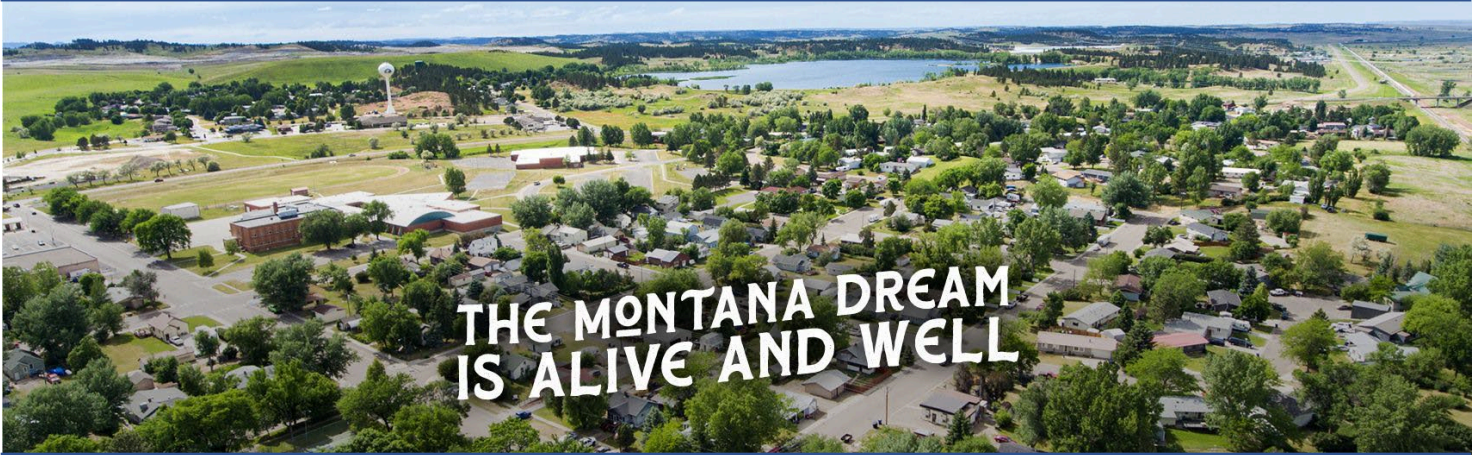


Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) 2025



2025 Community Meeting Recap for the Community of Colstrip

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 online public surveys to assess 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 that 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)

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Colstrip CEDS Survey 2025

SEMDC prepared a survey that asked about changes to previously gathered Strengths and Concerns. We provided last year's information in the survey and asked participants to indicate what had changed from last year's meeting. We recorded the results. The lists below are what survey responses indicated.

Strengths

10-year Government water Supply agreement	Low Cost of Living
Outside Pickleball Court	Low property taxes
200 Acre Industrial Site at Peabody	Low Utility Cost
30-year agreement - Feasibility Study (water)	Marketing-Diversification Strategy
Active planning board/addresses issues	Money and tax base
Agricultural Presence	More County Outreach
Airport – Instrument Rated/Small Jets	New Mountain Bike Trail by Western Energy
Area F+	New Commercial/Retail/Event Center Opportunity
Ash Pond Construction/Long Term Employment	Northend Water Loop
Avista and Rosebud County Impact \$\$	NW Energy Rosi Contract and \$ to community
Beautification Committee	Nuclear Possibility
Billings Hospital Support	Opportunity for OHV / MBT / ATV Recreation area
Biomass possibilities	Opportunity for RV space
Bird Watching Opportunities	Parks and Recreation
Broadband Grant	Paser Study of Streets
Business Innovation Center-Meeting Space / Partnership	People of Colstrip / Community Support
Castle Rock Lake fishing and recreation	Pharmacy
CDBG Grants: Public Facilities / Economic Development	Police department
CDKC Credits for HS Students	Potential for CO2 Capture
CEI	Professionals Per Capita are high
Change of Ownership at the Plant	Property Value Increased
CIF Impact \$\$/ \$10 million	Proximity to Billings
City Hall	Proximity to forest
City Financial Report, Increase	Quality of Life/Aesthetics of Area
Class 4 Rating for Fire Insurance	Rail Infrastructure
CMC Doc	Remote
Colstrip Resident in Legislature	Safe Community/Police Coverage 24/7
Community Driven Sports / Activities	SCADA Water and Sewer System
CPRD	Schools, School System, excess buildings
Diverse Community	SEMDC / Annual Reports
Effective Local Government	Senior/Community Van Transportation
Employment (Fully Employed)	SHAC (Arts)
EMS/Ambulance Service/First Resp. Training	Shooting Range
Energy Studies (6)	Skilled Labor Force, Technical and Professional

