hours at no charge to BEAR clients; additionally, they have agreed to represent their industries during these meetings rather than their individual businesses and to not use the consultations as a way to further their own business. This does happen occasionally but it is not the goal of the program, and it is the BEAR coordinator’s job to ensure that everyone is clear about this.

As with all other BEAR teams around the state, the Bozeman BEAR team also sponsors local businesses in applying for training funds with the Incumbent Worker Training Program at the Department of Labor in Helena. It is important to note that approximately 2/3 of the training
dollars the Bozeman BEAR team helps businesses get help fund customized training on specific business needs. These trainings are almost always one-on-one coaching engagements with a trainer or coach who works directly with the business on their needs. A few examples:

- A small retail business had grown around 20% for the past seven years. Their expenses had also grown exactly 20% every year. The owner of the company said that, while she was delighted that growth had taken off, she wasn’t making any more money but was, instead, only working hard. The BEAR team connected her with a Chief Financial Officer (CFO) who sat down with her for an afternoon and worked through the past several years worth of profit and loss statements, cash flow statements, etc. The meeting was a success and the business owner wanted to work further with the CFO. The BEAR team helped the CFO write a training plan called “CFO Bootcamp” and then helped the small business get $1,500 in IWT funds to work further with the CFO.

- A small moving company consisting of one owner needed to hire seven permanent employees out of the pool of on-call employees he normally used. The owner had never managed anyone before, much less seven new hires all at once. The BEAR team introduced the owner to a management consultant who met with the owner for several hours one morning. Again, the meeting was a success, so the BEAR team helped the business owner get $2,000 to work with the management coach over ensuing three months while the seven new employees came on board.

- A solo business owner initially expressed interest in getting training dollars to learn skills around social media marketing. After the BEAR interview, the business owner expressed an interest in meeting with a coach who could help her understand basic business strategy, how to drop problem clients, how to be clear about expectations with new clients, how to manage her time and multiple projects, how to stay organized, etc. The BEAR team introduced her to a coach and then sponsored her in getting $2,000 to work with the coach one-on-one over a several month period.

There are many other examples like this, but this small handful gives a good overview of how it works. The program is founded on volunteer time, and much of the work of the BEAR coordinator has been a) building the team; b) developing strong trust with the team and building camaraderie among the team so that they work together to help clients on a volunteer basis instead of competing with teammates. It also means being able to listen carefully to the needs of business owners, understand how the team (or, as is increasingly the case, other BEAR clients) might help them, and then articulate a basic action plan for the client so that they can see a path forward.

I provide this basic summary of the Bozeman BEAR team so that you can see it as one model. Given the realities you face in Malta, this will almost certainly need to be modified, and that’s going to be something you simply have to figure out as you move forward. I do think that there should be some kind of central coordinator who a) understands the needs of local businesses (usually through an interview process), b) understands the skill sets of community members, and c) can develop enough trust to connect one with the other.

**Recommendations for PhillCo**

If PhillCo ED or other leaders in the Malta community are interested in pursuing this, I’d recommend the following:
• Survey local businesses to gather a basic inventory of both needs and skills. Malta is a small enough community that you should be able to communicate what you’re doing and reach local businesses fairly easily. When beginning the interview process, I would expect to hear many of the same needs; I would encourage you to go as deep as you can in these interviews, because often the initial need is not the greatest one. Most businesses will talk to you about the need to increase sales; once you dig in, however, you often find that what they really need is help with business efficiencies, better understanding their finances, creating better organizational systems, hiring and managing good people, or simply someone to bounce their strategy off of. Being able to do this well takes a lot of practice and a lot of trust, but it will allow you to truly help the businesses if you can get there.

• Work closely with Bear Paw Development as well as the local Job Service before, during, and after initiating this process. Both of these organizations have significant resources and capacity and, given that you’re in their service area, should be able to provide you with solid support.

• Keep in mind that the easier part of this process is interviewing businesses and assessing needs. The challenging part will be to then connect those businesses with resources that can help them. I’d recommend beginning many of your interviews by clearly explaining what you’re doing and asking if they would be willing to meet with businesses to provide services as well as get help themselves. Many businesses are willing to do this on an occasional basis and your local business community is going to provide the deepest and most quickly-accessed resources. I’d also recommend being clear with the local Job Service and with Bear Paw that you would like their help in finding resources and use what they have as much as you can.

• Consider pulling together small groups of business leaders in peer learning sessions. These can be challenging in a small town because everyone knows everyone else and often people don’t like to share, but if you can bring together businesses that don’t compete and provide them with a safe space in which to open up, many of them will solve their own problems together.

• Keep in mind that the primary role of the facilitator is just that - to facilitate. If you’ve got insight on a specific business challenge feel free to help them brainstorm, but don’t get lost in this. Running a business mentor/peer mentor program means that most of your time will be spent keeping all the trains running on time, not providing business counseling yourself. Be clear with the businesses that this is what you’re trying to do and don’t get lost too much in the weeds. Your job is to manage the connections and make introductions, not provide business counseling.

• Work with the local Job Service (as well as Bear Paw if appropriate) to access training dollars that can help with foundational business needs, not just with industry-specific certifications. Many business owners know plenty about their specific industry and how to work “in” the business; its working “on” the business that is often a big challenge. Your job as business mentor coordinator is to help business owners learn how to work “on” the business better. If you keep the focus here, then you will find creative solutions for people that often involve connecting people across widely-varied industries but who share the same business challenge when viewed from above.
I’ve attached two documents for the Bozeman BEAR team that will hopefully provide you with some perspective in putting something like this together. Please feel free to reach out to me as well if you want to talk through any challenges or ideas.

**MAIN TOPIC: BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT ISSUES**

**Issue: Exploring new partnerships (PhillCo, Job Service, Bear Paw)**

There is significant opportunity for partnership among the various resource providers working in and around Malta. In our time there we were made aware of Phillco ED, Bear Paw ED (in Havre), Job Service (in Glasgow), and Triangle Communications. All of these providers work in different ways in the larger space of economic and community development and there is very real opportunity to collaborate and cooperate.

While we didn’t spend any time evaluating how any of these resource providers work together, I did want to offer some thoughts addressing the critical need for all of these players to be conscious and strategic about how they collaborate. Specifically, I want to address this section to Phillco. Again, I fully admit that this might be somewhat presumptuous and out of turn to offer this given that this was not the topic of any of the sessions, but hopefully you can get something out of it.

In my perspective, both Bear Paw Development and the Glasgow Job Service are the more established of all of the resource providers. Both of these organizations provide solid economic development services to Malta and Phillips County. There is opportunity here for Phillco in two specific ways: first, neither of these organizations are based on Malta, operating out of Havre and Glasgow respectively. Phillco is the main game in town, even if they are smaller and less established. Second, and this is not meant as any sort of slight, it appears that both Bear Paw and Glasgow Job Service offer more traditional economic development services (i.e., grants, loans, business counseling, and workforce development services), thus leaving space for innovation at the edges. Phillco and Malta are on the fringe, both geographically and from an economic development industry perspective, and that gives them opportunities not always available to more established players.

There are a lot of ways to approach this. For the sake of time and space here in this report, I want to share one strategy that I’ve used myself and which I’ve seen work quite well for many businesses we’ve worked with. When you’re essentially the new kid on the block and trying to figure out which way to go and how best to work with your target client group, it can often be helpful to go to the more established players (in this case, Bear Paw and Job Service) that already touch your target market and offer to provide something that’s related but different. You want to add value to the more established players, and being an organization that’s on the edges gives you more freedom to do that.

