

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) 2024



2024 Community Meeting Recap for the Community of Forsyth

Annually, Southeastern Montana Development Corporation (SEMDC) initiates public input throughout a four-county region to assist in developing a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). In the past, we have held community meetings to gain insight into trends, strengths, and concerns in various communities. This year we conducted an online survey to assess the current state of each community, to discuss how things have changed from last year, and to note what projects are priorities to be completed for the following year(s). These conversations are incorporated into a five-year CEDS planning document created by SEMDC to be utilized in the process to assist the communities in Southeastern Montana.

SEMDC is working with citizens and communities to find ways to maximize positive impacts and mitigate negative ones. The more individuals in each community understand economic change and its impacts, proactively plan, and communicate within the community and region, the better the outcomes will be.

Developed by:

Southeastern Montana Development
Corporation (SEMDC)

www.semdc.org

406.748.2990

Forsyth CEDS Meeting 2024

Strengths

10 Churches	Lodging
Active Chamber of Commerce	Low Cost of Living
Small Business Community	Movie Theater
Adult basic and Community-Based Ed.	Museum
Active Pals Program	Natural Resource Development Services-Energy Hub
Airport	New Businesses
Archery	County Fair
Assisted Living	New Hutterite Colony/Diversity
Bowling Alley	Oil Production Increase
Broadband Grant (pending)	Parks
Car Dealership	PER Water Complete
Child Care Services	Pool
Frolf Course and Dog Park	Possible Stop for Passenger Train Activity
Community Activities – Darts, Christmas	Fiber Optics Install
Community Attitudes/School Sports	Proactive City Government – City Leadership
Community Foundation	Prince Construction
Community Newspaper	Proximity to MCC Ag Advancement Center
Community Service/Generosity	Proximity to Yellowstone River
Computer Hub	Public Health Response to COVID 19
County Seat	Public Transportation Program in place
County/City Growth Plans	Quality Internet to Work from Home
Courthouse	Quality Nursing Home/Clinic Funded – Increased Revenue.
Diversified Ag Base	Quigley Shoot
Duck Days/Octoberfest	Radio station in the community
Emergency service radios are all digital	Railroad
Established Businesses	Branding Project/Forsyth Forever Nonprofit Group
Extension Service/MSU	Recreation Area and Parks
Fairgrounds Facility / Events	Residential Homes Occupied
Financial Institution	Riverview Villa
Acceptance of Forsyth to Main Street Program	RV Park
Golf Course	Seeking Funding for Next Gen 911
Good School/Sports Programs/High Involvement	Senior Center-Very Active 2 groups
Great People/Hospitality	Shooting Range
Grocery/Pharmacy	Stroll, Youth Sports
Handicap Fishing Access	Suicide Prevention Training
Hospital, good medical, and telehealth	Telecommunications Co-op in Community
Hunting/Fishing/Outdoor Recreation	Town and County have CIP's
Integrated Behavioral Health Program Avail.	UV System Installed (sewer)

IT Support for Businesses offered thru Range	Watts Murals
Jobs for residents of the area	Water / Waste Director
Large Veteran Population	Water Tower Project
Levee	Wind Farm Development Impact \$\$
Library	Vacant Lots – room to build
Location/Transportation	Front Street Remodel
Downtown Master Plan	Co Working Space Available

Concerns

Need to add an additional water tower	Large Corporate Interest in the Community
Lack of Affordable Housing	Levee Certification
Aging population	Limited Local Food Accessibility
Availability of Labor in both the Service Sector and in Skilled Trades	Hazardous Rail Cargo and Plans in case of derailment
Building Abatements	Medical Professionals
City Website/Keeping up content on all	Mental Health Services
Coal Board \$\$ Availability	Need for Recreational Development for families, hunting, bird watching, fishing access, biking, hiking trails, etc.
Coal Future Uncertain of Money	Need to actively maintain websites representing community
Commercial/Industrial Move-In Ready Bldgs	No Place for Local Artists to Showcase
Computer Tech Support	No Recreation Center
County Emergency Services Bldg	No Tourism Plan
Difficulty Getting Grants and Diminishing Pool	No Walking Path
Downturn in Ag Economy	Oil and Wind Development Impacts
Empty Lots/Run down Housing	Perception of drugs in the community
Fed & State \$\$ decreasing	Pool
Fish Ladder Improvements	Potential for Increase in Taxes with Loss of Colstrip
Fluctuations in Fed/State Hwy \$\$ (Prince)	Power Plant Closures
Future for BNSF Employees if train is rerouted	Quiet Zone
Hospice Care	Rail Crossing Dafer Options
Housing – assisted living and workforce, single family	Recruitment of Employees/Labor Force
Inability to get water out of town/pools there	Recycling Drop Offs
Increase in Drug Activity	Rental Housing
Lack of Foster Care in the area, CASA needs volunteers	School Population Decreasing
Increased Online Shopping	Sidewalk construction DOT (filling in gaps)
Intake water need PER - Improvement	Storm Drains
Irrigation District Infrastructure \$\$ Needed	Streets
Junked Cars	Threat of BNSF Railroad Changes
Lack Business Promotion/more local business	Utility concerns/Urban versus rural – costs associated with mandates and density

Lack of ag processing facilities locally/PULSE	Veteran Services
Water/Floodplain Issues	Aging Infrastructure/Replacement Cost
County Landfill Cell	Lack of Mental Health Services
Need for Silent Railroad Crossings	Pedestrian Cross Walks
Feral Cat Population	Lack of Volunteers or Problem of Volunteer Burnout
Lack of Billboards / Marketing	Lack of Workforce Housing

Economy

Market the Trail System and River Access

Marketing the trails and river access to visitors and potential residents gives more opportunities for the community to showcase offerings.

Housing/Quality of Life

Community Development Employee

Hire full time grant writer/community development person specific to community

Community Rebranding Project/Downtown Master Plan Projects

Continue to improve Forsyth by utilizing community groups and implementing visions from the Downtown Master Plan. Improve marketing with community rebranding project.

Workforce Housing

Housing for professionals such as teachers and medical workers.

Youth and Senior Activities

Develop more daytime activities for youth and seniors

Infrastructure

Levee Project - Certification

Work with federal agencies to obtain recertification on existing levee structures.

Water Intake/Water Tower/Lift Station

Continue to pursue the upgrade of the water intake from the Yellowstone River and the construction of a water tower and lift station.

Walking Paths

Assess the development of walking paths to encourage exercise for area residents or visitors.