RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT REPORT

ASSEMBLED VIA SUBJECT

DEER LODGE, MONTANA

APRIL 24 – 25, 2006

In Partnership with your Certified Regional Development Corporation: Headwaters RC&D; Montana Department of Commerce; Jefferson Local Development Corporation; Big Sky Economic Development Authority; USDA Forest Service/ Custer National Forest; Montana Economic Developers Association; USDA/Rural Development; Pondera Regional Port Authority and the People of Deer Lodge.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

Before digging into the report itself, I would like to give recognition to the Certified Regional Development Corporation program that is funded through Montana Department of Commerce (MDOC). Headwaters RC&D, under the direction of Judie Tilman, is the Certified Regional Development Corporation for the community of Deer Lodge which made this assessment possible. In addition, support and training for the process is provided by Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA). These three partnerships make Resource Team’s possible.

Special thanks are due the Powell County Planning Office. Ron Hanson and Peggy Kerr served as the champions behind this entire project and will continue to be involved with the project through activities detailed in this report. Ron and Peggy had help from a host of other people, agencies and businesses, but without their “Let’s do it” energy, the assessment would not have taken place.

In addition, I applaud each and every team member that dedicated hours of work and travel in order to participate on the team: Tom Harrington, Jefferson Local Development Corporation; Casey Joyce, Big Sky Economic Development Authority; Leisa Lester, USDA Forest Service/Custer National Forest; Michelle Shoquist, USDA Rural Development; Neal Ullman, MT Dept. of Commerce, CDBG; Elaina Zempel, Pondera Regional Port Authority. Special thanks to Gloria O’Rourke, of MEDA, who provided recording and facilitation support. 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 Deer Lodge. There are a number of short term and long term accomplishable recommendations that the resource team has provided in this report. Each of you individually must decide what it is that you want to do—what kind of project you want to tackle. It is also important for the entire community and/or county to be involved in finding ways to accomplish its goals. A few celebrations at the successful conclusion of an activity that has involved a large number of citizens will lead to a feeling of accomplishment that will carry over into other activities. Look through the suggestions, pick out one, and get started. It can be done. It is your choice, your decision; you can do it!

Connie Ternes- Daniels, Team Leader, Headwaters RC&D
PROCESS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THIS REPORT

According to Montana Department of Commerce program requirements, Resource Team Assessments are to be coordinated through the community’s Certified Regional Development Corporation. Headwaters RC&D fills this role for Deer Lodge, Powell County and six other counties in the region. Headwaters RC&D served as the Resource Team Leader for the project. Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA) provided staff support for the coordination of a resource team to assist Deer Lodge in evaluating its assets and challenges and in developing suggestions for improving the environment, social and economic future of the area.

Peggy Kerr, Powell County Planning Office Assistant, served as the local contact and local team leader for the project. Under Peggy’s direction, a host of people took the lead in agenda development, logistics, 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 Deer Lodge. The team members were carefully selected based on their fields of expertise that Deer Lodge officials indicated would be needed to respond to the problem areas identified.

The Resource Team interviewed over 250 people during April 24 – 25, 2006. In order to receive input from as many people as possible, people of all ages submitted written comments as well. 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: Eighth Grade Students at E.F. Duval Jr. High; Teachers at E.F. Duval Jr. High; Teachers at Powell County High School; No Host Community Dinner; Hospital, Emergency Services, Law Enforcement; Business, Financial Institutions, Chamber, Civic Groups; Churches, Non-Profits, Foundations, Social Services; Prison, Boot Camp, Industries; City, County and Federal Government; Senior Citizens; Agriculture, Farming, Ranching; Employees: Sawmill, Contractors, Construction, Retail, Office Workers, and those Self-Employed.

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 Deer Lodge?
➢ What do you think are the major problems and challenges in Deer Lodge?
➢ What projects would you like to see completed in two, five, ten and twenty years in Deer Lodge?
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 community of Deer Lodge.

A preliminary oral report and a summary of group recommendations was presented to the people of Deer Lodge the evening of April 25th, 2006.

Following the oral report, this formal written report was prepared and is presented to the people of Deer Lodge. Copies will be made available in print and electronically. The report is available on the MEDA website at http://www.medamembers.org/resourceteams.php A Town Hall Meeting is planned for Wednesday, May 24th at 7:00pm at the PEN (925 Main Street, Deer Lodge) to review the report with the people of Deer Lodge and to identify projects and set priorities for action.
DEER LODGE, MONTANA
RESOURCE TEAM
APRIL 24-25, 2006

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Address: 790 Colleen Street
City/State/Zip: Helena, MT 59601
Phone: 406.449.5000 xt 121 Fax: 406.449.5008
Email: Michelle.Shoquist@mt.usda.gov

Team Member: Neal Ullman
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Address: P.O. Box 200505
City/State/Zip: Helena, MT 59620-0505
Phone: 406.841.2773 Fax: 406.841.2771
Email: nullman@mt.gov

Team Member: Elaina Zempel
Title: Executive Director
Agency: Pondera Regional Port Authority
Address: 702 South Main, Suite #1
City/State/Zip: Conrad, MT 59425
Phone: 406.271.7237 Fax: 406.271.7237
Email: zempel@3rivers.net

Recorder/Facilitator: Gloria O’Rourke, MEDA, 118 E. Seventh St.; Suite 2A, Anaconda, MT 59711
Phone: 406.563.5259 Fax: 406.563.5476 email: gloria@medamembers.org
Deer Lodge Community Assessment

The following is the community assessment schedule. All meetings that are held in The Pen (925 Main St., Deer Lodge) are open to the public. The other locations are closed due to space limitations.

Monday, April 24, 2006

Arrival and Tour
11:00am  Team arrives – gather at the Court House in the Planning Office; address: 409 Missouri Ave.

11:05 – 12:30  Tour – depart from Court House via bus

12:30: 1:00ish  Walking Tour – end up for lunch at the Shack

1:00ish – 1:45  Lunch at the Shack – team orientation, prep for listening sessions

1:55  Here we go! Off to E.F. Duvall Jr. High.

Listening Sessions begin:

2:15-3:08 p.m.  E.F. Duvall Jr. High  Eighth-grade students
3:08-4 p.m.  EF Duvall Jr. High  Jr. High and elementary teachers (split team)
            PCHS  High school teachers
5:30-7:30 p.m.  Shack  No-Host Dinner – Working Dinner for Team

Tuesday, April 25, 2006

7-7:45 a.m.  PCMH  Working Breakfast: Hospital, Emergency Services, Law Enforcement
8-8:45 a.m.  The Pen  Business, Financial Institutions, Chamber, Civic Groups
9-9:45 a.m.  The Pen  Churches, Non-profits, Foundations, Social Services
10-10:45 a.m.  Armory  Prison, Boot Camp, Industries
11-11:45 a.m.  City Hall  City, County and Federal Government
Noon-12:45 p.m.  Sr. Citizens Center  Senior Citizens – Working lunch
1-1:45 p.m.  The Pen  Agriculture, Farming, Ranching
2-2:45 p.m.  The Pen  Employees in general: Sawmill, Contractors, Construction, Retail, Office Workers, Self-employed
3-6:30 p.m.  The Pen  Team Work Session – Working Supper
7-8:30 p.m.  The Pen  Resource Team Town Meeting

Wednesday, May 24, 2006

7-8:30 p.m.  The Pen  Resource Team Return Visit – Project and Prioritizing Town Meeting
MAIN ISSUES
DEER LODGE RESOURCE TEAM
April 24 – 25, 2006

These topics are a summary of the comments, ideas and suggestions provided during the Deer Lodge Listening Sessions. These topics and issues form the outline for the Deer Lodge Resource Team report.

MAIN TOPIC: HOUSING
ISSUES:
- Adequate Housing- safe, decent, affordable
- Availability – rentals and/or for sale
- Limited land availability
- Planning for various types of housing developments – great start with housing survey
- Senior housing and assisted living

MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
ISSUES:
- Comprehensive Plan and Growth Policy
- Infrastructure
  - Streets - potholes
  - Water/Sewer
  - Sidewalks
  - Tourism
    - Walking Trail
- “Define Deer Lodge”
  - All pulling in same direction based on that definition.

MAIN TOPIC: BEAUTIFICATION
ISSUES:
- Enforcement of codes and ordinances on the books
  - Junk vehicles, trailers, abandoned homes, yards, weeds, exterior home neglect
- Additional clean up days – more than twice per year
- Motivation: Community pride

MAIN TOPIC: SOCIAL CHALLENGES
ISSUES:
- Drugs and Alcohol and other “at risk” behaviors
- Drop out rate
- Physical and/or verbal abuse
- Parental supervision
- Expand on Life Line
- More non-school activities
- Non-traditional families
MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES
ISSUES:
- Drug Coalition, Skateboard Ramps, Teen Center,
- Downtown empty, downtown full…polar opposites.
- Impact of prison operation and industries
- Schools - different perceptions
- Schools and city role in recreational programs
- Rock Creek community investments
- Between county and city, i.e., law enforcement, services
- Community Resource Guide

MAIN TOPIC: ACTIVITIES
ISSUES:
- Youth
  - Youth Center
  - Skateboard, Paintball, Recreation Station, Soccer
- Family activities
- Funding assistance
  - The Arts, Elks, Fairgrounds, etc.
- Young adult activities
- Seniors
  - Transportation – hours and service extended
  - Senior Citizen Center hours extended

MAIN TOPIC: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
ISSUES:
- Workforce
- Need for new businesses
- Support local businesses
- Value added ag
- Marketing of attractions
- Need for lodging
- Strong focus organization
- Historic Preservation
  - Deer Lodge Hotel
  - Trask Hall
- Define Chamber’s role and Economic Development organization’s role
- “Define Deer Lodge”
  - All pulling in same direction based on that definition.
MAIN TOPIC: HOUSING

ISSUES:
- Adequate Housing - safe, decent, affordable
- Availability – rentals and/or for sale
- Limited land availability
- Planning for various types of housing developments – great start with housing survey
- Senior housing and assisted living

ISSUE: ADEQUATE HOUSING – SAFE, DECENT, AFFORDABLE
Many members of the community cited adequate housing as a major problem facing Deer Lodge. From teachers to workers at the prison, people we spoke with had a difficult time when they first moved to the city due to lack of affordable and decent housing. Some homes have been on sale for a significant period of time and are within the price range for many households but the state of these homes are either not safe, attractive, or will cost too much to fix up in the long run. Homes that are safe and decent are too expensive for the salaries available to most Deer Lodge residents.

