

# **RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT REPORT**

**For**

## ***MALTA AND PHILLIPS COUNTY MONTANA***

**OCTOBER 21 - 22, 2014**

**In Partnership with: PhillCo Economic Growth Council, Bear Paw Development Corporation, Montana USDA/RD, Montana Dept. of Commerce, Pondera Regional Port Authority, Mid-Rivers Communications, Montana Economic Developers Association, Triangle Communications, Gallatin County Planning and Community Development, and Zeier Consulting.**

## INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Gloria O'Rourke  
MEDA Team Coordinator

## PROCESS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THIS REPORT

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A Town Hall Meeting is planned for January 7<sup>th</sup>, at 6:00pm at Stretch's Pizza. The purpose of the meeting will be to briefly review the report, identify projects, set priorities and create working groups for action.

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

### **LISTENING SESSION NOTES - STRENGTHS AND ASSETS**

#### **SACO - Strengths**

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

#### **YOUNG BUSINESS OWNERS AND LOCAL OFFICIALS - Strengths**

- Jake's baked beans.
- Work ethic
- Lost jobs in mining, ag, ag equipment, CMR grazing and still sustainable
- A good number of young educated couples moving back home with families
- Great place to raise my kids and do business
- Cost of living is reasonable
- PhillCo Economic Growth Council
- My family is here; I couldn't return to ranch but wanted to be near family and good neighbors.
- Housing is available but we could use more.

- A beautiful lake is 17 miles away
- Close friends that make a community.
- You can go to work and bring your kids.
- There is nothing like the quality of life in a small city.
- You can make a difference here.
- Mustang Foundation
- Phillips County Community Foundation
- Bear Paw Development Corp.

#### **AGRICULTURE - Strengths**

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

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

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

- Boys and Girls Club

**NATURAL RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENTAL, OIL, GAS, UTILITIES, INFRASTRUCTURE - Strengths**

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

**SENIOR CITIZENS , CHURCHES, PARENTS, YOUNG ADULTS/FAMILIES – Strengths**

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

**LAW ENFORCEMENT, LOCAL GOVERNMENT, EMS – Strengths**

- Great network, great communication
- Giving community – time, money, and generous to people in need
- Strong sense of community with EMT volunteers
- Town is confident in EMT service

- Glad that Law Enforcement is combined with the County.
- Safe community
- People leave their cars running in the winter time.
- 911 upgrade is in Phase 2
- Fire truck equipment is good.
- Ambulance is all volunteer; good equipment enclosed

### **BUSINESS, RETAIL, SERVICES, REALTORS, ETC. – Strengths**

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

### **HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS - Strengths**

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

## **EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS, SCHOOL BOARDS, AND TEACHERS - Strengths**

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



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

### **LISTENING SESSION NOTES**

#### **SACO - Challenges**

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

#### **MALTA/PHILLIPS COUNTY Young Business Owners and Local Officials – Challenges**

- You have to travel more to do business. Driving is a part of life here; long delivery to customers.
- Do need good rental housing.
- Changing old ways and old mentality is hard.
- Hard for outsiders to be accepted; helps to volunteer and get involved.

#### **PHILLIPS COUNTY – AG Challenges**

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

#### **HEALTHCARE, NONPROFITS, YOUTH GROUPS, CIVIC CLUBS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, RECREATION, TOURISM, ARTS – Challenges**

- Miles; we have to drive at times for specialist, special needs
- People have to work two or three jobs
- Lack of decent housing for rentals; allow animals
- Houses are on the market but need \$20-\$30,000 to fix up.

- Human capital – trained workforce is hard to find, especially in healthcare
- Day care available 24/7
- Low income county
- Daily activity center needs new location
- Underage drinking
- No or very limited services for people with mental health needs

### **NATURAL RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENTAL, OIL, GAS, UTILITIES, INFRASTRUCTURE - Challenges**

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

### **SENIOR CITIZENS , CHURCHS, PARENTS, YOUNG ADULTS/FAMILIES – Challenges**

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

### **LAW ENFORCEMENT, LOCAL GOVERNMENT, EMS – Challenges**

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

### **BUSINESS, RETAIL, SERVICES, REALTORS, ETC. – Challenges**

- Finding help; short staffed. High school kids look for summer work but that is it – busy with sports or other extracurricular activity.
- Get hard hit for donation requests but want to help when we can.
- Merchant Meetings and Chamber Meetings – need to make sure they communicate.
- Job service is here only one day per week.

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

### **HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS – Challenges**

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

### **EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS, SCHOOL BOARDS, AND TEACHERS – Challenges**

- Hard to find healthy choices to eat; need more organic healthy food.
- Need more gluten free products; in stores and restaurants
- Our street is never plowed in winter.
- Keep young people safe; challenges with drug and alcohol
- Renting a home is awful; Havre has much cheaper rental opportunities
- Mosquitos.
- Teacher recruitment is tough – starting wages are terrible.