The challenge, of course, is figuring out what role you want to play and what that “different, added-value” thing is. As an example, the Bozeman BEAR team has been able to very successfully partner with some of the more established ED organizations in town by taking things off of their plate. Specifically, the more traditional economic development organizations in Bozeman provide a) loans, and b) business counseling related to the loans that have been granted. As the less established program/organization in town, it has been harder for us to find clients because they more naturally gravitate towards the organizations they’ve always heard of. We have been able to
successfully partner with the established ED organizations in town by instead going to them and, initially, referring a lot of clients to them, and then, providing services to their clients that go beyond core business needs: management, HR, social media, etc. This has been a win/win for everyone: the traditional economic development organizations can pass off clients that have needs going beyond their primary mission; the clients work with multiple people who provide them with well-rounded advice; and the Bozeman BEAR team gets access to clients it wouldn’t normally get.

When thinking about how you might go about this, what continues to occur to me is that you are right next door to the one of the oldest, most established, and most successful economic development organization in the state (Bear Paw). Malta and Phillips County is a long drive from Havre, and one of the effective and strategic things you might do is help be the “boots on the ground” for Bear Paw (or Job Service, for that matter). Help them be successful in a far-flung portion of their service area, become a trusted partner by helping the bigger player succeed, and continue to establish yourself as an effective player in the region.

There are several things you have to remember when you’re building partnerships. A few of them are: while the results are often beyond anything any one organization can accomplish, collaboration is almost always harder to do than simply going it your own way. This holds especially true when you’re an established organization that’s historically been very successful. If you’ve been successful for years, this new partnership often just looks like additional work to the more established party. In my opinion, if PhillCo is going to successfully build partnerships with the other players in the region it needs to recognize that collaboration is often hard enough that the established player doesn’t really need or want to do it. Please keep in mind that this is not based on any real knowledge of either Bear Paw or the Job Service; this is simply a core tenet of organizational theory as well as some thing I’ve experienced myself. You’re going to need to find out not only how you can help your community, but also how you’re going to help those established players. To say the same thing another way: if you approach Bear Paw or Job Service and ask them to partner with you, you may or may not get it because they may or may not need to partner with you. If you go to them and offer to solve a problem for them, you’ll get there faster.

**MAIN TOPIC: BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT ISSUES**

**Issue: Creative Financing**

Financing is often a big challenge for small businesses, but the options available are beginning to expand beyond the traditional finance and banking industry. I’m going to talk about two different options in the crowdfunding world that could provide interesting possibilities in Malta.

Both of these platforms operate using the same basic idea: anyone with an idea can enter it onto the website and potentially be funded from anyone in micro amounts from around the world. Everything works through Pay Pal and is entirely secure. It is truly a fascinating model because many of the traditional ways of lending and receiving money are not followed: primarily, a third party (i.e., the bank) is skipped, allowing individuals to give money directly to individuals. If you can convince someone that you’ve got a great idea, you just might raise the money.

The first example, Kiva Zip is an online lending platform ([https://zip.kiva.org](https://zip.kiva.org)) that allows people to raise micro loans (up to $5,000 for non-agricultural businesses and up to $10,000 for agricultural
businesses). These are not big loans by any stretch of the imagination, but with terms of 0% interest for two years they can help out the right business with the right need. The Bozeman BEAR team has successfully helped three businesses get loans through Kiva Zip (two $5,000 loans and one $2,500 loan). These were loans that significantly helped out the three businesses and kept them from putting these amounts on their credit cards for significantly more interest.

The second example is Kickstarter. Like Kiva Zip, Kickstarter is an online lending platform that has no limits on fundraising for a project and which has a much wider variety of projects one can choose from: many people on Kickstarter have a business idea but can’t get a traditional loan; other people on Kickstarter are trying to put together a project like a book or record an album. While we haven’t been directly involved in a Kickstarter Project, we have worked with two different businesses who have successfully gotten money through the platform: the first business asked for $10,000 to build a particular product and ultimately raised $120,000; the second business asked for $25,000 and successfully raised $75,000. This money was used for pre-orders of the product and ultimately launched both of these businesses successfully.

There are numerous other online lending platforms out there but these are two I’m quite familiar with and have seen used with very real success.

**MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ISSUES**

**Issue: Re-invigorating the Community Foundation**

At every session, members of the town talked about the strong sense of caring that anchored the community. From the volunteers working to connect trail corridors to the Boys and Girls club providing kids with things to do after school, the nonprofits in Malta provide very real value. Additionally, there is a strong sense of community and volunteerism throughout the town – when something needs to get done, people pitch in. They care.

The issue that began coming to light during the listening sessions is that there is no central hub for the nonprofits and the various community efforts that strengthen the town. While Philco ED provides organizing capacity for the town’s businesses and economic development efforts, there does not seem to be a similar effort in the nonprofit and civic sector. In a community as small as Malta, it may seem daunting to start up yet another organization, but it may be worth exploring how the nonprofit and civic sector can best be organized to ensure they are working as efficiently as possible given the resources (i.e., volunteer energy, time, ideas, and money) the town has to offer.

**Recommendations:**

Malta has a community foundation that is currently inactive. I recommend taking the time to think through whether or not this organization should be revived given the number of nonprofits in town and the lack of an organizer for this sector. Historically, community foundations have primarily served as a collection of funds and endowments from community members that can be disbursed to various nonprofits or causes. While this continues to be one of the core offerings, community foundations today are much more versatile.

Given the conversations we had during the MEDA assessment, I believe this may be a good time to think about the future role of the community foundation in Malta. The Malta Community
Foundation has the ability to serve as a leader for the nonprofit community. This might include coordinating the needs of nonprofits (and the “asks” that go along with these) with the needs of local businesses. It might also mean organizing trainings or other learning opportunities for local nonprofits. It might also mean stepping outside the bounds of the normal work for a community foundation and working alongside PhillCo ED to help the business community. Community Foundations around the state and the country are engaging in vibrant and versatile work and the people of Malta should consider whether some of these models might work in their town.

Please note that this section on the Community Foundation also has ideas that apply to the “Better Structure for non-profits to find funding/support” and “New Leaders/Community Leaders” sections.

**Recommended Resources:**
One of the most interesting and innovative reports about the possibilities around community foundations come from the Monitor Institute. Check out their five-part report titled “What’s Next for Community Philanthropy at:

http://monitorinstitute.com/what-we-think/#

I’ll let you get into the weeds on these reports if you’re interested, but I want to sum up some of the big ideas that have stuck for me (and which we’re using in Bozeman with the recently-revived Bozeman Area Community Foundation).

**Challenge your orthodoxies:**
- Are donors to community foundations really ultra-wealthy? Or can anyone be a philanthropist? What would this actually look like?
- Does a community foundation only work in the nonprofit world? Or can it be part of business development issues along with PhillCo?
- Is there a way to make money from your services even though you’re a nonprofit?
- Is the best role of the foundation really to work with donors and make grants? Or is there space for something else, i.e., leadership development, organizing, etc?

**Think about the big key strategy questions (From Roger Martin’s Book “Playing to Win: How Strategy Really Works”):**
- What space do you want to occupy? What role do you want to play?
- Given that, what specifically do you need to do to succeed?
- Given that, what do you specifically need to be good at?
- Given that, what do you need to manage on any given day?

**Think hard about the roles you play and the space you occupy:**
- What is your core role? Organizer? Grant maker? Relationships with donors? Leadership development in the community?
- Given that, what are the adjacent roles you play with all the other players in the community, nonprofit, and civic space?
- What are your aspirational roles – the roles you want to play but can’t just yet?
- What roles are out of bounds that you’ll never take on?
This is all high-level stuff, but it’s worth taking the time to look through these resources and really consider if there’s a role the community foundation can play in Malta given your day-to-day realities. The Montana Community Foundation is a wealth of resources and can be found at http://www.mtcf.org/index.html; likewise, the Bozeman Area Community Foundation is doing a lot of fresh new things because they have only recently hired a full-time staff and begun professionalizing after a decade of being volunteer-only. Info on BACF can be found at http://www.bozemanfoundation.org/.
I. What is Bozeman BEAR?
Bozeman BEAR is a cooperative partnership of local economic, community and workforce development organizations and private sector resource providers. Our common purpose is to build, support and grow local companies while enhancing our business climate. Our BEAR Team is comprised of a network of businesses, professionals, training providers, local government, and financial networks, and as a team, we come together to assess and promote local business health and our local economy.
Bozeman BEAR provides two primary services to its clients:

1) Connections with its volunteer mentor network and to other service providers in the community
2) Access to Incumbent Worker Training Grants through the Department of Labor

II. The Three Components of BEAR
Volunteers can engage with the BEAR program on three levels

- The Interview Team
  The interview team consists of a subset of the larger team. All interviews are led by the director; a second volunteer always attends each interview.