RECOMMENDATION:
Deer Lodge should consider working with government agencies and developers to bring adequate housing to the city. With the expansion of the prison, possible jobs as a result of the Rock Creek development, and other growth, the city is in dire need of adequate housing. To plan where and how the housing might enter the city, Deer Lodge must update its growth policy. A growth policy is the blueprint for how a community plans to manage growth and expansion and the Deer Lodge plan has not been updated in over 30 years.

The city should also apply for housing funds through government agencies that help rehabilitate, demolish, and build homes. These funds can also serve as seed money for a revolving loan fund (RLF) that the city could use as an ongoing revenue source for homebuyer assistance or rehabilitation projects. By loaning funds to households and asking them to pay back what they can afford, families will be able to afford a home without burdensome loan interest rates. Bankers who participated in the public hearings also generally acknowledged housing problems. Banks could also be used to fund an RLF, as could the chamber of commerce.

Another opportunity would be a homebuyer assistance program. Typically, such a program helps buyers with down payments, filing fees, and closing costs as well as homebuyer classes. Communities such as Whitefish, Kalispell, and Gallatin County currently are using CDBG funds for homebuyer assistance. While growth, housing costs, and income levels in these communities are much different than in Deer Lodge, there remains a need in Deer Lodge for help finding and purchasing a home.

RESOURCES:
See Housing Resources list below.
MAIN TOPIC: HOUSING

ISSUE: AVAILABILITY – RENTALS AND/OR FOR SALE
Affordability was not the only reason people couldn’t find housing in Deer Lodge, availability was another major concern. People told stories of searching for homes for months and even over a year. One prison worker told a story of a guard he hired who lived in a local hotel for weeks without finding a place to live and ended up quitting the job. A school councilor looked for months for an apartment before finding something available.

If the city is to grow at all or even maintain housing for its current needs, more housing must be available for renters or buyers. The expansion of the prison, the scenic location of the city, and Rock Creek development will create a more pressing need for housing.

RECOMMENDATIONS:
There is a real opportunity for the city to expand its housing stock. Through demolitions, creation of housing developments, and rehabilitation of existing homes the city could easily expand housing available to current or new residents. The city should contact other community who are experiencing similar growth with limits on existing housing including Shelby and Miles City. Both have too few homes and apartments to meet the need of current and new residents. Shelby is similar in that it also has a prison ready for expansion and other assets encouraging growth.

RESOURCES:
See Housing Resources list below.

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MAIN TOPIC: HOUSING

ISSUE: SENIOR HOUSING AND ASSISTED LIVING
Some residents, including at the luncheon at the senior center, indicated that senior citizen issues are something that need to be addressed. One resident brought up the specific need for a long-term care facility for Alzheimer and other similarly affected residents. More assisted living space was also mentioned as a concern.

RECOMMENDATION:
Potential organizers of either an assisted or long-term living center should read a draft of the Senior Assisted Living Needs Assessment compiled for the Housing Division of the Montana Department of Commerce. While the assessment is still only in draft form, it provides useful information on issues to take into account when planning for such a facility including long-term demographic trends of the community as well as the availability of local doctors, nurses, or health care providers to provide the care necessary for a facility. Some assisted living homes have difficulty
providing services due to the lack of local health care workers and a dwindling population to fill beds at such a facility. A long-term feasibility study should be done for the possibility of either an assisted living center or long-term care facility to determine if the community can support such a project, what kind of services would be provided, and what income level of clientele would be served

RESOURCES:
Senior Housing--
DRAFT of Senior Assisted Living Needs Assessment
Prepared by D. Blake Chambliss for the Montana Department of Commerce
Available through the Housing Division of the Department of Commerce
Office: 406-841-2840

Charlie Rehbein
Senior & Long Term Care Division
Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services
111 North Sanders, Room 210
Helena, MT 59620
Office: 406-444-7788
Fax: 406-444-7743
E-mail: crehbein@mt.gov

Housing Resources:
Gus Byrom
CDBG Program Manager
Montana Department of Commerce
301 South Park Avenue
PO Box 200523
Helena, MT 59620-0523
Office: 406-841-2777
Fax: 406-841-2771
E-mail: gbyrom@mt.gov

Ethan Stapp
HOME Program Manager
Montana Department of Commerce
301 South Park Avenue
PO Box 200523
Helena, MT 59620-0523
Office: 406-841-2818
Fax: 406-841-2821
E-mail: estapp@mt.gov

Mayor Larry Bonderud
City of Shelby
112 1st Street South
Shelby, MT 59474
MAIN TOPIC: HOUSING

ISSUE: ADEQUATE HOUSING
Many comments were received regarding the lack of safe, decent, and affordable housing in the Deer Lodge area. Numerous residents felt that local wages were not enough to support a home payment.

RECOMMENDATION:
There are various loan programs available to assist very-low to moderate income families in purchasing a home.

- Encourage your lending institution to participate in the Federal Home Loan Bank of Seattle’s HomeStart program. You can sign up with a participating lender to start a savings account that is matched $3 for every $1 that is contributed by the potential homeowner. HomeStart will match up to $5,000 to you to use for down payment, closing costs, and repairs of a home to be purchased. Participants must participate in homebuyer education.
• **USDA – Rural Development (RD) offers two loan programs for purchasing property** in rural communities – the Guaranteed Loan Program and the Direct/Leveraged Loan Program. No down payment is necessary and loans can be made for up to the appraised value plus some closing costs. The Direct Loan program offers monthly payment assistance to make the payments more affordable. Applicants must meet income and credit requirements and must occupy the property. Funds can be used to purchase an existing home, to construct a home or to purchase a new manufactured home. Both of the programs can be combined with other programs including, but not limited to, Montana Board of Housing (MBOH), National Affordable Housing Network (NAHN), Montana Homeownership Network and Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS), HUD/FHA, and Habitat for Humanity.

• **Montana Homeownership Network, Inc., an affiliate of the Neighborhood Housing Services, offers an array of loan products to make purchasing a home more affordable.** Programs include a deferred second mortgage, as well as low interest rate second mortgages to make a new home purchases more affordable. Loans must be used in conjunction with a FHA, RD, VA, MBOH, or conventional loan.

• **The Department of Housing and Urban Development offers the 203K and Streamlined K programs for rehabilitating a residence at the time of purchase or refinance.**

• **Remove dilapidated houses and trailer parks and infill with self help housing.** The use of water and sewer already in place would reduce some of the costs associated with new construction. **Rural Development’s Self Help Housing Program provides technical assistance grants to non-profit organizations to help groups of very-low and low income families finance and build their own homes.** Public bodies and public or private non-profit corporations with the legal, administrative and technical capacity to provide supervisory assistance to help low-income families build homes in rural areas by the self-help method may qualify for technical assistance grants. Habitat for Humanity also offers sweat equity housing opportunities for very-low income families. Assistance is offered directly to the homebuyer rather than the grantee. Though separate, both programs are administered by Barbara Miller of the National Affordable Housing Network (NAHN) in Butte.

**RESOURCE(S):**

Federal Home Loan Bank of Seattle  
1501 4th Ave., Ste. 1800  
Seattle, WA 98101  
Kimberly Strahm, Community Programs Administrator  
(206) 340-8741  

USDA – Rural Development  
790 Colleen Street  
Helena, MT 59601  
(406) 449-5000, ext. 4  
Cindy Donnell, Area Director  
cindy.donnell@mt.usda.gov
Many seniors live in homes that no longer meet their needs or capabilities.

**RECOMMENDATION:**
Some homes can be modified for senior living by the installation of ramps, locating laundry rooms on the main floor, installing a walk in shower, installation of handrails, changing doorknobs to levers, etc. **There are many programs available that are geared towards senior homeowners.** There are reverse mortgages to help seniors use the equity in their homes for additional income.

- Reversible mortgages are available through some local lenders.
- Dept. of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) offers the Home Equity Conversion Mortgage (HECM) program.
- Montana Board of Housing (MBOH) offers the Reverse Annuity Mortgage (RAM) program.

**There are loans and grants available to help seniors rehabilitate their property - for general repairs such as a roof, new windows, furnace, etc., as well as for making a property handicap accessible.** There are also programs geared toward weatherization projects.

- USDA - Rural Development offers the 504 Home Improvement Loan & Grant program. Applicants must be very low income. Grant recipients must be at least 62 years of age.
- HUD offers the 203K and the Streamline K rehabilitation programs for purchase and refinance loans.
• MT Dept. of Health and Human Services (DPHHS) offers the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) and weatherization services.

**Some seniors expressed the need for an assisted living facility.**
• USDA – Rural Development’s Community Facility Program can financially assist non-profit organizations and public bodies in building an assisted living center.
• MT Dept. of Commerce has programs that can assist with financing community facilities.

**RESOURCE(S):**
USDA - Rural Development  
790 Colleen Street  
Helena, MT 59601  
Cindy Donnell, Area Director  
(406) 449-5000, ext. 4  

Montana Board Of Housing  
PO Box 200501  
Helena, MT 59620-0501  
Gerald Watne  
(406) 841-2838  
[http://housing.mt.gov/Hous_BOH_Ed.asp](http://housing.mt.gov/Hous_BOH_Ed.asp)  
[http://housing.state.mt.us/Includes/CP/PDF/CP_HRD-Ref-Guide.pdf](http://housing.state.mt.us/Includes/CP/PDF/CP_HRD-Ref-Guide.pdf)

HUD, Helena Field Office  
7 W 6th Ave.  
Helena, MT 59601  
Tom Friesen, Director  
(406) 449-5050  
Don_H._Smith@hud.gov

MT Dept. of Health and Human Services  
PO Box 4210  
Helena, MT 59604-4210  
Jim Nolan, Chief  
(406) 447-4260  

Office of Public Assistance  
Mark Beattie, County Director  
409 Missouri  
Deer Lodge MT 59722  
(406) 846-3680
MAIN TOPIC: HOUSING

ISSUE: LACK OF DECENT AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING
Deer Lodge has the unique asset of two large employers in their vicinity – the sawmill and the Montana State Prison. MSP is hiring additional workers. Additionally, the Rock Creek Development will impact Deer Lodge’s housing market. Deer Lodge’s aging housing stock is already strained. At every listening session, the housing problem was mentioned and in most sessions, described as the number one problem facing Deer Lodge.

RECOMMENDATIONS:
The following are existing housing programs in the State of Montana that had received federal/state funding. Contacts are listed following the brief descriptions.

