



# Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2011 - 2015 Update

## CEDS Planning Resource: For Miles City, Montana

### Facts from the CEDS *Custer County*

Custer County had an Ageing Population (65+) of **17.2%** on 2010

Between 2000-2008 Custer County had an increase in business establishments by **5.6%**

Vacationers spend on average **\$183.37** per day for 6.02 days per Montana visit. Antelope, Deer and Elk hunters alone brought in about **\$4,341,761** in 2008 in this 4 county region.

Miles City had the highest flood insurance claims in Montana - Had a Total premium of **\$469,406** and a Total Coverage of **\$123,544,600** since 1978.

### What is the CEDS?

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is a planning document created in 2010 by SEMDC for the counties of Custer, Powder River, Rosebud, and Treasure.

### What is the importance of the CEDS document?

The CEDS document highlights some of the most current data for your county and helps to develop an economic roadmap for the region. This data is public and you or your organization can use it for studies, research, grant proposals, or just common knowledge. It helps us keep up to date and on course with new, current, and long-running issues or concerns.

The CEDS can help to:

- Enhance Community Awareness of an Issue or Issues
- Gather and Analyse Regional Statistics
- Stimulate Discussion, Motivation, and Support from Within the Region
- Work Towards Consensus Building and Cooperation
- Engage Communication

### How can **YOU** use this Accompanying CEDS document?

SEMDC held public meetings in each community in this region, and did an analysis on the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT Analysis), as well as identified key projects that community members proposed. Those were important ideas and interesting projects. Lets work on them!

This document will:

- HIGHLIGHT** results from those meetings
- FOCUS** on projects and opportunities presented
- OFFER** some suggestions for resources.

### OPPORTUNITIES | STRENGTHS | WEAKNESSES | THREATS | PROJECTS

#### **Strengths**

Data Center

Ag research center  
Fort Keogh

Strong Agro base and value added ag.  
- Livestock yard/Sales

Wal-Mart and other Big Box Stores on Haynes Ave.

Auto Dealers (3)

Events  
- Bucking Horse Sale  
- Car shows

Restaurants

Banking System  
- Credit unions  
- Financial implement companies

Restaurants /Casinos

Trade Center

Relatively low cost of living

Industry/trading/medical/transit hub in the region

#### **Weaknesses**

Large Corporations  
- Money leaves town  
- Hinders small businesses

Lack of labor force and qualified labor

Limited tax-base

Budget deficit state-wide

Insufficient business downtown and lack of Main Street draw

Boom-bust scenarios

Overall state of the economy  
- State of mind/perception

#### **Opportunities**

Promote entrepreneurship and youth

Develop public/private multi-recreational facility

Micro-financing

40 year plan for a service hub  
- Create a local committee  
- Bakkan Oil Field/Otter Creek  
- Dry Cleaners

IT hub

Alt. Energy development  
- Wind-power generation  
- Increasing technology for photovoltaic energy

Temporary employment

Industrial park improvement

Agro and Eco tourism  
- Maximize the parks

Algae farm

Services for temp labor  
- Laundry /Housing

Coordinate a recruitment sales team and ambassador

Enhance community marketing  
- Develop website further

Continue to work with the Depot Project

#### **Threats**

Energy and natural resource development  
- What will quick population and money bring?  
- Boom/Bust scenario?  
- Transient community

## Proposed PROJECTS

to enhance the ECONOMY

- **Develop a Committee for Natural Resource Development**  
Help in creating community awareness  
Ability to mobilize essential and non-essential services for temporary labor
- **Coordinate a Recruitment Sales Team and Ambassador**  
Develop the website further, enhancing web-presence  
Enhance marketing
- **Continue to Work with the Depot Project**
- **Potential Alternative Energy Project**
- **Temporary Employment Service**
- **Micro-Financing Project**
- **Develop Algae Farm**
- **Improve Career Fair**

### Thoughts on Projects

- Who will work on each of these projects?  
Organizations? Committees?
- Which are priorities?
- Can some of these projects be coupled with other projects in different sections?