- The Assessment Team
  The Assessment Team meets twice a month and reviews client reports written by the director. The assessment team provides additional ideas to be taken back to the client.

- The Resource Providers
  The Resource Providers include the entire BEAR team. Resource providers (or mentors) all sign non-disclosure statements and commit to up to two hours of no-charge help for clients.

BEAR team members may get involved with any and all of the above.

III. Bozeman BEAR Rules of Thumb
1. Overview of the team. The Bozeman BEAR team consists of the director, partner organizations (Prospera, Job Service, NRMEDD, SBDC, Gallatin County, and the City of Bozeman ED office), and numerous volunteers. All private sector volunteers have signed non-disclosure statements as well as a commitment to provide up to two hours at no charge to clients.

2. Getting involved. There are three levels at which volunteers can engage with the BEAR program: attending interviews with the director; attending assessment team meetings twice a month; being an on-call mentor that helps businesses when the need arises and when the volunteer has time.
3. **Interviewing:** The director leads all interviews. As soon as the interview is scheduled, the director sends an email out to the interview team and asks for someone to attend with him/her. First come/first served. The interview is generally a free-flowing affair, with the client talking about what’s important. Big topics that need to be covered include:
   a. **Tell us about the business**
   b. **Tell us about the industry**
   c. **What are your big challenges**
   d. **What’s the home run (i.e., what’s your vision for this business)**

4. **Working with a client.** Our goal is to connect clients to mentors as quickly and efficiently as possible.
   a. If an obvious mentor connection comes up during the interview, we broker the introduction as soon as possible.
   b. After the meeting, send an email to the client with the “Bare bones BEAR strategy” laying out the ideas that have come up during the interview.
   c. The client generally decides on the order of things. If they want to move ASAP on introductions, then we move ASAP. If they need to wait, we work with them on their schedule.

5. **The assessment team**
   a. Assessment team meetings are held twice a month (2nd and 4th Thursday of each month). The director sends out an email on Monday reminding the team of the upcoming meeting, listing the clients to be discussed and their big needs (accounting, HR, etc), and asking who will attend. Only those team members who respond with confirmation of their attendance get the client reports.
   b. The director writes up all client reports for the assessment team. Client reports are sent out at least one and ideally two days before the meeting. The report generally is a page long and covers the highlights of the interview. The write up needs to include the expressed needs and anything that’s been done thus far with the client.
   c. The director also lists out other various BEAR activity that’s happened since the last meeting (training grants applied for and/or received, etc.).
   d. Annual activity is also listed (number of clients, number of brokered connections, amount of training dollars received).
   e. During assessment team meetings, the second interviewer usually leads the discussion with the director providing commentary and clarification. This gets everyone involved and keep the director from droning on.
   f. After the assessment team meeting, the director reaches back out to the client with any additional suggestions that are added on to the bare bones BEAR strategy.

6. **Brokering connections**

   Introductions flow through the director. If a client is interested in talking with a specific team member about something (and this is almost always a connection suggested by the director), then
the director reaches out to the team member, describes the client and the request, and makes sure
the team member can do it. The director then sends an email to both client and team member
introducing them and laying out the basics of the client’s need. The director then follows up with
both team member and client after a week or two to make sure the connection was made and the
meeting satisfactory.

BEAR team members who meet with clients agree to do so as representatives of their industry.
They are not marketing their services. At times the connections made through the BEAR program
lead to a team member getting hired; when this happens, the client and mentor move beyond the
BEAR program into their own relationship.

Everyone walks a fine line here. On the one hand, they need to respect the fact that their
volunteers are giving their services away for free. On the other hand, clients need to feel safe. The
best way to handle this is just to stress to the client that they are not obligated to hire the team
member but that they are certainly welcome to do so, and to ensure that team members
understand the nature of their work with clients. This comes down to strong personal relationships
between the director and all team members.

7. Keeping track of clients and activities

This has been done a few different ways. In the early days, there was no follow up. Once we got
our act together, the director followed up on a one month, three months, six month, 12 month
schedule. This proved to be onerous and unnecessary, so now the director keeps a running list of
all clients under three headings: “hot”, “warm”, and “cold”.

Hot clients are ones we need to pay attention to right now. Warm clients are ones we scan every
few months and reach out to. Cold clients are ones we are entirely done with.

8. Using Executive Pulse

Executive Pulse is the BEAR team’s contact management software that we receive through MEDA.
It isn’t perfect but it works. The following info is critical:

- Client company and contact
- Retention survey (fill this out as best you can based on the interview conducted)
- The bare bones BEAR strategy (filed as a journal entry)
- The client report given to the BEAR team (filed as a journal entry)
- Any brokered connections (filed as action items)
- Any important emails between the director and client (not every email, but possibly ones
  that provide important updates. Use your discretion).
VI. Resource Provider Agreements

A. BEAR COMMITTEE MEMBER CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

I, __________________________ as a member of the Bozeman BEAR Team (hereinafter referred to as “BEAR”) agree to the following for the purpose of maintaining confidentiality of information given to me in my capacity as a BEAR Team member.

1. All charts, notes, interview checklists, extranet database information, and other written material concerning BEAR clients will be kept in confidential files and not left in a place visible to other individuals.
2. All discussions regarding BEAR clients will be held in staff offices or other private areas which will assure the confidentiality of the discussion.
3. Under no circumstances will privileged information concerning BEAR clients be discussed with co-workers, family, friends and/or other people outside the BEAR program.
4. For privileged information, written or verbal, to be shared with other governmental agencies or professionals, a written authorization must first be obtained from the BEAR client.
5. Access to BEAR client files is limited to members of the BEAR Executive Committee. Access to BEAR client files by anyone else must be approved by the BEAR Administrative Director.
6. Under no circumstances will privileged information concerning confidential committee meetings be discussed with co-workers, family, friends and/or other people outside the BEAR program.
7. All BEAR Team members will conduct themselves in a professional manner to ensure the highest degree of client confidence, trust and satisfaction in our BEAR program.

VIOLATION OF THIS CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT WILL RESULT IN TERMINATION OF YOUR BEAR COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT.

I have read, acknowledge and agree to the above conditions.

By: __________________________ Date: __________________
(Signature of BEAR Committee Member)

Print Name: __________________________
C. BEAR RESOURCE PROVIDER GUIDELINES & EXPECTATIONS
On behalf of the BEAR program, we would like to thank you for your participation, and for volunteering to be a resource provider to BEAR clients. We are a caring and dedicated group of professionals willing to give our time to promote and sustain the health and success of area businesses. It is our goal to thank all area businesses for doing business in Bozeman and Gallatin County and to get to know the business owners and their businesses. Through this process we are able to identify current needs and opportunities, and send resources to them.

As a Resource Provider for the BEAR program, you are required to adhere to professional standards when assisting BEAR clients. This includes:

1. You must agree to provide at one consultation for free. This is a volunteer program. You will not be paid for your services. However, after the initial consultation, it is between you and the business owner to negotiate price and service(s), if the business owner decides to continue with your service(s). Businesses are not required to do so.

2. You must not solicit business from the client at any time. If a business relationship develops after the first session, it must be initiated by the client. If a business relationship develops after the initial consultation, then the terms are negotiated independent of BEAR.

3. You must interact with a business as a representative of your industry and expertise, not as a representative of your employer/business.