HOME-Funded Local Programs

- The City of Laurel received $280,000 in HOME funds in 2003 to provide low-interest loans to qualified households within the jurisdictional limits of the city for assistance with housing acquisition costs, down payment or closing costs assistance, and homeowner rehabilitation costs. The maximum amount of assistance per housing unit for both homebuyer assistance and homeowner rehabilitation is $25,000, depending on the Median Family Income (MFI) of the household. The homebuyer and/or homeowner must have an annual gross income less than 80% of the Area Median Income for Yellowstone County, and must use the HOME-assisted unit as his/her principal residence. Applicants must successfully complete the prescreening process administered by the Project Coordinator, and be approved by a participating mortgage lender for the maximum allowable amount. Homebuyers must complete homebuyer education counseling. Those receiving down payment/closing cost assistance must provide a cash down payment of no less than 3% of the purchase price.
  
  Contact: Casey Joyce, Project Coordinator (Big Sky Economic Development Authority, Billings) for the City of Laurel: 406.256.6871, ext. 241.

- The City of Shelby received $450,000 in HOME funds in 2003 to undertake a program of housing rehabilitation for existing homeowners, and homebuyer assistance in the form of down payment and closing costs, coupled with modest rehabilitation for code compliance to qualify homes for mortgage financing. The city anticipates assisting approximately ten low-income families in Shelby with homebuyer assistance and modest rehabilitation, and five homeowners with rehabilitation of their current residence. The average assistance for homebuyer assistance/rehabilitation is anticipated to be $27,300 and the average assistance for homeowner rehabilitation is anticipated to be $30,000.
  
  Contact: Kathleen Lumsden, Grant Administrator (Black Coulee Company) for the City of Shelby; 406.434.5222.
Glacier Affordable Housing Foundation (GAHF) received $500,000 in HOME funds in 2004 to down payment and closing cost assistance, up to $35,000 per household, to an anticipated 15 to 20 income-qualified first time homebuyers within Flathead County. GAHF will secure the no-interest, shared appreciation, deferred payment loans through a resale restriction agreement. When the assisted homes are sold or refinanced, GAHF will recapture the original amount funds loaned plus the calculated equity share, which will be used to assist additional eligible homebuyers.

Contact: Lynn Moon, Affordable Housing Consultant, Glacier Affordable Housing Foundation: 406.758.7741.

The Town of Bridger received $378,875 in HOME funds in 2004 to undertake a program of housing rehabilitation for existing homeowners, and homebuyer assistance in the form of down payment and closing costs, coupled with modest rehabilitation for code compliance to qualify homes for mortgage financing. The town anticipates assisting approximately five low-income families in Bridger with homebuyer assistance and modest rehabilitation, and fifteen homeowners with rehabilitation of their current residence. The average assistance is anticipated to be $20,000.

Contact: Julie Jones, Grant Administrator (Single Tree, Inc.) for the Town of Bridger: 406.662.3438.

Ravalli County received $400,000 in 2004 to provide homebuyer assistance in the form of down payment and closing cost assistance to an estimated 15 to 20 lower income households in Ravalli County. The average assistance is anticipated to be $20,000 per household.

Contact: Brendan Moles, Grant Administrator (District XI Human Resource Council, Missoula) for Ravalli County: 406.728.3710.

Elkhorn Affordable Housing Corporation, a newly formed CHDO in Helena, received $333,333 in 2005. They will contract with Rocky Mountain Development Council (RMDC) to complete Phase III of an affordable homeownership program to provide down payment and closing cost assistance to an estimated 12 lower income households in Lewis & Clark County in the greater Helena area, including East Helena and the Helena Valley. The average assistance is anticipated to be $25,000 per household.

Contact: Larry Middagh, Grant Administrator (Rocky Mountain Development Council, Helena) for Elkhorn Affordable Housing Corp: 406.457.7460.

HRC District XI, Missoula, received $183,667 in 2005 to provide low-interest homeowner rehabilitation loans to an estimated 13-17 low-income homeowners in Missoula, Ravalli and Mineral counties. The terms and conditions of the loans would be tailored to the financial circumstances of the borrower, including deferred payment loans. The average assistance is anticipated to be $15,000 per household.


The City of Kalispell received $216,333 in 2005 to provide down payment and closing cost assistance to 7 low-income, first-time homebuyers to purchase homes within the city limits of Kalispell. The City will partner with Glacier Affordable Housing Foundation, which will secure the no-interest, deferred payment loans through a Resale Restrictive Agreement. The average assistance is anticipated to be $30,000 per household.

Contact: Lynn Moon, Affordable Housing Consultant (Glacier Affordable Housing Foundation) for the City of Kalispell: 406.758.7741.

Lake County received $137,015 in 2005 to provide down payment and closing cost assistance to 10 low-income families within Lake County with a deed restricted, no-interest second mortgage. The average assistance is anticipated to be $13,000 per household.

Contact: Elaine Wood, Grant Administrator (Ronan Housing Authority, Ronan) for Lake County: 406.676.5900.

The City of Lewistown’s Affordable Homebuyer Project received $293,333 in 2005 to provide down payment and closing cost assistance to 17-20 low-income families. With Montana Board of Housing funds, the project will provide funds to finance the gap between increasing home purchase prices and the amount families can afford. The City of Lewistown has a long-term relationship with HRDC VI, who will be managing this grant. The average assistance is anticipated to be $15,000 per household.

Contact: Esther Distad, Grant Administrator (HRDC VI) for the City of Lewistown: 406.535.7488.

Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS) of Great Falls received $333,333 in 2005 to continue providing its homebuyer assistance program to provide down payment and closing cost assistance to 40 low income, first-time homebuyers.
deferred mortgages to purchase affordable homes. Funds would be available throughout the state, except in entitlement cities or in other areas where a HOME grantee has homebuyer funds available. The average assistance is anticipated to be $8,000 per household.

Contact: Karen Nebel, NHS, Great Falls: 406.761.5861.

The Whitefish Housing Authority (WHA) received $310,000 in 2005 to provide down payment and closing cost assistance to 10 low-income families. WHA and Whitefish Housing Development, Inc. (WHDI) would secure a minimum of 10 homes, either through purchase from developers or construction of homes on land owned by WHDI. These homes would be made available for purchase by qualified low-income first-time homebuyers using an array of funding partners. The application did not specify whether the program is limited to Whitefish city limits or to the WHA jurisdiction, which would be up to 10 miles outside the city limits. The average assistance is anticipated to be $30,000 per household.

Contact: SueAnn Grogan, Whitefish Housing Authority, Whitefish: 406.862.4143.

RESOURCES:
HOUSING RESOURCE DIRECTORY
Information in Support of the Montana Consolidated Plan
For the Plan Year Beginning April 1, 2006
JANUARY 2006

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MAIN TOPIC: HOUSING

ISSUES:
- Adequate Housing- Safe, Decent, Affordable
- Availability – Rentals and/or For Sale
- Senior Housing and Assisted Living

The Deer Lodge resource team assessment meetings held April 25th and 26th along with results of a Deer Lodge housing survey indicate a very high response from residents that “there is a need to demolish some of the deteriorated residences in Deer Lodge and replace them with new residences.” Housing survey results for the Deer Lodge community also indicate a very high percentage of those residents in favor of seeking state or federal funds as well as supporting the use of local funds or resources to make improvements to existing housing or to construct new affordable housing in Deer Lodge, Montana.

RECOMMENDATION:
- Establish some type of Deer Lodge Community Housing/Neighborhood Task Force – to address safe, decent, and affordable housing within the City of Deer Lodge.
- Conduct a housing inventory assessment along with point detraction to identify housing conditions of the existing housing units within Deer Lodge.
- Identify some options for development and/or construction of senior housing, assisted living housing units, or other personal care apartment complexes.
- Consult and/or partner with the local financial institutions and Deer Lodge banks in seeking possible funding programs to assist elderly and low income residents in creating more affordable housing.
• Explore formation of a Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) certified by the Montana HOME program to perform housing related activities involving home ownership, sponsorship and development.
• Encourage the concept of developing a Habitat for Humanity or Rebuilding Together organization within the City of Deer Lodge.

RESOURCES:
• Designing and Initiating A Small Community Housing Rehabilitation Program or The Housing Rehabilitation Program Workbook both published by the Montana Department of Commerce in May of 1995 would be a good resource guides for the City of Deer Lodge. Request copies of both resources from Montana Department of Commerce, Community Development Block Grant Program, P.O. Box 200523, Helena, MT 59620-0523 or phone is (406) 841-2791.

Other informational resources and helpful web sites that may offer the Deer Lodge residents with sources of funding, technical assistance guides, and other relevant materials for addressing housing issues are as follows:
• http://www.housing.mt.gov/
• http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt/
• http://www hud gov/offices/adm/grants/fundsavail/cfm.
• http://www.ruralhome.org/
• http://www.rcac.org/
• http://www.habitat.org/
• http://www.rebuildingtogether.org/
• http://www.hud.gov/local/index.cfm?state=mt

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MAIN TOPIC: HOUSING

ISSUES:
• Limited land availability
• Planning for various types of housing developments – great start with housing survey

Again comments at the Deer Lodge resource team assessment meetings indicated that there is limited land available for planning or developing new housing. The Deer Lodge housing survey states “there is a need to demolish some of the deteriorated residences in Deer Lodge and replace them with new residences.” This is a great first step and with collaboration among government, human service organizations, financial institutions, real estate agents, housing developers, and other community groups, I believe housing problems can be overcome.

RECOMMENDATION:
• Develop a map of Deer Lodge showing areas where possible housing development might take place as well as identify neighborhoods where deteriorated housing may be unsafe and may be considered for replacement.
Explore funding opportunities for low interest loan or grant programs that might assist the elderly and low-income households with home repairs, weatherization, or energy efficiency.

Build partnerships with Deer Lodge banks and other financial institutions to link up with possible funding programs for developing more affordable housing.

RESOURCES:
The following resources or web sites may be helpful to Deer Lodge residents in developing maps, gathering demographic information, identifying sources of funding, reviewing technical assistance materials, and/or working together as a community to address housing issues:

- http://www.ceic.mt.gov/
- http://www.fanniemae.com/index.jhtml
- http://www.nwgreatfalls.org/outsideofgf.htm
- http://www.nwmt.org/

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MAIN TOPIC: HOUSING

ISSUE: AVAILABILITY, SENIOR HOUSING, LIMITED RENTALS
A common theme throughout the listening sessions was a lack of adequate housing. The availability of safe, decent, and affordable housing for sale or rent is very limited in the area. The lack of housing is further compounded by a limited availability of land for development of housing.

- Many people employed at area businesses must commute to/from work due to a lack of available housing in the area.
- Increased employment opportunities at the prison and with the Rock Creek development has placed additional pressure on local housing availability.
- There is a need for additional senior housing.
- Limited rental units are available.

RECOMMENDATIONS:
Coordinate with local city and county planners to identify potential land that is adjacent to the city that could be connected to city services and annexed for the development of additional housing.

Work with area realtors to identify potential developers with the expertise and resources to construct new housing.