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

### **LISTENING SESSION NOTES - PROJECTS AND VISION**

#### **SACO - Projects and Vision**

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

#### **YOUNG BUSINESS OWNERS AND LOCAL OFFICIALS – Projects**

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

#### **AGRICULTURE – Projects**

- Use the access to rail more.
- Build community support and pride for hospital and clinic

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

### **HEALTHCARE, NONPROFITS, YOUTH GROUPS, CIVIC CLUBS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, RECREATION, TOURISM, ARTS - Projects**

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

### **NATURAL RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENTAL, OIL, GAS, UTILITIES, INFRASTRUCTURE - Projects**

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

- Move the fair to Malta
- Fertilizer plant – have rail, gas, etc.
- Reconsider green houses – grow cucumbers and peppers we are purchasing from Canada

### **SENIOR CITIZENS , CHURCHES, PARENTS, YOUNG ADULTS/FAMILIES – Projects**

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

### **LAW ENFORCEMENT, LOCAL GOVERNMENT, EMS – Projects**

- Hazmat training and equipment funding
- City county facilities – acoustics repaired
- Combine and coordinate to keep emergency vehicles together
- Parks and Rec active again
- Upgrade city parks and rec

### **BUSINESS, RETAIL, SERVICES, REALTORS, ETC. – Projects**

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

### **HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS – Projects**

- More housing – so when jobs come open they can live here.
- John Deere service
- Used car business
- Bowling alley
- Community Center – like Boys and Girls Club for older kids – a place to go.

- Swimming pool (fix it!); swim team uses it, too.
- Course or option to learn about being in business for yourself.

### **EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS, SCHOOL BOARDS, AND TEACHERS – Projects**

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

## MALTA/PHILLIPS COUNTY RESOURCE TEAM ASSESSMENT – MAIN ISSUES

The team’s report covering the main topics and issues listed below will be available online at <http://www.medamembers.org> by November 17<sup>th</sup>. The team plans to return to facilitate a town meeting to prioritize projects and ideas the first week of December.

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

### MAIN TOPIC: INFRASTRUCTURE ISSUES:

- Water/Sewer
- Road Signs
- Sidewalks
- Roads
- Trails
- Rental Housing
- Tax dollar pie chart/explanation
- EMT/FIRE
- HazMat/First Responder Training
- Updated communications equipment
- Vehicle storage space/ambulance barn
- New building for MOI

### MAIN TOPIC: AGRICULTURE ISSUES:

- Educate consumer on value of agriculture
- Feasibility of grain elevator
- Land ownership and use
- Feasibility of fertilizer plant
- St. Mary’s Project – funding and jurisdictions
- Explore niche market crops, i.e., Spinach
- Green houses/value added ag

### MAIN TOPIC: COMMUNITY PROGRAMS ISSUES:

- More Daycare and Daycare 24/7
- Parks and Recreation – reactivate programs
- Multi-use Community Center
- New Leaders/Community Leaders
- Better structure for Non-Profits to find funding/support
- Re-invigorate Phillips County Community Foundation
- Swimming Pool
- Improvement and upkeep of parks

### MAIN TOPIC: BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT ISSUES:

- Increase tax base by:
  - Keystone Pipeline
  - Elevator
  - Fertilizer Plant
- Border open longer
- Business Mentorship Program
- Product Transportation
- Re-use for Existing Structures
  - Armory
  - Empty store fronts
  - Old Malta Auto
- Creative Finance Mechanisms
- Explore new partnerships, i.e., PhillCo, Job Service, and Bear Paw
- Multi-use Shooting Range
- Marketing
  - Phillips County
  - Malta
  - Race Track
  - Hunting/Fishing, etc.
- Car Rental Business – get creative



# MALTA/PHILLIPS COUNTY PRIORITIZING TOWN HALL MEETING

March 4, 2015 Stretch's Pizza 6:00pm – 8:00pm

The items below were identified as priorities during a Town Meeting held in Malta, Montana, March 4, 2015, at Stretch's Pizza. Approximately 55 people were present to discuss projects needed in the community and county. The people then voted and ranked the projects according to priority.

## **ISSUE #1: AGRICULTURE (16 votes)**

### **Projects:**

- 1.1 Educational Marketing – prepare educational materials so that the public understands the value of agriculture in the area
- 1.2 Begin a community garden; use the garden as an educational tool

**Resources:** See Malta/Phillips County Resource Team Report for funding resources and ideas. Phillips County MSU Extension Agent, PhillCo Economic Growth Council, Dirt Daubers Garden Club.