4. All activity must be kept confidential.

When a resource referral is sent to you, you agree to contact the business owner within 72 hours. If that is not possible, please contact your BEAR Resource Coordinator (Warren Vaughan), in order to make other arrangements. We want our BEAR clients to feel they are getting preferential priority treatment from the BEAR program. Please be sure to inform the business owner that you are there as a Resource Provider on behalf of the BEAR program.

You are responsible for updating the BEAR coordinator with a summary of any client meetings. Please call Warren Vaughan at (406)582-3130 for any assistance you may need.

By signing this agreement, you acknowledge and agree that all information regarding the BEAR client businesses is strictly confidential.

Resource Provider: ________________________________________________________(Please print)

Signature: ________________________________________________________________

Mailing Address: __________________________________________________________

Email Address: ____________________________@__________________________

Phone: (406): ____________________________
Bozeman BEAR Strategic Plan - 2014

This simple document is the Bozeman BEAR Strategic Plan for 2014. It is not an operations plan nor does it lay out goals and objectives in the traditional way. Instead, it asks seven big questions:

1) What’s our winning aspiration? What’s our reason for existing as a program and an organization?
2) Where will we play? What space will we occupy in the economic development landscape here in Bozeman and the Gallatin Valley?
3) How will we win on our chosen playing field?
4) What do we need to be good at in order to win?
5) How do we manage it all?
6) What assumptions are we making with all of this?
7) How do we know we’re winning?

The answers to these questions set the Bozeman BEAR team in a strategic direction. It identifies where we want to play and what we need to do to actually succeed. It lays out basic metrics. It is a simple document but it guides our work on the two fronts where have chosen to play: with the clients we hope to help and with the team of volunteers that have chosen to be a part of it all. This document will certainly change as our work evolves.

Bozeman BEAR – What’s Our Winning Aspiration?

The BEAR team is a network of private sector volunteers and public sector entities that support economic development and business assistance opportunities throughout Gallatin County.

Our reason for being is to help businesses in Bozeman and the Gallatin Valley grow and thrive.

Specifically:

1) We aspire to be an essential broker between our clients and the resources that can help them get to the next level. Specifically, these resources include mentors, training dollars, and occasionally business opportunities and clients.

2) We aspire to build a trusted team of business advisors that has a lot of fun, helps local businesses, and is rewarded by being part of the team.

Bozeman BEAR – Where Will We Play?

Clients = anyone who comes to us. Our clients tend to be small businesses in Bozeman and the surrounding communities who learn about the BEAR team and its opportunities.

Product = We provide two primary products to our business clients:
1) Access to a team of mentors who provide feedback and perspective on specific issues for up to two hours at no charge
2) Access to training dollars at the MT Dept of Labor

Geography = Gallatin County

When utilizing our mentor network, the clients we work with best tend to be those with specific needs (hiring/firing someone, website development, accounting questions, etc) that can be addressed in a single session with a volunteer from the BEAR team. Often, the clients that use our services most successfully are those who have been in the industry for some time but have only been in business for themselves for a year or so and who will get a lot out of these single, free sessions.

Bozeman BEAR – How Will We Win?

*Bozeman BEAR has to succeed on two fronts: with clients on the one hand, and with the volunteer team members on the other.*

We win by quickly and effectively matching our clients with mentors (both volunteer, private sector mentors as well as with public sector entities) who can help our clients with specific needs.

We win by helping our clients get training dollars. These training dollars can sometimes be very industry specific (helping a web developer learn a new coding language, for example); other times, they can be customized training that helps a client learn a specific business function (connecting our clients with sales or management coaches, for example). We take an active role in helping clients identify training ideas and in getting the IWT paperwork to an approvable level.

We win by respecting the time and energy of our volunteer mentors, ensuring that their time is well spent and that the BEAR program is fun and worthwhile. Sometimes our team members get contracts from their mentoring activities, sometimes they create customized training and we use grant dollars to help both the clients and the team members extend those two hours of volunteer time into something more meaningful, and sometimes our team members simply have a cup of coffee and share their perspective with a client. All of these interactions should be worthwhile for our volunteers. As a BEAR team, we do not (and cannot) actively seek to help our BEAR team members get contracts but we are open to the possibility when it happens.

*The Bozeman BEAR team’s innovation has been in combining the two halves of our work: the mentor network and the training dollars. Often, a client has a specific need – sales, management, understanding their financials, inventory management – but no way to pay for a consultant. We have successfully matched our clients up with mentors and coaches who then create customized trainings around these needs; we then go get the training dollars at the state to pay for it. This represents our work in its highest and best form: helping a promising client identify their need; finding them someone who can help them with that need; and then finding the money to help them pay for it.*
Bozeman BEAR – What Do We Need to be Good At?

A) The work of the BEAR coordinator focuses on listening to the client, being able to tease out a client’s true need(s), and being able to creatively match resources to those needs. This is deeply personal work – our product is often a mentor connection that we offer a client, and that mentor needs to be a good match for them. We need to be great at figuring out exactly what’s going on with a client and then effectively brokering the relationship between client and mentor.

B) We need to be great at staying organized. We average 1-2 clients a week, and each client averages 2-3 mentor connections. We need to make sure that those connections are happening and that they are worthwhile. We’ve got to track all of it.

C) We need to be great at helping our clients access training dollars. Most of our clients are not used to dealing with government paperwork, and our role is providing a human face and a helping hand to help the client complete the application and get it submitted to Helena. We need to advocate for our client’s applications with the Helena office.

D) We need to be great at thinking through creative and effective ways our clients can use those training dollars. Sometimes they want it for one thing but could use it much more effectively another way. We need to be great at helping our clients see and understand the possibilities.

E) We need to be responsive and responsible to our clients. When we suggest a possible mentor, we need to broker that connection quickly and efficiently. When our clients need training dollars, we need to help them access that money as efficiently and painlessly as possible. We have developed a reputation for making things happen quickly, and that takes work.

F) We need to create strong camaraderie within the team. Our volunteers are just that – volunteers – and we are asking them to give their knowledge away for free (in small chunks, anyway) with no promise or even intent of getting paid work for their time. This is also deeply personal work.

G) We need to have a great relationship with the Dept of Labor so that we can best access the training dollars.

H) We need to have a broad team that can handle a wide variety of business needs.

I) We need to have great relationships with all other resource providers in the community, specifically Prospera, SBDC, NRMEDD, Job Service, Gallatin County, City of Bozeman, etc.

Bozeman BEAR – How Do We Manage All of This?

A) We need ways to track and manage all of our clients and the work we do for them (Executive Pulse).

B) We need regular and personal follow-up systems in place for each of our clients to make sure they’re getting what they need.

C) We need regular systems in place to make sure the team is happy – Beer with BEAR, summer potluck, regular coffee shop/lunch meetings with the team members

Bozeman BEAR – What Big Assumptions Are We Making?

A. Volunteers will be willing to continue donating their time
B. The training dollars continue to be renewed by our legislature
C. The director continues to receive political support to do all of this
D. The team doesn’t devolve into a competitive, back-biting mess but instead stays focused on the community benefit of it all
E. Businesses in the market are willing to share their personal stories with us and are open to meeting with volunteers.
F. Everything continues to stay confidential

Bozeman BEAR – How Do We Know We’re Succeeding?

A. We serve at least 50 clients annually
B. We broker at least 150 relationships annually
C. We bring in at least $100,000 in training dollars a year
D. Our clients are still in business a year later
Introduction
Malta is uniquely positioned in North Central Montana. The entrepreneurial spirit and willingness to take a calculated risk are evident in many ways. First and foremost is the success of the Malta community owned mercantile store. The success of this store is a great indicator that the community will support a homegrown business venture. The distance to adjacent markets and the market isolation do not adequately explain the success of these businesses. One of the things that needs to be emphasized is that there are opportunities for those who want to work hard and discover Malta’s next success story.