Note: Adding additional senior housing would increase the number of existing homes available for sale or rent.

RESOURCES:
MAIN TOPIC: HOUSING

RECOMMENDATIONS/RESOURCES:

Headwaters is assisting Powell County and the City of Deer Lodge with a comprehensive housing survey that will ultimately provide much of the information that the community is seeking in addressing its housing needs.

Headwaters provides a First Time Home Buyers Class that is designed to assist people with down payment and closing costs. These classes can be scheduled in Deer Lodge.
MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

ISSUE: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND GROWTH POLICY
Many suggestions of needs for the community were mentioned during the course of the Resource Team’s meeting with the people of Deer Lodge. There seemed to be no consensus on what was the highest-ranking specific issue is that faces the community. Certainly, there were broad issues such as housing and economic development that were repeated more often than others but within those issues were many suggested sub-issues.

RECOMMENDATION:
As mentioned above, the community needs a plan on how to prioritize all of these needs and how each need will be addressed. A comprehensive plan and growth policy will allow members of the community see how the city plans to deal with each need, and in what level of priority. Some people may think that a certain need should have a higher priority but if they are able to see that it is a priority nonetheless they should be encouraged that their local government and planners are addressing their issue.

Deer Lodge’s growth policy plan has not been updated in over 30 years. Over that time Deer Lodge has experienced significant changes and to meet those changes the city should adapt its plan to match today’s community.

RESOURCES:
Dave Cole
Community Development Division Administrator
Montana Department of Commerce
301 South Park Avenue
PO Box 200523
Helena, MT 59620-0523
Office: 406-841-2776
Fax: 406-841-2771
E-mail: dacole@mt.gov

Gus Byrom
CDBG Program Manager
Montana Department of Commerce
301 South Park Avenue
PO Box 200523
Helena, MT 59620-0523
Office: 406-841-2777
Fax: 406-841-2771
E-mail: gbyrom@mt.gov

Tim Davis
MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

ISSUE: INFRASTRUCTURE
Most often brought up as an infrastructure concern were the potholes in streets across the city. Also mentioned were the water and sewer systems, the deterioration of sidewalks, and the state of the walking trail as it relates to tourism.

The state of streets and sidewalks in Deer Lodge was dismal at best. Most streets had significant potholes including chunks of pavement missing. Sidewalks, including those close to the senior center, were extremely worn down and uneven. Members of the city government said that the water and sewer mains needed replacement. The walking trail is currently only on one side of town with a planned expansion to stretch through the community. Residents now have to drive to the trail to walk on it and believe that having a trail going through town would increase community and tourist use and encourage visitors to shop in the downtown area.

RECOMMENDATION:
There are funding agencies that can provide grants or low interest loans to the city to address these infrastructure problems. Once the city is ready to address one of these issues, it should look at what funding the project is eligible for and apply for those grants or loans.

RESOURCES:
See the link below for a list of public facility funding agencies:

Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks – Recreational Trails Program
http://fwp.mt.gov/parks/grants/rtp/default.html

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ISSUE: INFRASTRUCTURE – SIDEWALKS

RECOMMENDATION:
Numerous comments were made regarding the dilapidated and buckled sidewalks, or lack of sidewalks, in the downtown and residential areas of Deer Lodge. Sidewalks in ill repair can certainly be a safety hazard to pedestrians. By not having a sidewalk in place, pedestrians are at risk of walking in traffic, or may present an unwanted foot traffic problem on neighboring lawns. Both situations could be especially problematic to persons that are mobility impaired.

Deteriorated sidewalks leading up to a residence can pose the same problems and can put the homeowner at risk for liability issues. Elderly and disabled occupants may face serious challenges in coming and going from their residence if their sidewalks are in disrepair.

RECOMMENDATION:
- The Montana Department of Transportation has a Community Transportation Enhancement Program (CTEP) which can help with installing new, or replacing old, sidewalks on publicly owned property.
- USDA – Rural Development’s Community Facility program can provide financial assistance to communities for repairing/installing sidewalks.
- USDA - Rural Development’s 504 Program can assist very-low income homeowners with replacing deteriorated walkways on their property. Property must be owner occupied.

RESOURCES:
Montana Dept. of Transportation
PO Box 201001
Helena, MT 59620-1001
Ross Tervo
(406) 444-9209

USDA – Rural Development
PO Box 850
Bozeman, MT 59771-0850
John Guthmiller, Program Director
(406) 585-2549
http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt/

USDA – Rural Development
790 Colleen Street
Helena, MT 59601
Cindy Donnell, Area Director
(406) 449-5000, ext. 4

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MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
ISSUE: INFRASTRUCTURE – STREETS/POTHOLES

RECOMMENDATIONS:
There are State and Federal programs available to assist nonprofit organizations and public bodies improve streets.

- USDA – Rural Development’s Community Facility program can provide loans or guarantee bank loans for street repair.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES:
USDA – Rural Development
PO Box 850
Bozeman, MT 59771-0850
John Guthmiller, Program Director
(406) 585-2549
http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt/

Montana Dept. of Commerce
Community Development Division
PO Box 200523
Helena, MT 59620-0523
Dave Cole, Administrator
(406) 841-2770
http://comdev.mt.gov/

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MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

ISSUE: INFRASTRUCTURE - TOURISM
With the many museums, historic Grant Kohrs Ranch, tri-county fair and rodeo, Big Sky Draft Horse Expo, ample recreational opportunities, and scenic views, Deer Lodge has a lot to offer visitors to their community. The fact that Deer Lodge is located on an interstate system and in between Glacier and Yellowstone National Parks makes it an excellent spot for tourists to explore. Locals seem proud of what their community has to offer, but feel that their assets could be better publicized.

RECOMMENDATION:
- Utilize Travel Montana to promote local businesses on a broader scale. Information provided to the State by local businesses is relayed to prospective Montana visitors via a call center and is listed in the Travel Guide. This service is free and the outreach potential is boundless. For a $25 fee, a business can link their website with the Travel Montana site.
- Review the Montana Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan for 2003-2007. This plan is a blueprint for individuals and communities interested in expanding upon Montana’s tourism and recreation industry. The Plan highlights three main action areas: Managing Information – includes assistance in creating new tourism and recreation products, Managing Assets –
includes guidelines on developing signs and posting them on Interstates and highways, and Creating Teams – includes identifying partnerships between tourism facilities with technical and financial resources.

- Visit the National Agricultural Library website. There are numerous links in the Tourism Resources section on this site. **The section is specifically designed to provide information on tourism in rural areas.** Many of the links provide information on developing and maintaining Agri-tourism in rural communities, while others offer planning resources, statistics, funding and program assistance, and case studies.
- The Montana Dept. Of Commerce’s Tourism Infrastructure Investment Program (TIIP) can assist in building, remodeling, or preserving existing tourism and historic sites.

**RESOURCE(S):**

To review the Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan:


For the National Agricultural Library:


General:

http://travelmontana.mt.gov/faq/links.asp
http://travelmontana.mt.gov/faq/addbusiness.asp
http://travelmontana.state.mt.us/ourprograms/trsmdevelop/2005faq.shtm

Travel Montana
301 South Park
PO Box 200533
Helena MT 59620
406-841-2788
Jan Wirak, jan@visitmt.com

Montana Promotion Division
PO Box 200533
Helena, MT 59620-0501
(406) 841-2870
(406) 841-2871 FAX
mt-webmaster@visitmt.com

**MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

**ISSUES:**

- Comprehensive Plan and Growth Policy
- Infrastructure
  - Streets - potholes
  - Water/Sewer
  - Sidewalks
  - Tourism
    - Walking Trail
• “Define Deer Lodge” - All pulling in same direction based on that definition.

Deer Lodge definitely has a need to develop some type of community development plan or growth policy according to the comments made during resource team assessment meetings. The public perception of infrastructure is that it needs improvement and that existing trail or museum facilities could be expanded upon.

RECOMMENDATION:
• Begin with preparing “neighborhood renewal” plans for all areas within the City of Deer Lodge to address the critical need of streets, water and/or sewer, sidewalks, and other community infrastructure.
• Consider a combination of federal, state, or local funding sources to make community improvements such as drinking water and wastewater facilities so that low interest loan or grant programs can assist senior citizens and low-income households on fixed incomes.
• Work with local government, Deer Lodge banks, financial institutions, businesses, schools, hospital, library, nursing home, youth organizations, and community groups to identify priorities of community projects.

RESOURCES:
For additional information on infrastructure planning and funding programs, please go to web sites listed as follows:
• http://www.comdev.mt.gov/
• http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt/RUS/water_and_environmental_program.htm
• http://www.rcac.org/programs/serv-financial.html
• http://www.railstotrails.org/
• http://www.mrws.org/home.html
• http://www.map-inc.org/Programs&Services.htm
• http://www.deq.state.mt.us/wqinfo/index.asp
• http://www.epa.gov/region8/community_resources/grants/grants.html
• http://www.doc.gov/eda/html/sitemap.htm
• http://www.epa.gov/ow/funding.html
• http://www.epa.gov/ow/funding.html
• http://www.mrws.org/home.html
• http://www.fwp.mt.gov/parks/grants/default.html

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MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

ISSUE: ACTIVITIES, COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, GROWTH POLICY
A need for community development activities was identified. The basis for community development was in development of a comprehensive plan/growth policy for the community with a key component being to define Deer Lodge with specific goals and objectives.
RECOMMENDATIONS:
*Develop a detailed comprehensive plan/growth policy that defines the community needs*

Closer coordination between the city and county on issues like law enforcement, planning, growth, and other mutually beneficial issues.

Hold public meetings to discuss and define what the community of Deer Lodge sees as their focus and priorities – such as with the Resource Team Assessment on May 24th, 7:00pm at the PEN.

RESOURCES:
Headwaters RC&D  
Connie Ternes-Daniels  
Economic Development Planner  
305 W. Mercury  
Butte, MT  59701  
Phone: 406.782.7333 Fax: 406.782.9675  
Email: ctdaniels@bigskyhsd.com

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MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

RECOMMENDATIONS/RESOURCES:

Headwaters provides technical assistance and grant writing help for community projects. Several projects that Headwaters has assisted Deer Lodge with in the past include: Main Street redevelopment project, funding for a new roof on the 1912 cell house, the wastewater line replacement across the Clark Fork River, irrigation project at the Grant Kohr’s Ranch, and the Sun Mountain Lumber project.

If the community desires assistance with a special project, please contact Headwaters and have it placed on the annual plan of work.

If Deer Lodge is considering infrastructure projects, I would encourage you to contact Water, Wastewater, and Solid Waste Action Coordination Team (W2ASACT).  
In 1995, the state and federal funding agencies adopted a common preliminary engineering report format that would be acceptable to each of the agencies that fund these kinds of projects. Additional information can be obtained through the Montana Department of Commerce, USDA Rural Development, and other state and federal agencies.