## RESOURCES

Develop a blog or website for your project/company:  
[wordpress.com](http://wordpress.com)

Rural Entrepreneurial Case Studies: [www.cvcia.org](http://www.cvcia.org)

National Development Council: <http://nationaldevelopmentcouncil.com>

Rural Entrepreneurial Case Studies: [www.cvcia.org](http://www.cvcia.org)

### OPPORTUNITIES | STRENGTHS | WEAKNESSES | THREATS | PROJECTS

#### **Strengths**

Geography  
- Major business hub in the region

Location on the National Power Grid

County Fair Grounds

High-speed internet access

Transit hub in the region  
- Excellent road system  
- EAS Airlines  
- Railroad  
- Public transit for elderly

Landfill

#### **Weaknesses**

Lack of in-town public transit

Limited high-speed internet access outside of Miles City

No passenger train  
Legislation required

Rail goes through town - clogs traffic

Growth boundaries

Housing  
- Affordable  
- Temp/workforce

Downtown parking limited and railroad noise

Flood plain issues

No in-ground pool

Ageing infrastructure

#### **Opportunities**

Ride-share and additional public transit system

Potential to add high-density living in downtown

Opportunities with flood plains

Potential for clean waste water

Paved road development  
- Tongue River Road

Enhance/support infrastructure for business and population growth

IT Opportunities  
- Data Hotel

Improved career fair better marketing

Housing

#### **Threats**

Growth boundaries

Limited infrastructure for business and population growth

## Proposed PROJECTS

to enhance INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Develop a Multi-Recreational Private/Public Facility**
- **Floodplain Funding**  
Work with congressional delegates towards securing funding
- **Develop a Coordinated Public/Private Transportation Group**
- **Tongue River Highway**
- **Improved Airline Service**
- **IT opportunities**  
Data Hotel

### Thoughts on Projects

- Which projects have the highest priority?
- If these projects have been worked on, has there been an evaluation of the current progress made?
- Who are other entities you can reach out to for help?
- Who could take charge of these projects?
- What resources do you have/will you need?
- What are some similar case-studies or successful examples?

### HOW SEMDC CAN HELP

SEMDC works to secure funding for various projects for grants—we could work with people to help set up a fundraising group for the city

With SEMDC's Small Business Development Director, we can help anyone get a small business started

### RESOURCES

Accessible Rural Transit:

<http://rtc.ruralinstitute.umt.edu/Trn/models.htm>

Rural Capacity Building Resources:

<http://ruralcommunitybuilding.fb.org>

National Development Council

<http://nationaldevelopmentcouncil.com>

### OPPORTUNITIES | STRENGTHS | WEAKNESSES | THREATS | PROJECTS

#### **Strengths**

School System

Miles Community College

Food Access  
- Grocery Stores  
- Food Co-op/Food bank/  
Soup Kitchen

Foundations, community organizations and endowments

Range Riders Museum

Historical Value

High school/college sporting events

Retirement Center

Low crime rate per capita

Cultural and recreation  
- Orchestra and Art Center  
- Bowling and movie theatre

Good quality of Life

Diversified faith-base

Good health care  
- Hospital and Clinic  
- Community Health  
- Public health taxi service

Excellent fire department

Recycling Services

Communications

#### **Opportunities**

Create a community vision

More pro-active community development

Native American influence

Child-care

VISION Miles City

Involve students and youth more

#### **Weaknesses**

Lack of Veteran's Care and Services

Duplication of services

Single-parent families and breakdown of family structure and support

#### **Threats**

Lack of community vision

Day care regulation and cost

Pessimistic culture

Family structure breakdown

## Proposed PROJECTS

to enhance SOCIETY AND CULTURE

#### ● VISION Miles City

#### ● Some other possible projects could be:

#### ● Looking at Alternative Child-Care Programs/Strategies

#### ● How to Better Market All of the Strengths?

#### ● One Weakness Stated was: "Duplication of Services." **Perhaps an Evaluation of Programs, Organizations, and Recreation could be completed.**

This may help in making programs for efficient and improved, as well as identifying better ways to market

### Thoughts on Projects

- Evaluate the current progress of VISION Miles City and work to gain more awareness of this project in the community
- How do other towns coordinate their child care programs? Are there other case studies on successful ways to fund/manage child care?
- Organize a community-wide evaluation of all programs and services

## RESOURCES

National Development Council  
<http://nationaldevelopmentcouncil.com>

Rural Capacity Building Resources:  
<http://ruralcommunitybuilding.fb.org>

Rural planning and networking opportunities:  
[www.planning.org/divisions/smalltown/index.htm](http://www.planning.org/divisions/smalltown/index.htm)