MAIN TOPIC: BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

ISSUES: Business Mentorship Program

Recommendation and Resources:
Begin a program that will allow successful business owners to grow and develop not only their business but young people that are returning to the community. There was a lot of talk among the people interviewed on how there are lots of families returning to Malta and some are bringing their businesses with them. There are many examples in the state of local business development groups. Normally found in a chamber or in a local Economic Development Organization (EDO) it is important that there is assistance and resources available to people that are returning to the community. One of the best ways to ensure success is to pair potential business owners with their potential successor as soon as possible to allow for enough time to make sure it is a good fit for both parties.

https://www.sba.gov/content/plan-your-exit

ISSUES: Creative Finance Mechanisms; Explore new partnerships, i.e., PhillCo, Job Service, and Bear Paw

Recommendations and Resources:
Access to capital to credit worthy borrowers is a critical element to any community. If the business community is to grow and expand there needs to be sufficient lending capacity and wherewithal by the local finance community. The good news is that there are many examples statewide of community capital financing mechanisms that are successful in a community the size of Malta. It is important to demonstrate that the need exists to allow for the local lending community to participate as a partner, not as competition.

https://www.sba.gov/category/navigation-structure/loans-grants
http://www.bearpaw.org/
ISSUE: Multi-use Shooting Range

Recommendations and Resources:
This is a very straightforward case of proving that if the need and the market exists a private sector entrepreneur will fill the need. The trouble is that there is a free resource close by that is slated for closure fairly soon. Once this occurs there will be a significant need that will have to be met. There is also a need for local law enforcement training. This is an ideal first customer that will be a long term relationship.
https://www.bluecreeksport.com/
http://billingsrodandgun.org/

ISSUE: Marketing

- Phillips County
- Malta
- Race Track
- Hunting/Fishing, etc.

Recommendation: It is important to get all of these groups at the table to allow for a single, unique and clear message to come out for Malta. There is a need for the virtues for the community to be seen not as competing but complimenting each other. Try to identify the groups and their marketing efforts and determine who does what for each group.

MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

ISSUE: More Daycare and Daycare 24/7

Recommendation and Resources:
Use some sort of planning process or market identification process to demonstrate that there is a need in the community for these services. There are many resources available through SBDC and Bear Paw that will allow for this to happen.

https://www.sba.gov/offices/headquarters/osbdc/resources/11409
http://www.bearpaw.org/

ISSUES: Parks and Recreation – reactivate programs
- Improvement and upkeep of parks
- Multi-use Community Center
- Swimming Pool

Recommendations and Resources:
In my opinion these items are interrelated as they are potentially owned by the same parties. First, find out what happened to local public parks and recreation programs. One this occurs see what can be done to restart those programs. It may be a density issue as there were many years of out migration of families and now there are lots of families moving back to the area. The concept of utilizing potential revenues from these programs to allow for a funding mechanism for a multi-use community center is
intriguing. Many times community centers do not get off the ground because they have no way to sustain themselves. Locating potential revenue generators in the building is a natural fit.

**ISSUE: New Leaders/Community Leaders**

**Recommendation and Resources:**
Establish a Leadership Malta program or expand upon current efforts to allow for the grooming of new leaders in the community. There is a segment of the population that wants to serve but is often frustrated with the lack of ways to participate. This is a great way to engage the population. It might be more beneficial to implement a county wide program that will allow for more participants and greater exposure. Consider contacting the Havre Chamber of Commerce to learn of their youth leadership model.

**ISSUES:**  
Better structure for Non-Profits to find funding/support  
Re-invigorate Phillips County Community Foundation

**Recommendation:**
Determine the best way for the community to support fundraising efforts. In smaller communities it is often the case that businesses are willing to participate at a certain level and they are approached by multiple parties. They can help with some but not all and therefore they have to make difficult choices. The use of a community fund can allow for the available resources to be better utilized through a systematic fashion as opposed to scattered all over town. The Phillips County Community Foundation is a perfect vehicle for this type of mechanism to occur.
MAIN TOPIC: INFRASTRUCTURE

ISSUES:

- Water/Sewer
- Road Signs
- Sidewalks
- Roads
- Trails
- Rental Housing
- Tax dollar pie chart/explanation

Contact the Phillips County Department of Revenue office and ask for assistance, publish results in local media as point of interest. 406.654.2123

ISSUE: New building for MOI

Concerns were expressed about aging facility for the day activity center operated by Malta Opportunities Incorporated (MOI). MOI is a large employer and service provider in Phillips County and without improved and adequate facilities to serve clients and recruit new clients, the long term future and viability of the center is in jeopardy.

RECOMMENDATION: Work with MOI management and board of directors to learn more about the economic importance of MOI day activity center and group home to the community. Encourage options to assess the adequacy of structures/facilities and identify new opportunities within a Preliminary Architect Study (PAR). A PAR can assess current conditions and identify solutions for rehabilitation of existing buildings, expanded facilities and/or new construction and associated costs along with working with the local entity in a funding proposal.

RESOURCES:
PhilCo ECG – philco@itstriangle.com
Bear Paw Development Corporation http://www.bearpaw.org/ Example of Big Sandy Day Activity Center Project is included here http://cdbged.mt.gov/content/docs/summaries/summary2009.pdf
Preliminary Architectural Report Requirements in Montana http://comdev.mt.gov/content/CDBG/docs/GrantAdmin/GAM/EXH10B.pdf
State of Montana - Big Sky Trust Fund Planning Projects, CDBG ED https://fundingmt.org/outsideStorefrontList.jsp
MAIN TOPIC: AGRICULTURE

ISSUE: Feasibility of grain elevator

Grain producers in Phillips County travel extreme distances to take their product to markets in Harlem, Havre and other Montana terminal locations. Distance and long waiting lines make deliveries costly and in effective.

RECOMMENDATION: Historic conversations with elevator operators indicate Phillips County does not have adequate grain production for a large facility with rail access. Montana Ag Statistics report is a good resource and shows wheat and barley shipments, wheat supply and production statistics by region and county. With the number of new acres in production in Phillips County (former CRP acres), the community should investigate options to verify local production and compile that data into a presentation for grain facilities. Example – work with local ag groups and/or MSU Extension to conduct outreach and education that includes a local production survey or a combined survey and petition. This effort could also involve general consumer education on the value of agriculture.

Compile local data into a written proposal with signed petition and/or support letters and deliver to all grain terminal companies. Follow up with personal invitation to Malta to meet with local committee and agriculture producers.

RESOURCES:
Montana Rail Plan – 2010 (section 5 on grain transport)
http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/railplan (accessible by section)

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Matt Jones, Director of Public Affairs – serving Montana and Wyoming
406.256.4217
List of grain terminals on BNSF in Montana – shows owners and local contact info
http://www.bnsf.com/customers/grain-facilities/elevators/menu/mtlist.html
Customer guide to new rail served locations

General terminal contacts
http://www.columbiagrain.com/contact.htm
http://www.ugcpnw.com/

ISSUE: Green houses/value added ag

Utilization of natural gas within region for alternative use and industry. The green house industry was suggested.

RECOMMENDATION:
Contact Tiffany Melby, Value Added Agriculture Coordinator with Bear Paw Development (406.265.9227) and seek her assistance in organizing a local effort to learn about the commercial greenhouse industry. Working with Tiffany and staff from the Montana Department of Agriculture, explore opportunity to tour the greenhouse industry near Medicine Hat, Alberta in the natural gas rich community of Red Cliff.

Research options for conducting a feasibility study and marketing plan, using Phillips County as a Montana model. Continue to work with interested parties to further develop and implement a business plan for greenhouses. This effort could also incorporate niche market crops.
RESOURCES:
http://www.bearpaw.org/Staff.php
General greenhouse resources: (Google Canadian Greenhouse Industry – tons of reports, etc)


Canadian Greenhouse Tomato Industry http://www.ers.usda.gov/media/307173/err2c_1_.pdf

Red Hat Cooperative - http://www.redhatco-op.com (364 miles NORTH WEST of Malta)

FUNDING/TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE RESOURCES:
Montana Department of Ag http://agr.mt.gov/agr/Business/GrantsLoans.html#sibility
USDA Value Added Producer Grants (VAPG) http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/bcp_vapg.html
State of Montana - Big Sky Trust Fund Planning Projects, CDBG ED https://fundingmt.org/outsidestorefrontList.jsp

MAIN TOPIC: BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

ISSUES: Marketing
- Phillips County
- Malta
- Race Track
- Hunting/Fishing, etc.