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

USDA Rural Development
Local government officials may want to consider an urban renewal plan and the implementation of tax increment financing (TIF) to assist areas within the downtown that may suffer from blight. Several communities across the state have implemented TIFs. Local government officials may want to visit with some of these communities and discuss the benefits of downtown revitalization efforts using this tool.

Montana just adopted a state-wide main street program and several communities across the state have developed their own main street programs for revitalization. Again, local government officials may want to investigate the merits of the program and consider some sort of implementation of this proven program.

TIF Information
Tax Exempt Financing for Economic Development Purposes
Mae Nan Ellingson
Dorsey & Whitney LLP
125 Bank Street, Suite 600
Missoula, MT 59802
(406) 721-6025
ellingson.mae.nan@dorsey.com

Karen Burns, URA Director
Butte-Silver Bow
(406) 497-6465

Main Street Approach-Making Downtowns Come Alive
The National Trust for Historic Preservation
www.mainst.org/

George Everett
Butte Main Street Director
gevertt@mail.montana.com

Deer Lodge is rich with historic resources. Preserving its historic buildings and maintaining its historical integrity will benefit Deer Lodge’s overall economy. The Deer Lodge Hotel is worth looking at as a preservation strategy along with the community’s housing needs. Deer Lodge should work with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Montana State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and the Montana Preservation Alliance. Federal and state tax credits are available for preservation of historic building. Local preservation officials should work with the SHPO on any preservation projects.

National Trust for Historic Preservation
www.nationaltrust.org/
MAIN TOPIC: BEAUTIFICATION

ISSUE: ENFORCEMENT OF CODES AND ORDINANCES ON THE BOOKS
As residents talked about abandoned vehicles or junk vehicles on streets throughout the community, someone mentioned that there are already local laws dealing with this issue.

There was also concern expressed about abandoned and dilapidated homes. These concerns included neglect of the yards, tall weeds, and the exterior appearance. Some of these homes were also mentioned under housing issues. When talking about availability of adequate housing, people said that there were affordable homes for sale but these homes were severely neglected and in poor repair. Homes that were in good condition were usually too expensive for most potential buyers.

RECOMMENDATION:
The city should consider, as some residents suggested, expanding its community clean up day to more than just one day a year. Getting neighborhood leaders involved and active in participating and organizing more clean up days will help residents take pride in their area and make sure to keep it clean.

The volunteer program could also be extended to include enforcement of the city’s junk vehicle ordinances. Because law enforcement is stretched thin for the city and Powell County, volunteers could be trained by the city for what type of junk vehicles can be removed. If this option is not feasible, the city should consider hiring an employee, either full or part-time, to manage this issue.

The city should also consider a neighborhood rehabilitation project. Butte currently has two projects, funded in part by CDBG, that are replacing sidewalks, curbs, and gutters as well as demolishing deteriorated homes and rehabilitating others. Butte plans to expand these projects to other parts of town as they work to get rid of unlivable homes and improving infrastructure.

RESOURCES:
Gus Byrom
CDBG Program Manager
Montana Department of Commerce
301 South Park Avenue
PO Box 200523
Helena, MT 59620-0523
Office: 406-841-2777
Fax: 406-841-2771
E-mail: gbyrom@mt.gov

Mike Wherley
Community Transportation Enhancement Program Section Supervisor
Montana Department of Transportation
2701 Prospect Avenue
PO Box 201001
Helena, MT 59620-1001
Office: 406-444-4221
MAIN TOPIC: BEAUTIFICATION

ISSUE: ADDITIONAL CLEAN UP DAYS

RECOMMENDATION:

• Pick up garbage on your street, or downtown whenever you see it. Don’t wait until the once-per-year community based clean up.
• Schedule your community clean up for more than once time per year. Make a fun community day out of it by celebrating with a picnic/barbeque in the park or a street dance. The Keep America Beautiful Organization has great ideas for motivating and organizing a clean up, as well as keeping citizens involved on a long term basis.
• Organize something similar to the “adopt a highway” program within your city. Have different businesses, civic organizations, your local volunteer list, etc. commit to keeping a section of your city clean on a scheduled basis.

RESOURCE(S):
http://www.kab.org/

MAIN TOPIC: BEAUTIFICATION

ISSUE: MOTIVATION--COMMUNITY PRIDE

RECOMMENDATION:

• Set a good example and clean up your own yard, home and business front. Make improvements if you can afford them. Your actions can spur your neighbors into action.
• Acknowledge and thank the people that actually do keep up their property. Try a monthly write up in a newsletter or newspaper to acknowledge the new paint job, addition, reseeded lawn, tearing down of an old shed, removal of junk, etc. Again, the positive reinforcement can keep others motivated to maintain and improve their property.
• Organize your neighbors, or use your community volunteer list, to help elderly and disabled homeowners plant flowers, mow lawns, paint and do light maintenance on their property.
• Buy more banners for the downtown area celebrating Deer Lodge and Deer Lodge events/history/scenery. Put them on light posts in the entire downtown area.
• Establish a community “tool library” where locals can borrow the necessary tools to do home and yard maintenance. Missoula has had a great success with this resource.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCE(S):
http://www.kab.org/
http://www.sustainablebusinesscouncil.org/members/missoulaurbanproject.html

MAIN TOPIC: BEAUTIFICATION

ISSUES:
• Enforcement of codes and ordinances on the books
  o Junk vehicles, trailers, abandoned homes, yards, weeds, exterior home neglect
• Additional clean up days – more than twice per year
• Motivation: Community pride

Comments from elementary school children all the way up to senior citizens, it was stated that Deer Lodge is overdue for cleaning up the community. Some form of policy according to the ordinances currently on the books at the City Hall may have to be revisited. The general public seems to think that Deer Lodge is a “good” place to live and/or work.

RECOMMENDATION:
• Organize neighborhood meetings that focus on community pride and the “renewal” of Deer Lodge.
• Encourage businesses, school, non-profit organizations, churches, museums, library, hospitals, MSP/Boot Camp employees, elderly, youth, local government, farmers, ranchers, Grant Kohrs Ranch, and neighborhood volunteers to think about small community improvements or beautification projects that could be made within the next five years.
• Develop some short-term goals and a “Beautification Fund” through the involvement of Deer Lodge businesses, school, non-profit organizations, churches, hospitals, Boot Camp/MSP employees, elderly, youth, library, local government, Grant Kohrs Ranch, farmers, ranchers, and neighborhood volunteers to enhance community beautification projects as well as home safety initiatives.

RESOURCES:
During most of meetings held April 25th and 26th, it was commented over and over that Deer Lodge is made up of very dedicated people that work together well. Some of the informational resources may offer Deer Lodge residents with ideas for creating partnerships to achieve community beautification projects. There may be ways to involve more people in the beautification projects such as planting trees or flowers, creating new green spaces or park areas, as well as teaching friends or neighbors about community garden projects. It might be helpful for the City of Deer Lodge with its surrounding mountains and river landscape to “Celebrate Spring” by promoting National Youth Service Day, Earth Day, National Arbor Day, National Wetlands Month, or Keep America Beautiful Great
American Cleanup Week. Other community events or could be sponsored by specific businesses or the local “Arts Club” that exists in Deer Lodge.

The following web sites might help provide sources of funding, give technical assistance, and guide community beautification efforts or activities:

- http://www.creativehomeartsclub.com/
- http://www.garden.org/home
- http://www.kab.org/programs2.asp?id=799
- http://www.smartgrowth.org/
- http://national/unitedway.org/

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MAIN TOPIC: BEAUTIFICATION

ISSUE: CLEAN UP AND APPEARANCE
The appearance of the community and downtown area was addressed as an issue in several listening sessions.

- The appearance of the downtown area and the vacant hotel was a concern
- The poor appearance of junked vehicles in yards, lack of yard maintenance, old trailers, weeds, and homes needing repairs or maintenance was sited as a community detractor
- Improving community pride.

RECOMMENDATION:

- Enforce the existing codes and ordinances that are in place. Closer coordination between the city and county law enforcement to apply the rules would assist with compliance

- Have additional clean-up days throughout the year – more than just one.

- Get involved with the Main Street Program

- Adopt standards for the construction and materials for the downtown business district

- Ask the local newspaper to highlight those who exceed the standards.

RESOURCES:
Your local newspaper

Mel Walters
Main Street Montana Program
Montana Department of Commerce
301 South Park Avenue
PO Box 200523
Helena, MT 59620-0523
Office: 406-841-2756
MAIN TOPIC: BEAUTIFICATION

RECOMMENDATIONS/RESOURCES:

Headwaters can and has assisted Deer Lodge in the past with grant writing assistance for community beautification projects. Community Transportation and Enhancement Program (CTEP) funding through the Montana Department of Transportation have been used in the past for beautification projects.

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MAINTOPIC: SOCIAL CHALLENGES

ISSUE: DRUGS, ALCOHOL AND OTHER “AT RISK” BEHAVIORS

Many members of the community, including the 8th grade students the Resource Team met with as well as comments from Juniors at the high school, cited drugs, specifically methamphetamine, as a problem. **Both students and adults said that meth is easy to obtain and is the root of much of the crime and school dropout in the city.** Some adults pointed to Hepatitis C as a problem resulting from sharing needles during meth use.

Students also said that alcohol was a problem for a number of reasons. One is that some of their peers drink which also leads to crime and school dropouts. Another is the perception presented to students that drinking is acceptable. Some students complained of the number of bars in town and that when adults go out, they go to the bars.

Teen sex was also brought up as a concern. Some of the 8th graders said it was a problem but more juniors at the high school thought it was a problem as well as pregnancies. The teachers at the junior high said teen pregnancy is a problem and teachers at the high school said sexual abuse is something that needs to be addressed.

RECOMMENDATION:
The 8th grade students recently discussed meth in their class. Further education on the dangers of meth use may lower the risk to teens. Possibilities on further education could include the Montana Meth Project, the attorney general’s office, or the prison. The attorney general could also be helpful in discussing alcohol and teen crime.

Students, and some adults, said that there is not enough to do outside of school and that is why there is such a problem with drugs and sex. **Creating more after school activities, either through the school or separately, would provide opportunities for students.** Some activities mentioned were a skate park, paintball course, soccer program, motocross track, and a ski area.

Right now, students are frustrated that ideas aren’t followed through with action. Adults should help students organize a project and mentor them to follow through with their project. A number of students in the 8th grade class raised their hands to express interest to volunteer. Teachers, parents, or other volunteers should follow up and offer to help the students get what they want.