Online Educational resources - free courses and webinars: <http://ocw.mit.edu/courses/>

## HOW SEMDC CAN HELP

Find funding for certain initiatives  
Develop a business plan  
Help in small business development

### OPPORTUNITIES | STRENGTHS | WEAKNESSES | THREATS | PROJECTS

#### **Strengths**

Pristine environment  
Good weather for events

#### **Opportunities**

Maximize the Yellowstone  
River

#### **Weaknesses**

None mentioned

#### **Threats**

None mentioned

## HOW SEMDC CAN HELP

SEMDC may be able to help secure funding for natural resource or tourism projects.

Network with other communities to help in some of these initiatives

Do Tourism studies if funding secured

## RESOURCES

Rural Landscape Institute on Agro-tourism:  
[www.rurallandscapeinstitute.org/  
projects\\_farrcc.php](http://www.rurallandscapeinstitute.org/projects_farrcc.php)

Ideas for Public Spaces and Recreation:  
[www.pps.ort](http://www.pps.ort) (suggestion: search "rural")

Market your community:  
[www.iira.org/pubs/publications/  
IIRA\\_RRR\\_713.pdf](http://www.iira.org/pubs/publications/IIRA_RRR_713.pdf)

## Proposed PROJECTS

to maximize ENVIRONMENTAL potential

**No suggested projects were discussed specifically around Natural Capitol.**

**Some possible projects could be:**

#### **Enhance Eco-Tourism**

Develop increased web-presence  
Create a marketing campaign  
Organize current businesses/organizations/  
events involved in eco-tourism

#### **Continue to Develop/Maintain Trails**

Maintain and publicise current trails and paths  
Increase paths along the Yellowstone  
Perhaps connect trails in Miles City to other  
community/regional trails creating a network of  
paths

## Thoughts on Projects

- Can Natural Capitol projects tie in with other forms of capitol in Miles City?
- What people or organizations would be qualified to work on promoting eco-tourism?
- What trails or outdoor recreation could be enhanced?
- Are there farms/ranches/value-added ag that could be marketed to a larger public in the region/state/nation?

### OPPORTUNITIES | STRENGTHS | WEAKNESSES | THREATS | PROJECTS

#### **Strengths**

Full government office Support  
- City/County/Federal

Strong community support  
- Urge to re-invest in community  
- Strong loyalty  
- Volunteerism  
- Strong work ethic

#### **Weaknesses**

Ageing population

Planning boards

Private property rights

Pessimistic culture

Lack of support for land-use planning

#### **Opportunities**

Mentor High School Kids  
- Utilize younger adults to mentor

- Professionals for mentorship and internships

Enhance business marketing

#### **Threats**

Bureaucratic red tape

Taxation policies

Budget deficit state-wide

Billings is the service center for Sanjel, Bakken and other projects

## Proposed PROJECTS

to enhance POLITICS and POPULATION

### **Involve Students and Youth in Various Community and Decision-Making Initiatives**

Some possible projects could be:

### **Develop/Evaluate/Improve Current Youth Programs**

This could include a focus on leadership or career building

### **Highlight Successes in the Community as Well as Propose new projects and opportunities**

In order to help create a healthier perspective and attitude within the community

### **Thoughts on Projects**

- What organizations or government programs can youth become a part of to voice their options?
- Create a 'youth representative' position in each school who has the job to report to youth about community issues and report to the community about youth perspectives and needs.
- Enhance opportunities for internships and volunteer opportunities by creating more school incentives
- Who would be willing to organize some of these projects?
- Would fundraising be involved?
- Timelines for projects?

## RESOURCES

Online Educational resources - free courses/webinars:

<http://ocw.mit.edu/courses/>

Leadership Tools:

[http://www.raconline.org/info\\_guides/leadership/](http://www.raconline.org/info_guides/leadership/)

Online planning and community development courses:

[www.planetizen.com/courses/index.php](http://www.planetizen.com/courses/index.php)

Rural Capacity Building Resources:

<http://ruralcommunitybuilding.fb.org>

## HOW SEMDC CAN HELP

SEMDC can help to network and work with local governments