Phillips County has tremendous assets that could make it a destination for travelers and business but there is no formal effort to coordinate local resources and market collectively. Rich natural resources, Phillips County Museum, Great Plains Dinosaur Museum, PC Motor Sports, Sleeping Buffalo Hot Springs, Zortman, CMR Refuge, Bowdoin NWR, American Prairie Reserve and more should all be invited to participate. Other marketable resources include extraordinary local facilities such as schools, medical and long term care facilities, the fiber optic network and more.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Working with the Chamber and PhilCo ECG, investigate options for a detailed market analysis and branding effort. This can be accomplished through a planning process using a variety of matching grant opportunities. The next step in this process could include a signage and wayfinding system incorporated within a fully integrated responsive website. Project should match natural resources, tourism and industry assets to promote region as a place to “live, work and play.”

RESOURCES:
The Montana Main Street Program offers technical assistance and expertise to member communities and awards competitive grant funding to communities actively working on downtown revitalization, economic development, and historic preservation. Following the process outlined by the Montana Main Street Tier System, Malta should invite program coordinators to make a formal presentation to the community and work toward becoming an Affiliate Community. The application cycle is open from October 1 through December 31st. Montana Main Street program [http://mtmainstreet.mt.gov/default.mcpx](http://mtmainstreet.mt.gov/default.mcpx)

Investigate interactive data for Malta and region per the Of Institute for Tourism & Recreation Research (ITTR) website. [http://www.itrr.umt.edu](http://www.itrr.umt.edu) At minimum, share data with community members in local media, Chamber newsletter and provide a direct site link to the Chamber of Commerce website. This would also be an ideal student government project (research and present a written report to the community.)


State of Montana Matching Grants - Big Sky Trust Fund, CDBG Planning Grants and more [https://www.fundingmt.org/outsideStorefrontList.jsp](https://www.fundingmt.org/outsideStorefrontList.jsp)

State of Montana Tourism grants and programs. [http://commerce.mt.gov/tourismresources.mcpx](http://commerce.mt.gov/tourismresources.mcpx)


Link to consultant Roger Brooks – he has done work in Montana [http://www.rogerbrooksinternational.com/community-branding-marketing-programs/](http://www.rogerbrooksinternational.com/community-branding-marketing-programs/)


**MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT**

**ISSUE:** Ongoing support of non profits

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** The Montana Nonprofit Association is a wealth of resources, often unknown in small communities. A great start to helping local non profits could include working with PhillCo EGC to invite MNA to Malta for a program overview and resource sharing. Event should be coordinated so staff, volunteers and governing board members can attend.

**RESOURCES:** [http://www.mtnonprofit.org](http://www.mtnonprofit.org)

**ISSUE:** Re-invigorate Phillips County Community Foundation
The Phillips County Community Foundation (PCCF) was created in several years ago under the umbrella of the Montana Community Foundation (MCF). A separate nonprofit application was submitted by PCCF in 2013 and they are still awaiting IRS designation. Current board member understand the value of the foundation and the tremendous opportunity for the community and plan to meet in early December to get an update from MCF and establish a “game plan” for moving forward. Interested persons should contact Anne Boothe.

http://pccommunityfoundation.weebly.com/phillips-county-projects.html
The Montana Community Foundation http://www.mtcf.org/index.html

ISSUE: Improvement and upkeep of parks

Under improvement and upkeep of parks, we heard about Mosquitoes:
Overall, we heard a lot about mosquitoes and how they are a detriment to quality of life and doing business in the region.

According to Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mosquito_control

Mosquito-control operations are targeted against three different problems:
1. Nuisance mosquitoes bother people around homes or in parks and recreational areas;
2. Economically important mosquitoes reduce real estate values, adversely affect tourism and related business interests, or negatively impact livestock or poultry production;
3. Public health is the focus when mosquitoes are vectors, or transmitters, of infectious disease.

Recommendation – establish a committee or task force to augment the work of existing mosquito control programs.
• Become aware of existing and alternative methods to control mosquitoes.
• Meet with local officials to learn about existing control efforts
• Partner with officials to educate citizens about reducing mosquito populations in neighborhoods by removing breeding habitat. Encourage use of acceptable source reduction products such as larvicides in standing water where larvae exist. Include a mosquito safety guide or link on local websites.

A great overview of Larvidides can be found on the Flathead County website
https://flathead.mt.gov/mosquitoes/mosquitocontrol.php
Backyard Mosquito Management – informative flyer

Bacillus thuringiensis var. israelensis is one of the most popular and most effective least-toxic biological controls. It is a bacterial strain that, when sprayed into larval pools, is ingested by feeding larvae and kills them. You can buy a product called Mosquito Dunks™ at your local lawn and garden store, in hardware stores, and in some catalogs and on line. The dunks are safe for
birdbaths, rain barrels, ponds, ditches, tree holes, roof gutters, unused swimming pools — anywhere water collects.

- Mosquito Control resources from Montana State University [http://landresources.montana.edu/wnv/Control.html](http://landresources.montana.edu/wnv/Control.html)
- [http://www.cdc.gov/westnile/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/westnile/index.html) - includes complete information about West Nile and risk. Also a good section on Information about mosquito control
- [http://www.cdc.gov/westnile/faq/mosquitoControl.html](http://www.cdc.gov/westnile/faq/mosquitoControl.html)
LISTENING SESSION NOTES - STRENGTHS AND ASSETS

SACO - Strengths
- New water system
- Own natural gas company – ratepayers pay 1/3 normal rate
- Great school
- Active technology students
- People – work ethic is amazing
- Great store with a great meat market
- Hardware store just outside of town – feed, lumber, etc.
- Basics are all available here in Saco
- Agriculture
- Natural resources
- Right on highway 2
- Railroad
- Hunting and fishing
- Service organizations – good volunteers: Garden Club, 4-H, FFA partnership,
- Saco co-ops with Hinsdale and Malta with several sports so they can continue
- Four churches
- Saco tears down old buildings at no charge
- Phillips County transportation for Senior Citizens
- Fidelity grants
- De-Hy company has potential
- Café
- Haircutting salon
- Tax preparer
- Private contractors – i.e., fencing, storage
- Artists in this area
- Beaver Creek Lodge
- Hunter’s paradise

YOUNG BUSINESS OWNERS AND LOCAL OFFICIALS - Strengths
- Jake’s baked beans.
- Work ethic
- Lost jobs in mining, ag, ag equipment, CMR grazing and still sustainable
- A good number of young educated couples moving back home with families
- Great place to raise my kids and do business
- Cost of living is reasonable
- PhillCo Economic Growth Council
- My family is here; I couldn’t return to ranch but wanted to be near family and good neighbors.
- Housing is available but we could use more.
• A beautiful lake is 17 miles away
• Close friends that make a community.
• You can go to work and bring your kids.
• There is nothing like the quality of life in a small city.
• You can make a difference here.
• Mustang Foundation
• Phillips County Community Foundation
• Bear Paw Development Corp.