RESOURCES:


Grindline Skate Parks
- Grindline claims Great Falls and Missoula as skate parks they have constructed and Dillon and Wolf Point as design projects.
  http://grindline.com/cgi-bin/view.pl

Dirt Wurx U.S.A.

Gary Pfister
Education Program Manager, Health Enhancement & Safety Division
Office of Public Instruction
1300 11th Avenue, 2nd Floor
Helena, MT 59620
Office: 444-3000
Fax: 444-1373
E-mail: gpfister@mt.gov
- Gary works on after school programs for students

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MAIN TOPIC: SOCIAL CHALLENGES

ISSUE: DROP OUT RATE
We heard some alarming figures regarding the drop out rate for local teens. Some figured that the rate may be as high as 40%.

RECOMMENDATION:
- Use your volunteer list to determine if there are people available to tutor high school students that may be struggling with subject matter.
- Explore alternative teaching methods such as teaming students throughout middle school and high school.
- Introduce more vocational subjects to keep students interested and provided with job skills. If a self help housing project were introduced, students could get involved with the construction. Habitat for Humanity has utilized students in past projects in neighboring cities.

RESOURCE(S):
Habitat for Humanity of Southwest Montana
PO Box 632
66 W. Park, Ste. 214
Butte, MT 59703-0632
Barbara Miller
(406) 782-8579
http://www.habitatswmt.org

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MAIN TOPIC: SOCIAL CHALLENGES
ISSUES:
- Drugs and Alcohol and other “at risk” behaviors
- Drop out rate
- Physical and/or verbal abuse
- Parental supervision
- Expand on Life Line
- More non-school activities
- Non-traditional families

There were lots of comments from young people at resource team assessment meetings that Deer Lodge has lots of drug and alcohol problems along with “at risk” behaviors such as teenage sex.

Even though Deer Lodge residents think that the community is safe there may be non-school activities or programs that could be implemented with little or no cost. **Collaboration among government, law enforcement, human service organizations, the school, library, churches, social clubs such as the Elks, the local 4-H, senior citizens, and other community groups could reduce school drop-out rates, promote healthy lifestyles, and reinforce the need for keeping existing programs.** The existing community programs that have positive impact in the Deer Lodge community that were mentioned as strengths include: Rialto Community Theater; the Library; 4-H Clubs; the CPC; Life Lines; Elks educational scholarship programs; American Legion baseball program; Teen Center; and DARE program.

RECOMMENDATION:
- **Find ways to involve or engage all residents of Deer Lodge in building a “Recreation Center” or “Skate Park”** through the existing non-profits, churches, hospital, school, youth/senior citizen groups, farmers, ranchers, and other community volunteer organizations.
- **Create a community “safety net” program or develop “safe at home” initiatives** through network of local businesses, non-profit organizations, churches, school, hospitals, Boot Camp/MSP employees, local government, 4-H/youth programs, farmers, ranchers, senior citizens, and other neighborhood volunteers.

Recommended Resource(s):
Informational resources and web sites that Deer Lodge can use to locate sources of funding, helpful technical assistance, or other relevant materials as follows:
- [http://bccdoj.doj.state.mt.us/](http://bccdoj.doj.state.mt.us/)
- [http://www.deq.state.mt.us/Meth/index.asp](http://www.deq.state.mt.us/Meth/index.asp)
- [http://www.usdoj.gov/05publications/other_government_resources.html](http://www.usdoj.gov/05publications/other_government_resources.html)
- [http://www.bgca.org/](http://www.bgca.org/)
- [http://www.fourthcouncil.edu/](http://www.fourthcouncil.edu/)
- [http://www.campfire.org/all_about_us/faqs.asp](http://www.campfire.org/all_about_us/faqs.asp)
- [http://www.girlsspeakout.org/programs.html](http://www.girlsspeakout.org/programs.html)
- [http://www.gbgm-umc.org/umw/BFCY/index_eng.cfm](http://www.gbgm-umc.org/umw/BFCY/index_eng.cfm)
MAIN TOPIC: SOCIAL CHALLENGES

ISSUES: DRUGS AND ALCOHOL, DROP OUT RATE, PARENTAL SUPERVISION
There were some social challenges identified that were a common theme in several of the sessions.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Do complete the Resource Guide that lists all the available services with a point of contact that are located in the Deer Lodge area.
- Look at alternative and vocational school educational opportunities to help those dropping out of school with alternatives to the traditional high school.
- Provide the opportunity for getting GED training and testing support to help those who have dropped out of high school.
- Look at starting a Big Brothers/Sister program in the area.
- Identify ways to expand and maintain the Life Line program.
- Identify the primary causes for the high drop out rates and address identified issues.

RESOURCES:
Big Brothers/Sisters program: http://www.bbbnsa.org
Montana Department of Public Instruction: http://opi.mt.gov

MAIN TOPIC: SOCIAL CHALLENGES

ISSUES:
- Drugs and Alcohol and other “at risk” behaviors
- Drop out rate
- Physical and/or verbal abuse
- Parental supervision
- Expand on Life Line
- More non-school activities
- Non-traditional families

Although all of the issues raised by the local citizens were valid, the one that brought me (Leisa) the most concern was the high percentage of school “drop-outs”...40+. Our children are the future for any community and thus I feel strongly that this issue needs to be understood and dealt with immediately.

RECOMMENDATIONS:
To approach this issue I would suggest the educational community get together and establish a team dedicated to finding out why the young people are quitting school. Once the reasons are established, and there is no doubt going to be a multitude of reasons, then search for solutions based on the problem area. For example, are most drop out situations due to teen pregnancy? If so, perhaps more information could be made available on increased sex education and more availability of access to...
Planned Parenthood. If there is no local Planned Parenthood Office (PPO), perhaps a weekly or bi-monthly visit could be performed by a Planned Parenthood representative from a surrounding city (Helena or Missoula).

RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESOURCES:
As PPO receives grant funding for various projects, possible funding sources for the reproduction/distribution of information packets/brochures to students, contact Helena PPO (tele #406-457-2470) or Missoula PPO (tele#406-728-5490).

http://www.teenpregnancy.org/resources

http://www.plannedparenthood.org/pp2/imt/

If a drop-out factor appears to as a result of dysfunctional family homes where abuse of some sort is present, perhaps the team could explore opportunities for providing information to suspected abuse offering foster/alternative home sites.

Resource: Department of Family Services telephone (406-846-9613)

Additionally, if not already offered, perhaps the teaching staff could offer extra credit in classes for activities that focus on city government and community beautification projects. Build curriculums in relative classes that bring up local issues and encourage the students to get involved and have ownership for the direction their city will take. Come up with a motto like “This is YOUR town” or have the students participate in a contest to come up with a new motto.

Look for/provide mentoring opportunities—perhaps job shadowing city government officials.

Build “Task Force” student teams comprised of students that address each of the issues brought up by the concerned citizens (stated in the Deer Lodge Resource Team Assessment).

Examples:
1.) HOUSING ISSUES:
Have student teams look at available housing real estate in Deer Lodge with a realtor. Afterward, have them write a synopsis of what they learned as well as what solutions they can come up with.

2.) COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ISSUES:
(Infrastructure): Have the student teams walk and/or drive the streets of Deer Lodge and look around. Afterward, have them write a synopsis of what they learned as well as what solutions they can come up with.

3.) BEAUTIFICATION ISSUES:
Again, the student teams could walk and/or drive around Deer Lodge looking for junk vehicles/trailers, trash, etc. and then write a synopsis of what they saw as well as what solutions they can come up with.
By having the student teams address each of the issues mentioned in the Team Assessment, they will have a clearer idea of what challenges Deer Lodge faces and more importantly, have a role in improving Deer Lodge.

I believe that the more we engage the children of communities—in this particular instance, Deer Lodge, the issues will become clear to the children and motivation will come naturally-- with some constructive adult direction/group discussion. Solutions can be found and “ownership” of the community will be felt.

The children of Deer Lodge, ARE the future of Deer Lodge.

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MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES

ISSUE: MIXED MESSAGES AND MISINFORMATION
During the course of the public hearings, residents provided information that contradicted each other. Some people had different information regarding the Rock Creek project as well as the skateboard park, youth center, drug coalition, impact of the prison on the city, and law enforcement.

RECOMMENDATION:
Better communication between the city, schools, community groups, and the public would help clear up some of these misunderstandings. Periodic newsletters or articles in the local newspaper would help with this issue. Also, taking the discussion directly to residents through meetings or a door-to-door campaign would help. Use a hook to bring people to a community meeting such as a potluck dinner or picnic or a raffle to support a local effort and the winner gets a fun prize. Make people want to come and participate.

RESOURCE:
The citizens of Deer Lodge

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MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES

ISSUES:
- Drug Coalition, Skateboard Ramps, Teen Center
- Downtown empty, downtown full...polar opposites.
- Impact of prison operation and industries
- Schools - different perceptions
- Schools and city role in recreational programs
- Rock Creek community investments
- Between county and city, i.e., law enforcement, services
- Community Resource Guide

It was very rewarding to hear that a “new” Resource Guide would be compiled for the Deer Lodge community. The local Ministerial Society volunteered its services to redevelop a guide for community programs and services, civic groups, emergency and medical facilities, law enforcement, fire protection, church organizations, recreation opportunities, drug coalition members, and other public activities or events held in Deer Lodge.

There were comments made during resource team assessment meetings that seemed to communicate two different project ideas for youth – one being a Skateboard Park and another being a “Recreation Center” with paintball, go-cart track, and other outdoor sports equipment or activities. The general public of Deer Lodge seems to think the schools is a “strength” in the community, however, the school drop out
rate might indicate the opposite perception. It may be helpful to do an economic and social impact analysis of the Boot Camp/MSP operations as well as the investments of the “new” Rock Creek development and then communicate the information to residents of Deer Lodge.

RECOMMENDATION:

- **Begin with publication and disbursement of the “new” Resource Guide** throughout the Deer Lodge community.
- **Development of an informative newsletter or some type of community flyer** that could be easily produced and hand delivered to all neighborhoods by young volunteers or mailed directly to local businesses, non-profits, churches, hospitals, Boot Camp/MSP employees, the library, school, local government, Grant Kohrs Ranch, farmers, and ranchers.
- **Establish a “Deer Lodge Volunteer Network”** by enlisting local government officials, Deer Lodge bankers, local businesses, Elks club members, schools, hospital personnel, library staff, nursing home employees, youth organizations, museums, senior citizen groups, Boot Camp/MSP employees, Grant Kohrs Ranch volunteers or staff and all other community associations.

