

City of Forsyth

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Community Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

The CEDS process involves a community member meeting, held each year, at which community members list strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the City. The meeting is arranged and hosted by Southeastern Montana Development Corporation (SEMDC) with executive director Jim Atchison facilitating the discussion.

Community members attending the 2017 meeting listed 68 community strengths including: library, RHCC, county health, fairgrounds, recreational opportunities, airport, museum, parks, Riverview Villa, Chamber of Commerce, Roxy Theatre, Quigley Shoot, senior center, golf course, city and county government, Yellowstone River, good schools, pool.

Community members also listed 48 concerns including: streets, water drainage, recertification of the dike, lack of child care facilities, lack of business promotion, affordable housing, drug use, mental health services, future of power plants, junk vehicles, lack of hospice care, changes at BNSF, downtown business district suffering, old building abatement.

The entire document with the full list of strengths and concerns can be found on the Chamber's website: forsythmt.com; Resources; City Council Info; Agendas; Minutes, News.

The attendees were asked to determine areas that need special emphasis:

Economy and Housing (*#1 Priority)

Marketing Hometown America: Emphasize marketing Forsyth to bring home youth and provide job opportunities for younger persons;

Tourism Projects: Complete the Custer Circle Project and the Historic Tour Brochure to help direct traffic off interstate and bring tourists into Forsyth and throughout Rosebud County;

Market Recreational Sites: Establish signage, improve facilities, improve boat launch, promote recreational opportunities;

**Entrepreneurial Training:* Develop/implement mentoring programs and quarterly training programs;

Processing Center for Independent Banks: Establish a processing center to serve independent banks throughout the region.

Quality of Life (*#1 Priority)

Park Improvements: Purchase and install new playground equipment in parks, remodel bathroom at Riverside Park;

**Healthy Activities:* Establish a recreational center and a mentoring program similar to Big Brothers and Sisters to connect youth with strong role models;

Drug Court/DUI Court: Establish a drug/DUI court program in Rosebud County to assist persons with dependency problems;

Community Leadership: Establish a leadership training program to expand leadership capacity in the community.

Services and Infrastructure (*#1 Priority)

Levee Project: Work with federal agencies to guarantee certification of the dike;

**Rosebud County and Forsyth CIP:* Both governmental entities would like to pursue the development of Capital Improvement Plans (CIP) to categorize and prioritize infrastructure needs, required maintenance and replacement schedules. This will assist with many items including budgeting and planning;

Hospital Roof: The hospital roof is in need of replacement;

City Fire Truck: A more modern fire truck is needed by the City of Forsyth to provide adequate fire protection;

Wind Farm: roads, an off loading site and electric lines need attention if the proposed wind farm is to be realized.

The 2018 CEDS meeting has not been scheduled but information will be posted in the Independent Press and strategic locations around town.