AGRICULTURE - Strengths
• Our location – a crossroads; centrally remote so people gather here
• Strong ties to neighboring communities and people living in the country
• Return of our youth- great to see.
• Border is near so we have security and a border patrol
• A safe community
• Healthcare – hospital and clinic major employers
• As our community ages, we have near access to specialists

HEALTHCARE, NONPROFITS, YOUTH GROUPS, CIVIC CLUBS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, RECREATION, TOURISM, ARTS – Strengths

• Safety
• Our people – everyone helps everyone else
• Great volunteers who give their time
• Full downtown with a lot of amenities for a town this size – groceries, shopping, hospital, etc.
• Great healthcare
• Quality of life
• Location – we are the central location within 70 to 90 miles
• Walking trails
• Theater
• School activities
• Two museums
• Community groups such as PhillCo, Rotary, Chamber – goes back to great people and volunteers.
• Agriculture – diverse crops, cattle, grains, etc.
• Highway 2
• Railroad through town
• Airport
• A lot of recreational opportunities
• Destination point for hunters
• 40 students in youth group; great support from businesses
• 4-H
• Active youth in the community – scouts, 4-H, Key Club, FFA
- Boys and Girls Club

**NATURAL RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENTAL, OIL, GAS, UTILITIES, INFRASTRUCTURE** - **Strengths**
- Beautiful landscape
- Natural gas, geothermal, artesian water
- Current up-to-date hospital
- Up-to-date high school
- MainStreet
- Court House
- Many basic amenities
- Outlying communities
- Water and sewer districts
- Infrastructure
- Public lands – influx of people from Canada and North Dakota to recreate on public land
- Amtrak stop
- Tax base from energy companies is tremendous
- Great fiberoptics; great cellular

**SENIOR CITIZENS, CHURCHES, PARENTS, YOUNG ADULTS/FAMILIES** – **Strengths**
- We have a lot of Senior Citizens
- Quite a few churches with great attendance and programs
- Active ministerial association
- Organizations such as Boys and Girls Club
- Our Senior Citizens Center
- New Exercise Class for Seniors
- Emergency services and health care
- Local transit bus – used for community events
- Meals on Wheels
- Two Assisted Living Centers
- Independent Living apartments
- Community based services for healthcare
- Home oxygen
- Card groups, bridge clubs pay to use this facility
- Can rent this for special events.
- Food Bank – money used to run the Senior Citizens Center
- Dietitian visits once per month

**LAW ENFORCEMENT, LOCAL GOVERNMENT, EMS** – **Strengths**
- Great network, great communication
- Giving community – time, money, and generous to people in need
- Strong sense of community with EMT volunteers
- Town is confident in EMT service
- Glad that Law Enforcement is combined with the County.
- Safe community
- People leave their cars running in the winter time.
- 911 upgrade is in Phase 2
- Fire truck equipment is good.
- Ambulance is all volunteer; good equipment enclosed

BUSINESS, RETAIL, SERVICES, REALTORS, ETC. – Strengths
- Our businesses support sports, events, etc. with sponsorships.
- Customers are most often loyal
- Our isolation helps keep business here.
- A lot of things going on
- Banks support businesses,
- Families Matter
- Hospital
- New apartments
- High school
- Business is more about the people here, not so much about making a lot of money.
- Great food!
- Our businesses are approachable; great customer service.
- Great sports teams
- PhillCo and Bear Paw

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS - Strengths
- The people – everyone takes care of everyone.
- Our school facilities are great – good gym and clean place to go to school.
- Everyone can know everyone and looks after you.
- Everyone waves.
- Teachers give you more one-on-one time than when in a big city.
- Teachers are willing to stay after school and help out.
- We have more opportunities because we are smaller.
- Good place – can boat, fish, hunt, canoe, golf, snowmobiling.
- Land owners often give you permission to get on their land.
- You don’t want to get in trouble because everyone knows you and your reputation would be hurt.
- Jobs are available if you want them.
- Go by Joe’s to hang out.
- I want to be able to come home because this is what I know. If I can’t find a job I would have to go.
- 4-H
- Kiwanis/Key Club
- Drag track- economic value outweighs the noise
EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS, SCHOOL BOARDS, AND TEACHERS - Strengths

- Malta has an incredibly strong sense of community.
- A lot of resources for our size; a lot of things to do.
- People are friendly to new teachers; help to move in, genuinely nice.
- I was attracted to return to Malta because of the support from administrators.
- The custodians are amazing; cleanest school around.
- Support from other teachers is great.
- Our business community is always willing to do what they can to help us.
- We have lost businesses but it seems that the ones that remain are more vibrant than they were 10 years ago.
- Students involved with athletics, band, and speech are drug tested before they can participate.
- About 80% of our students are involved in speech, band, athletics, clubs, etc.
- We have two music teachers- both voice and instrumental.
MALTA PHILLIPS COUNTY RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT

LISTENING SESSION NOTES

SACO - Challenges
- Available housing to rent – quality housing
- ¼ of population lives elsewhere but own property here
- Mosquitos
- Employment – why would you move here?
- Non-livable wages
- People live in Malta or Hinsdale but work in Saco.
- Threats from outside the area: free roam bison that can restrict our ag production
  - In 2010 Dept of Interior asked for more national monuments which included northern and southern Phillips County.
  - Growth and land use policies – we have the right to coordinate with Federal agencies. Wording is very important – these outside stakeholders are all working and will change our ag future tremendously. Even Ducks Unlimited. Now have 90,000 acres that cannot be in production/development even though private individuals own the land. **What can we do to protect ourselves?** **County needs money and time to address our needs.**
- Studies state that national monuments bring in a lot of money but the study does not include the loss of agriculture.
- School population dropping; hard to keep teachers
- No more railroad jobs like in the good old jobs
- People who are qualified to work in the gas field are working in the Bakken

MALTA/PHILLIPS COUNTY Young Business Owners and Local Officials – Challenges
- You have to travel more to do business. Driving is a part of life here; long delivery to customers.
- Do need good rental housing.
- Changing old ways and old mentality is hard.
- Hard for outsiders to be accepted; helps to volunteer and get involved.

PHILLIPS COUNTY – AG Challenges
- To get people to a meeting and plan to move forward.
- A truck can bring liquid fertilizer; the train would take three weeks.
- Irrigation issues
- Improve value for our crops
- Climate – growing season is short and unpredictable

HEALTHCARE, NONPROFITS, YOUTH GROUPS, CIVIC CLUBS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, RECREATION, TOURISM, ARTS – Challenges
- Miles; we have to drive at times for specialist, special needs
- People have to work two or three jobs
- Lack of decent housing for rentals; allow animals
- Houses are on the market but need $20-$30,000 to fix up.
• Human capital – trained workforce is hard to find, especially in healthcare
• Day care available 24/7
• Low income county
• Daily activity center needs new location
• Underage drinking
• No or very limited services for people with mental health needs

NATURAL RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENTAL, OIL, GAS, UTILITIES, INFRASTRUCTURE - Challenges
• Outgoing transportation for our products – for grain, cattle,
• Need closer elevator – or one right here
• Amtrak stop ridership is down in Malta
• No place to rent cars – tell people to get off in Havre so they can rent a car.
• County reserves are shrinking

SENIOR CITIZENS, CHURCHES, PARENTS, YOUNG ADULTS/FAMILIES – Challenges
• Mental health is a struggle; do have a community care coalition
• Money – for projects and support; can’t do special things
• Race Track near my house – and my property – who will buy a house near the racetrack? Can’t hear on our patio.
• If you don’t agree with certain people you pay the price.
• Activities for kids when they are out of school – Boys and Girls Club reaches only a certain age group.
• Parks need more upkeep and new equipment.
• Aging population – making sure we can meet or exceed people’s needs.
• Food bank only open two days per week; it is very busy. All volunteer. Hours of paperwork.