RESOURCES:

More informational resources for Deer Lodge residents can be found at web sites as follows:

- [http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/chc/reinventingaging/volunteer.html](http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/chc/reinventingaging/volunteer.html)
- [http://www.uwex.edu/ii/learner/sites_volunteer.htm](http://www.uwex.edu/ii/learner/sites_volunteer.htm)
- [http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/newsroom/katrina.asp](http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/newsroom/katrina.asp)
- [http://www.nea.org/readacross/volunteer/youthleaders.html](http://www.nea.org/readacross/volunteer/youthleaders.html)
- [http://www.aarp.org/about_aarp/community_service/](http://www.aarp.org/about_aarp/community_service/)
- [http://www.onestarfoundation.org/onestar/resources/n_awards.html](http://www.onestarfoundation.org/onestar/resources/n_awards.html)
- [http://narsvpd.com/resources.htm](http://narsvpd.com/resources.htm)

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MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNICATIONS CHALLENGE

ISSUE: MIXED MESSAGES AND MISINFORMATION

There were several sessions where comments and perceptions completely different between individuals. Further discussions indicated there was a lack of information or mis-information that was being circulated:

- Several comments were made about the appearance of the downtown area needing to be improved or have standardized building codes. Then other sessions the comments were that the downtown area has seen considerable improvement over the past few years.
- A perception was the local businesses were struggling and that many vacant spaces existed on the main street and detracted from giving the community a vibrant look. The other side indicated there wasn't any available retail space and local businesses were doing well. The main vacant building was the old hotel on the corner of main street that is very visible.
- Comments about the impact of the prison on the community went from a positive contributor to a detractor for the community.
• The perception of the local schools is they have a quality program with excellent administration and staff. On the
other hand there is a concern about the high dropout rate and what is the cause and solution.
• The new Rock Creek development was seen as both a positive and negative for the community. There was a concern
about property values rising in an already tight housing market. It became obvious that information about the
projects and the benefits it has already brought to the community are not widely understood.
• There was a concern about the city/county law enforcement support for the community. The perception is law
enforcement within the community was limited and didn't cover the enforcement of local codes and ordinances.
• There was a difference of understand the responsibilities of the school and the city and their involvement in after
school recreational programs. The feeling was divided on who has responsibility to manage and supervise after
school programs.
• There was a concern that many services didn't exist in the area when in reality they were available and just not
visible or easy to find and contact. An example was the need for a drug coalition was expressed and found to already
be in existence. The need for a skateboard park was addressed and then it became evident that new equipment was
purchased for a skateboard park and has been in storage unused. These discussions indicated a need for a resource
guide of community activities and services.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

• Do publish the Resource Guide (discussed at the Town Meeting) of community activities and functions
• Look at the Main Street program and the successful implementation in other communities and
model a program that fits the needs of the community
• Look at establishing a community group that meets quarterly with the prison to discuss
current operations and community impact. This working group could be the information
conduit between the prison and the community and a way to provide input to prison officials.
• Establish routine meetings between the city and county law enforcement to discuss any
concerns or issues. Identify responsibility for enforcement of local ordnances and codes
that currently exist in the community.
• Get more information out on a routine basis about the Rock Creek development. This will
help inform the public and minimize misinformation and rumors about the community impact of
the development.
• Get together a group of interested individuals to routinely meet with the school
administration to address the concern about the high drop out rate being experienced. This
group could explore alternative education options and vocational training that could assist these
individuals with their education; looking at a GED program to assist these individuals could also
be another option.
• Get the local newspaper more involved in community activities and passing information
about on-going projects and activities

RESOURCES:
Mel Walters
Main Street Montana Program
Montana Department of Commerce
301 South Park Avenue
PO Box 200523
Helena, MT 59620-0523
Office: 406-841-2756
Fax: 406-841-2728; E-mail: mwalters@mt.gov
MAIN TOPIC: ACTIVITIES

ISSUE: YOUTH, FAMILY AND ARTS ACTIVITIES
Some residents, especially students, said there was nothing to do in town. This subject was also brought up in the employee housing survey conducted by the Montana State Prison.

RECOMMENDATION:
I have already provided links to the internet for paintball, skate parks, and motocross above. Below are more links on activity ideas or grants available for activities including for the arts, education programs, and outdoor ideas.

RESOURCES:
Montana Arts Council: http://www.art.mt.gov/
Montana Office of Public Instruction: http://www.opi.mt.gov/
  • Under the “Ed News” tab is a link to educational grants available
Montana Kids, Montana Department of Commerce: http://www.montanakids.com/
Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks: http://fwp.mt.gov/education/schoolprograms/default.html
Office of Commissioner of Higher Education: http://mus.montana.edu/distance_learning.htm

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MAIN TOPIC: ACTIVITIES

ISSUE: YOUTH
We heard a lot of talk about the apparent lack of after school and youth activities. The teens mentioned that they would like to have somewhere to go where they can gather with their friends and have fun. The adults mentioned that they would like to see the youth in the community have some activities to keep them occupied, safe and supervised, especially while parents may be working.

RECOMMENDATION:
• Check out the After School Alliance website for great ideas on establishing after school activities in your community. There is a downloadable kit to help identify program needs and which resources to tap.
• Organize activities or classes that can be lead by the numerous talented people in the community. Perhaps the people involved in the art and theater groups could volunteer their time and teach painting, photography or acting classes.
• Check out the Insane Paintball website for ideas on how to help establish a paintball club.
• Establish a youth soccer league.
• Hold fundraisers to raise the remaining monies needed for installing the skateboard ramps that have already been purchased.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES:
After School Alliance websites:
http://afterschoolalliance.org/
http://afterschoolalliance.org/start_a_program.cfm

For tips on organizing and coaching youth soccer:
http://www.brucebrownlee.com/coaching/coaching.htm

Insane Paintball:
http://www.ip8ball.com/ip_aboutus.html

General:
http://www.helpingamericasyouth.gov/
http://pubs.cas.psu.edu/freepubs/pdfs/ui350.pdf

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MAIN TOPIC: ACTIVITIES

ISSUE: FAMILY ACTIVITIES
We heard from the community that they would like more activities for families and sports for adults.

RECOMMENDATION:
• Find other adults with interest in the same sports as yourself and form teams and a schedule.
• Organize or coach a team for the youth in your community.
• Organize clubs for indoor activities like playing cards, painting, acting, and cooking. Utilize your volunteer list for instructors.
• Plan for family themed movie nights at the local theater.
• Organize a “party in the park” once a week or a couple times a month. Host a band, hire a food and drink vendor, sell crafts, and have a Farmer’s Market.

RESOURCE(S):
T-Ball:
http://www.teeballusa.org/

World Association of Adult Recreation:
http://www.teamwaar.com

For tips on organizing and coaching youth soccer:
http://www.brucebrownlee.com/coaching/coaching.htm
MAIN TOPIC: ACTIVITIES

ISSUES:
- Youth
  - Youth Center
  - Skateboard, Paintball, Recreation Station, Soccer
- Family activities
- Funding assistance
  - The Arts, Elks, Fairgrounds, etc.
- Young adult activities
- Seniors
  - Transportation – hours and service extended
  - Senior Citizen Center hours extended

Again the comments made at the Deer Lodge resource team assessment meetings and written information that was received indicated that there was a difference of opinion on a Skateboard Park or multi-purpose Recreation Center. The Deer Lodge community is in need of collaboration among local businesses, financial institutions, real estate agents, non-profit organizations, churches, library, school, hospitals, the Boot Camp/MSP, local government, 4-H/youth programs, farmers, ranchers, senior citizens, and all community volunteers when planning any type of event in Deer Lodge such as the Draft Horse Show. Deer Lodge must take advantage of what it has and make improvements to some of the existing buildings such as the PEN, Trask Hall, museum facilities, senior citizens center, and other community buildings.

RECOMMENDATIONS:
- Begin with preparing plans and make priority for either a Skateboard Park or the “Recreation Center” with paintball, go-cart track, and other outdoor sports equipment or activities.
- Develop a combination of federal, state, or local funding sources for community buildings such as the PEN, Trask Hall, a “new” Elks building, the fairgrounds, Deer Lodge museums, and Teen Center.
- Work with local government, Deer Lodge banks, financial institutions, businesses, schools, hospital, library, nursing home, senior citizens, youth organizations, and community groups to identify priorities of community building projects and funding needed for expansion of the transportation service in Deer Lodge or Powell County.

RESOURCES:
For more information on planning and funding programs, please go to web sites listed as follows:
- http://www.tonyhawkfoundation.org/grant_recipients02.asp
- http://www.local.com/results.asp
- http://www.apta.com/research/info/online/aging_options.cfm
MAIN TOPIC: ACTIVITIES

ISSUE: MORE TO DO FOR YOUTH, ADULTS AND FAMILIES

The listening sessions identified a need for expanded activities throughout the community.

- There is a concern that the youth don't have enough activities and programs in the area and contributes to some of the social challenges being experienced. Discussion about a youth center, Skateboard Park, Paintball Park, recreation station, soccer program and other ideas followed.
- The lack of family activities was addressed as a concern.
- Lack of funding to develop other activities like the arts program, rebuild the Elks Club, upgrade and repair the fairgrounds and support for several other worthwhile projects.
- Programs and activities for young adults are lacking in the area.
- Seniors discussed the need for expanded transportation service with extended hours. There was also a desire to expand on the hours of operation of the Senior Center to allow for additional activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Get interested individuals together to develop a strategy for implementation of activities.** An example would be getting those interested in a soccer program together and explore the options for starting a program.
- **Look at the possibility of establishing a recreation district within the community supported by a mill increase that would provide some limited funds for maintenance and upkeep of recreational facilities.**
- Coordinate with the city/county on fair grounds upgrades and repairs.
- **Look for willing volunteers who can research how other communities have met these same challenges.** This could be the basis for developing a plan that fits the local community needs and be a good road map to getting and sustaining worthwhile projects.
- **Meet with Rock Creek development and explore if they might be interested in setting up a local fund that is managed by a volunteer group to improve recreation and community activities.**

RESOURCES:

- [http://www.recreation-areas.com/state/MT/1](http://www.recreation-areas.com/state/MT/1)
- Coordinate with other communities with successful programs.
- Rock Creek Development
MAIN TOPIC: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

ISSUE: MARKETING OF ATTRACTIONS, DEFINE DEER LODGE, HISTORIC PRESERVATION

A number of participants in the public hearings expressed concern that Deer Lodge is only known as a prison town. While the prison is certainly a major part of the community, the city also has other things to offer in the way of tourist attractions and activities.

People also mentioned the Deer Lodge Hotel and Trask Hall as historic buildings of significance. The general feeling at the public hearings was that if they could not be preserved, they should be demolished. The community would prefer, however, that they be preserved but to do so will take a lot of commitment and work from the community, especially considering the state of decay these buildings are in.