**Key Players:** Contact Bear Paw Development Corporation for grant resources. Utilize MOI clients.

**Volunteers:** Sharon Kindle, Janice Reichelt, Jake Stuart, Marty Lundstrom, Donny Bagley, Julie Snellman, Perri Jacobs, Barbara Schlocker, Lesley Robinson

**Time Frame:** Create an Agriculture Working Group and hold the first meeting by April 15<sup>th</sup>.

## **ISSUE #2: HI-LINE RETIREMENT CENTER (15 votes)**

### **Projects:**

- 2.1 Promote, advertise, market, and educate others on the center.
- 2.2 Fundraising and Recruitment
- 2.3 Improve appearance, functionality
- 2.4 Restructure
- 2.5 Improve community involvement

**Resources:** USDA/RD (already involved), planned giving/endowments, fundraising committee, state funds, Montana Community Foundation.

**Key Players:** Phillips County Foundation, USDA/RD, HLRC staff and board

**Volunteers:** Ken Wiederrick, Jason Snellman

**Timeframe:** The center is in urgent need of help.

## **ISSUE #3: NEW BUSINESSES AND SUSTAINING BUSINESSES (15 votes)**

### **Projects:**

- 3.1 Feasibility study to determine business activity and needs in the area; identify road blocks
- 3.2 Consider feasibility of a commercial kitchen
- 3.3 Hold Adult Education courses to encourage business development
- 3.4 Consider becoming a Main Street Program community.

- 3.5 Consider holding a signature event for the area.
- 3.6 Reach out to new families who have returned to the area.

**Resources:** Bear Paw Development Corporation, Chamber of Commerce, Workforce Training Resources from Job Service and MT Dept. of Labor; Malta/Phillips County Resource Team Report.

**Key Players:** Chamber, SCORE, Adult Education, existing business owners, entrepreneurs

**Volunteers:** Travis Rhoads, Joshua St. Denis, Jason Snellman, Lesley Robinson, Kathy Bagley

**Timeframe:** Hold the first Business Development Working Group meeting by April 15<sup>th</sup>.

**ISSUE #4: IMPROVE PARKS AND RECREATION (13 votes)**

**Projects:**

- 4.1 Improve equipment at parks
- 4.2 Improve or replace city pool
- 4.3 More recreational venues
- 4.4 Fix sound system in city hall so that voices on this and other topics can be heard.

**Resources:** Malta/Phillips County Resource Team Report for ideas and funding sources.

**Key Players:** Malta Trails Group, other local groups that utilize the parks

**Volunteers:** Travis Rhoads, Joshua St. Denis, Jackie Sorlie, Laura Pankratz, Sharon Kindle, Kathy Tribby, Julie Snellman, Anne Boothe, Michael Rappold.

**Timeframe:** Begin this spring so another summer is not lost without using our parks. Hold first working group meeting by April 15<sup>th</sup>.

**ISSUE #5: HOUSING – AFFORDABLE AND LIVE-ABLE (8 votes)**

**Projects:**

- 5.1 Housing study to determine existing housing
- 5.2 Identify markets for housing needs
- 5.3 Develop city owned property

**Resources:** Malta/Phillips County Resource Team Report, HUD

**Key Players:** Bear Paw Development Corporation (study has begun)

**Volunteers:** Travis Rhoads (5.3)

**Timeframe:** Two to four years

**ISSUE #6: WATER AND SEWER (8 votes)**

**Projects:**

- 6.1 Engineering Study
- 6.2 Updating and replacement of existing system

**Resources:** City of Malta, Malta/Phillips County Resource Team Report, Bear Paw Development Corp.

**Key Players:** City employees, Bear Paw Development

**Volunteers:** Lorie Bond, Mark Kunze, Bonnie Wiederrick

**Timeframe:** Within next two years.

**ISSUE #7: MARKETING MALTA AND PHILLIPS COUNTY (7 votes)**

**Projects:**

- 7.1 Signage – encourage traffic to go beyond the railroad
- 7.2 Better coordination between city, chamber, and PhillCo
- 7.3 Improve appearance and attractiveness of Phillips County

**Resources:** Malta/Phillips County Resource Team Report

**Key Players:** City, Chamber, PhillCo

**Volunteers:**

**Timeframe:** Begin today! First coordinating meeting before April 15<sup>th</sup>.

**ISSUE #8: SENIOR CENTER/COMMUNITY CENTER (4 votes)**

**Projects:**

- 8.1 Feasibility Study ( CDBG study in progress)
- 8.2 Prioritize study information and begin work

**Resources:** Bear Paw Development Corp., USDA/RD, MT Dept. of Commerce, Council on Aging

**Key Players:** Bear Paw Development Corp., city/county, Senior Citizens, Phillips Transit, Food Bank

**Volunteers:** Mark Kunze, Greg Ziegler, Donny Bagley, Travis Rhoads, Barbara Schlocker

**Timeframe:** in progress

**ISSUE #9: MOI**

**Projects:**

- 9.1 Building improvements
- 9.2 Alternative building sites

**Resources:** Bear Paw Development Corp, Malta/Phillips County Resource Team Report

**Key Players:** MOI board of directors, City of Malta, Bear Paw, Anne Boothe

**Volunteers:** Anne Boothe

**Timeframe:** As long as it takes!