LAW ENFORCEMENT, LOCAL GOVERNMENT, EMS – Challenges
• Need new EMTs
• Lack of population; loss of young people
• NonProfits hurting us by reducing tax base, ag base, etc.
• Hazmat training is needed but hard for
• Hand-held radios work within the ambulance but some areas are not reachable
• Law Enforcement hurt by loss of energy revenue.
• Aging infrastructure, aging community – hard to ask fixed income people for more funds

BUSINESS, RETAIL, SERVICES, REALTORS, ETC. – Challenges
• Finding help; short staffed. High school kids look for summer work but that is it – busy with sports or other extracurricular activity.
• Get hard hit for donation requests but want to help when we can.
• Merchant Meetings and Chamber Meetings – need to make sure they communicate.
• Job service is here only one day per week.
Six options to reach local markets to buy ads

- Workforce – very hard to find people to work.
- Online shopping
- Shop Local push must be accompanied by the businesses stepping up and being very accommodating.
- Improve communications between businesses.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS – Challenges
- Kids that move here from other towns wish we had soccer, other sports.
- Jobs are available if you want them.
- Can’t always get access to the gym.
- Some people think our clothes are over priced; there are things you have to go out of town to buy.
- It is a great little town but when I graduate I'm leaving town.
- Ranches are getting bigger so people can’t manage them.
- There are jobs here but I don’t think there are careers here.
- Strong volunteer base – but it is the same people; older people sometimes have to stop.
- Drag track is good but it is loud
- Don’t have dentist, eye doctor
- School teaches us just what we need to graduate and go to college.

EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS, SCHOOL BOARDS, AND TEACHERS – Challenges
- Hard to find healthy choices to eat; need more organic healthy food.
- Need more gluten free products; in stores and restaurants
- Our street is never plowed in winter.
- Keep young people safe; challenges with drug and alcohol
- Renting a home is awful; Havre has much cheaper rental opportunities
- Mosquitos.
- Teacher recruitment is tough – starting wages are terrible.
MALTA PHILLIPS COUNTY RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT

LISTENING SESSION NOTES - PROJECTS AND VISION

SACO - Projects and Vision

- Need small businesses
- Feasibility study for fertilizer plant
- Young families
- Kids want to return to the farm (but outside threats could destroy all efforts)
- Need a grain elevator – rail competition with oil products would be an issue
- Delux bus (such as PTI) that goes to the Bakken – shower, beds, and wifi available on the bus.
- Farm tourism could be an option
- Find a buyer for the meat market – and workforce of three people
- Consider an art show and craft show
- Keystone pipeline would increase tax base – come near here; man camp near Hinsdale; county would receive $2million annually.

YOUNG BUSINESS OWNERS AND LOCAL OFFICIALS – Projects

- Reach out to new comers and invite them to join projects/committees.
- Parks and Rec activities to return.
- Maintain parks and update playground equipment; there is no park on the east side of town.
- Some way for young mothers of 2 – 5 year olds to meet and interact.
- Swimming pool
- Event center or a place to have handicap accessible meetings; consider a joint Senior Citizens Center and event center.
- Clean up the airport.
- Build a new armory and secure the old building to use as community center or city offices.
- Membership or privately owned gun range.
- All trails connected.
- New volunteers recruited.
- Team up Philco Economic Growth funds with Bear Paw Development funds to prime the pump for entrepreneurs.
- More industry in to support ag base, i.e., natural gas.
- Fertilizing plant – 10 years out.
- Explore/take advantage of teleworkers; use the fiber in the ground we have.
- Beef processing plant.

AGRICULTURE – Projects

- Use the access to rail more.
- Build community support and pride for hospital and clinic
• Malta must get an elevator – the acres and bushels are here; This should be our top priority. Engage resources from PhillCo Economic Growth, Bear Paw Development, etc. and form a team to get this done.
• Keystone Pipeline must be built; ease up rail for crops, creates jobs, etc.
• Consider growing spinach and asparagus; low water. Need chiller – find if these crops would be feasible.
• More awareness statewide that agriculture provides food products, not Alberstons or Safeway.

HEALTHCARE, NONPROFITS, YOUTH GROUPS, CIVIC CLUBS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, RECREATION, TOURISM, ARTS - Projects
• New and or improved location/site for the Malta Opportunities, Inc. daily activities center
• Organized recreation activities
• Explore how Glasgow build their activity center
• Prepare for new volunteers as current volunteers retire
• Swimming pool
• New community center build near city hall; use with Senior Citizen
• Utilize old Armory building for Malta Opportunities, Inc.
• New buildings that could house activities, projects, Seniors, etc.
• Strengthen the Arts that exist here.
• Make connections between all of the groups in Malta to improve networking and share resources.
• Create a bike camp on a trail
• A Phillips County brochure that has all of the strengths in the county, including trails.
• An “ap” for what there is to do in Phillips County.
• Work with the city to update our water and sewer system.
• Boys and Girls Club funding; expand to five days instead of just three
• Provide a training for how to manage non-profits; better connect
• Organizational chart – where do you go when you want to get involved, what exists here
• People want to know what there is to do in the evening; need a brochure or website for what to do after hours.
• Revive Parks and Rec activities and organization
• Dire need for mental health services

NATURAL RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENTAL, OIL, GAS, UTILITIES, INFRASTRUCTURE - Projects
• Consider a small rental car business for those wanting to get to Billings, Great Falls from Malta; suggest a transit bus or car rental businesses to drop cars here in Malta.
• Build more sidewalks, Hwy 191 is very narrow.
• Awareness and improved communication of what we have and how to use it
• Inform the county people where tax income comes from, i.e., rail, energy, etc.
• Water project - fix our water and sewer
• Better facilities for entertainment – improve what we have or add new. I.e., pavilion is only for roping; sound system is poor where available; expand city park or use ball field(s) for alternative events too.
• Villa Theater – bathrooms repaired so events can be held there;
• Portable stage – closest one is in Great Falls and too expensive.
• Move the fair to Malta
• Fertilizer plant – have rail, gas, etc.
• Reconsider green houses – grow cucumbers and peppers we are purchasing from Canada

SENIOR CITIZENS, CHURCHES, PARENTS, YOUNG ADULTS/FAMILIES – Projects
• More after school and summer activities for kids – after school and in the summer.
• Improve our parks.
• Open Parks and Rec once again.
• Utilize the Malta Business Center better – explore the arts and rent office/business space.
• A bus barn for the transit vehicles
• Remove the race track; car show uses it too.
• Better advertise and promote the race track; it is the best in the state and/or region.
• Beautification; use empty lots and buildings
• Open border crossing for longer hours
• Better promotion of our town; branding – showcase our assets.
• Outreach - Increase attendance of people using the Senior Citizen Center; do have usage of people over 70 but want to reach out to the 55 – 70 group.

LAW ENFORCEMENT, LOCAL GOVERNMENT, EMS – Projects
• Hazmat training and equipment funding
• City county facilities – acoustics repaired
• Combine and coordinate to keep emergency vehicles together
• Parks and Rec active again
• Upgrade city parks and rec

BUSINESS, RETAIL, SERVICES, REALTORS, ETC. – Projects
• Utilize Job Service programs when they are here one day per week.
• Reach out to new businesses – recruitment
• Offer more business training events, such as customer service, social media, etc. – PhillCo will do this working with Bear Paw.
• Managerial training; how to retain our employees.
• Capture students/youth that are not college bound and train them for work and leadership right here.
• Re-start Phillips County Leadership
• Send businesses to address a class once per month to share about doing business here, becoming an entrepreneur, etc.
• Survey business owners/community to determine individual skill sets and use them to help each other; create learning opportunities.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS – Projects
• More housing – so when jobs come open they can live here.
• John Deere service
• Used car business
• Bowling alley
• Community Center – like Boys and Girls Club for older kids – a place to go.
Swimming pool (fix it!); swim team uses it, too.
Course or option to learn about being in business for yourself.

EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS, SCHOOL BOARDS, AND TEACHERS – Projects

• More trails, keep up the great work.
• Healthy, organic food choices available in town, i.e., Farmer’s Market in summer and year round.
• Provide activities for the 20% of kids who are not involved in sports, band, clubs, or speech.
• More houses built so that more new affordable homes are available.
• Boys and Girls Club – continue to grow; put high school students in charge of something with the younger students.
• Obtain vision and dental services; alternative medicine.
• School needs: reroofing the old gym; fixing the drainage problem by the cafeteria, roof in the elementary gym.