RECOMMENDATION:
The city should work on an aggressive marketing campaign to let people know what Deer Lodge has to offer. Through brochures, billboards, a better website, and other efforts, the city can increase its name identification as a place to visit. Key in this marketing program, however, will be the city’s efforts on other issues discussed in this report such as beautification and activities. The community can work with the Department of Commerce and Travel Montana on this campaign.

Addressing either the Deer Lodge Hotel or Trask Hall is a major undertaking. The community should focus on one before tackling the other. Below is contact information to the Montana Historical Society who works with communities to preserve buildings such as the hotel or Trask Hall. Within the webpage below is also a number of funding opportunities for rehabilitation projects, both government and non-profit. Deer Lodge should pursue a number of these funding sources to reopen these historic buildings.

RESOURCES:
Karyl Tobel
CDBG Economic Development Program Manager
Montana Department of Commerce
301 South Park Avenue
PO Box 200523
Helena, MT 59620-0523
Office: 406-841-2733
Fax: 406-841-2731
E-mail: ktobel@mt.gov

Ann Desch
Small Business Development Center Bureau Chief
Montana Department of Commerce
301 South Park Avenue
MAIN TOPIC: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ISSUE: VALUE ADDED AGRICULTURE

RECOMMENDATION:
Not knowing many specifics about the agricultural community surrounding Deer Lodge, I can’t offer much advice. However, knowing that Governor Schweitzer and Agriculture Director Nancy K. Peterson both have strong backgrounds and a firm emphasis on agriculture, I’d suggest that a Deer Lodge agricultural committee contact the Department of Agriculture and also use the link I included below to find ways of helping local farmers and ranchers.

RESOURCES:
Growth Through Agriculture Program, Montana Department of Agriculture:
http://agr.mt.gov/business/GTA.asp

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MAIN TOPIC:  ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ISSUE: DOWNTOWN RENEWAL AND REDEVELOPMENT
Deer Lodge, like most small towns, has an inability of local investor-developers to deal with all of the redevelopment problems found, both public and private, and still realize a reasonable profit on the investment. The private sector cannot provide new water/sewer infrastructure, land may be too expensive or buildings may have to be cleared for development. Streets and parking may be inadequate.

RECOMMENDATIONS:
(The following is recommendations received from Larry Gallagher during the Conrad Assessment in 2002.)
The Montana Urban Renewal Law provides the power necessary for local government to prepare and implement comprehensive plans for the provision of public improvements, acquisition and reselling of property for private redevelopment, and for exercising of the power of eminent domain, if necessary and in the public interest. A full description of the Montana Urban Renewal Law can be found in the MCA: Title 7. Local Government, Chapter 15. Housing and Construction, Parts 42 & 43. Urban renewal.

RESOURCES:
http://data.opi.state.mt.us/bills/1999/mca_toc/7_15_42.htm

Local government can aid in single and/or multiple purpose project financing through the use of city Special Improvement Districts (SID’s) for street and utility improvements, lighting and landscaping, Business Improvement Districts (BID’s), and other tools described in MCA Title 7, Chapter 12. Industrial Revenue Bonds (IDRB) and tax increment financed urban renewal (TIF).
Headwaters RC & D can give details regarding the following programs:
CDBG – Community Block Development Grants for Economic Development and Public Facilities
W2ASACT – Water, Wastewater and Solid Waste Action Coordinating Team
TSEP – Treasure State Endowment Program

Larry Gallagher, U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development, Montana Field Office, Helena:
406.447.1480  HUD Rural Housing and Economic Development Grant Program (RH/ED)

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MAIN TOPIC: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ISSUE: POWELL COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
Deer Lodge’s Economic Development Organization does not have a consistent point-of-contact. Financially keeping an office sustained is a fund-raising nightmare. Putting the entire financial burden of providing staff on a few individuals, organizations or businesses results in feelings of unfairness. Allowing the efforts to be accomplished by volunteers often results in the 'ball being dropped' as the volunteers return to their real job. Sustained, consistent, efforts are difficult to accomplish.

RECOMMENDATIONS:
Because everyone benefits from economic development efforts, it is reasonable to conclude that everyone could help pay for those efforts. By establishing a Port Authority according to MCA 7-14-1101 through 7-14-1137, a resolution between the county and other incorporated cities/towns in Powell County would allow for a mill levy(s) to be placed on the ballot to sustain a economic development position.

RESOURCES:
Northern Express Transportation Authority (NETA)
112 First Street S
Shelby, MT 59474-
Phone: 406-434-5203
Fax: 406-434-2761
tcneta@shelby.mt.us

Pondera Regional Port Authority
702 South Main, Suite #1
Conrad, MT 59425
Phone: 406-271-7237
Fax: 406-271-2924
pcpconrad@3rivers.net

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MAIN TOPIC: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ISSUES:
• Workforce
• Need for new businesses
• Support local businesses
• Value added agriculture
• Marketing of attractions
• Need for lodging
• Strong focus organization
• Historic Preservation
  o Deer Lodge Hotel
  o Trask Hall
• Define Chamber’s role and Economic Development organization’s role
• “Define Deer Lodge”
  • All pulling in same direction based on that definition.

The comments from made at the Deer Lodge resource team assessment meetings indicate that there is room for improvement for not only developing the local workforce but also expanding or retaining locally owned and operated businesses located in Deer Lodge. Some new business might be “grown” locally and local residents of Deer Lodge should be encouraged to support the existing business community. Small business resources should be promoted throughout Deer Lodge and federal, state, or local funding sources could help revitalize or restore community buildings such as Trask Hall or the Deer Lodge Hotel.

RECOMMENDATION:
• Organize/develop or revitalize some type of historic preservation effort for Deer Lodge that would focus on prioritizing building or restoration projects such as Trask Hall or the Deer Lodge Hotel.
• Involve businesses, school, non-profit organizations, churches, museums, library, hospitals, MSP/Boot Camp employees, elderly, youth, local government, farmers, ranchers, Grant Kohrs Ranch, and other residents of Deer Lodge in a “Buy Local Campaign” or revitalize the “This Business is Supported by Timber Dollars” program.
• Explore short-term goal for a “Jobs & Business for Deer Lodge” with the involvement of Deer Lodge businesses, school, non-profit organizations, churches, hospitals, Boot Camp/MSP employees, elderly, youth, library, local government, Grant Kohrs Ranch, farmers, ranchers, and other community leaders to encourage job creation and business retention.

RESOURCES:
It might be helpful for the City of Deer Lodge to promote business with monthly “Shop Local Day” or “Keep Dollars in Deer Lodge Week.” Other community events or could be sponsored by specific businesses or companies such as the “This Business is Supported by Timber Dollars” program currently implemented in Deer Lodge.

Some informational resources and helpful web sites that may offer the Deer Lodge community with sources of funding, technical assistance guides, and other relevant materials for addressing the economic development issues are as follows:
• http://agr.mt.gov/dept/agDevDiv.asp
MAIN TOPIC: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ISSUE: Many discussions identified the need for expanded and diversified economic development opportunities in the area.

RECOMMENDATIONS:
- Agriculture is a big part of the local economy and there is an opportunity to develop value added agricultural products.
- There is a lack of temporary motel lodging in the area that limits the ability to retain tourists longer or hold large meetings or activities.
- The role of the local Chamber of Commerce and the economic development group needs to be defined and coordinated.
- The community has many diverse segments that pull in different directions. Need to define what the community is all about and get efforts working in a common direction.
- Support of local business and shopping locally needs more emphasis.

RESOURCES:
Growth Through Agriculture Program, Montana Department of Agriculture:
http://agr.mt.gov/business/GTA.asp

MAIN TOPIC: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

RECOMMENDATIONS/RESOURCES:

Headwaters provides several programs and services that can assist Deer Lodge with its economic development efforts.

Planning: Headwaters is always willing to assist communities with planning and project development. The Headwaters Board adopts a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), which is a
five-year planning document that is reviewed annually. In order for a project to meet most federal and state funding requirements it must be included in this document. Both Powell County and the City of Deer Lodge have representation on the Headwaters Economic Development Committee and Board. If you are considering any new projects or programs, please contact the Headwaters office and have it included in the CEDS.

**Small Business Development Center (SBDC):** Headwaters has professional staff to assist individuals who are considering going into business or who maybe already in business with business planning and technical assistance. Counseling services are free and confidential. Interested persons can meet with the SBDC Director in Deer Lodge. Please contact the Headwaters office for dates and time.

**Loan Programs:** Headwaters has several loan programs to assist businesses with gap financing. The Headwaters loan programs are not intended to compete with local financial institutions, but rather to work with local banks. Again please contact the Headwaters office for a complete listing of loan funds and lending requirements.

**Business Expansion and Retention Program (BEAR):** The BEAR program offers support, help and assistance to existing businesses. A team of qualified interviewers sit down and interview businesses to determine how they maybe assisted to survive. Deer Lodge may want to discuss the BEAR program further and through its local economic development group consider conducting a series of BEAR interviews with the City’s businesses.

The BEAR program involves five steps:

1. Local business people volunteer to assist with the program.
2. Local businesses apply to be interviewed.
3. Volunteers interview the businesses and identify roadblocks to their expansion.
4. BEAR task force identifies solutions and/or resources to alleviate those roadblocks.
5. Resources provide individual assistance (at no cost) to the company in the form of  
   a. Marketing assistance  
   b. Workforce training  
   c. Financing  
   d. Public services  
   e. Grant research and writing  
   f. And more

**Natural Resource Technical Assistance:** Headwaters has assisted communities with fuels for schools, hazardous fuels reduction programs, water, weed, and other natural resources programs and projects.

Headwaters has also assisted communities with workforce investment assistance, including Deer Lodge with the Sun Mountain Lumber Mill Project.

For more information regarding any of these programs, please contact the Headwaters office at (406) 782-7333.
CONCLUSION:
While Deer Lodge is faced with some challenges your strengths can make you very successful. You have great facilities including your schools, hospital, museums, and community center. Natural beauty abounds along with recreation opportunities including the Clark Fork River, great mountains, and your historic resources including the Grant Kohrs Ranch, all make for an incredible visitor destinations. I was impressed with the people, their volunteerism and support for the community. Your location on I-90 and being located between the two national parks is truly an asset. Your small town flavor can offer opportunities to southwest Montana. The Montana State Prison and Sun Mountain Lumber are tremendous economic resources for Deer Lodge and the surrounding area. Development at Rock Creek will also add economic benefit to Deer Lodge and Powell County. Finally, I came away from Deer Lodge with a deep appreciation for your community and a new understanding of its dynamics. I look forward to assisting you in implementing your priority projects.