Expanded Airport Hangars	Small Business friendly
Fishing Opportunities	Sports Illustrated Sports Town MT/USA
Geothermal Options	Strategic location for the airport to fill Tankers
Golf Course/Free for residents	Strong Civic and Church Organizations
Grid United / Transmission Lines	Students from Outside District
Growth Plans: 4 counties and 5 cities	Supportive Major Industries
Health Department	Sustainable and Reliable Water
Healthcare infrastructure/supported tax district & recruiting \$	Swimming Pool/Splash Park
Home Based Businesses	Trails (9+ miles) and Parks (32) Revamped Skate Park
Housing Needs Study	Transmission Line
Hunting and Wildlife Income for the area	Utility Training Center Opportunity
Improved Internet/Broadband with Range	Value added energy
Increase in Retiree Population	Volunteer Fire Dept
Interlocal Agreements	Unit 1 & 2 Commercial Options
Job Opportunities – Good Paying	Water Feasibility Study
Large Successful Home School Organization	Wave/Cycle of younger families
Library	Wildlife In Town (Bird Watching)
Local Businesses	Workforce Training Support
Located on Oversized Loads Highway	Yellowstone River water to Colstrip/Water Rights Opportunity for City
Long-term Coal Contracts /Coal Country	
Long-term Community Stability	

Concerns

“Coal town” perceptions State-wide	Mine Reclamation Holdups (release)
State Washington Legislation	Negative Perception (East and West)
Absentee Ownership of Industry	No OHV Recreation Area
Advanced Health Care	No Plumber
Area C Road	No Veterinarian
Assisted Living	No Zoning for Industry
Basic Infrastructure: Water & Sewer	Nuclear
Bond Release for Development	NW Energy Depreciation Pressure
Coal/Labor Contracts	Outfitting/Hunting Access
Colstrip Long-Range Planning (10-30 yrs)	Out-of-state non-union workers
Community Apathetic	People Leave town to shop / Internet
Community Communication – Online Options,	Post Office Appearance/Safety Issues
Community Involvement /Reactionary	Professionals / Telehealth
Daycare – More Employees Needed	Public Services Training
Deer in City	Railway Diversified Currently
Developing Investments in the Community	Recruitment of Public Services Employees
Development of Critical Metal Resources	Recruitment of Teachers
Environmental Interests	Remote

EPA/DEQ Regulations	Renewables on Transmission Line
Equal County Health and Public Services as rest of Rosebud County	Retail visibility
Extreme environmentalism / no oversight	Review & Strengthen City Codes
Higher Power Prices/Impacts	Review & Strengthen Animal Control Codes
Housing / Rental Costs Increasing	Seasonal Demand for Services
Increase costs - raw water	Walls and Stereotypes between NC Tribe and Colstrip
Industry / not diversified	Shift Work Effects on Community/Regional Commute vs. Living in Colstrip
Interventions NWE	Shrinking Student Population
Lack of available commercial / Retail space	Skilled Labor Force Recruitment -attract-
Lack of centralized business district	Skilled Labor Retirement Gaps
Lack of Chamber of Commerce	Solar subsidies
Lack of Confidence in the Future of Coal Jobs	Staffing -Not enough workers
Lack of Doctors / hard-attracting healthcare	Status of IBES
Lack of employment diversity	Status of FBMS
Lack of Plan for Plant Closure	Tax Base Future- Future \$\$ from taxes
Lack of Single Family / Low Income Housing	Teacher Retention
Landfill Cell	Unwilling Power Plant Owners
Land Locked and Lack of Land to develop	Walls and Stereotypes between NC Tribe and Colstrip
Local, State and Federal Elections Impact on Coal Industry.	Wastewater Study / Continued Water Reliability
Housing Shortages	Water Feasibility
Maintenance Issues with Schools	Water Pipeline Condition/Rights
Mail in Ballot Only	Wind Farms Tax Abatement
Major Industry spokesperson	

Economy

Business Innovation Center (BIC)

Continue the development of the Regional Center to act as a focal point for industrial relocation and development / workforce opportunities into the future.

Colstrip Diversification Plan Update

Create a plan to update the Colstrip Diversification Strategy for the community.

Data Center

Study potential for data center in Colstrip.

Energy Studies

Continue to work with the private sector that completed the studies to move forward with energy commercialization options. Such as: Critical Metals Development, SMR's, Flue Gas Capture, Transmission and more.

Nuclear Energy Development

Create task force to advance potential for Nuclear Energy Development.

Recruit Businesses that will Create Jobs

Capitalize on existing infrastructure assets to encourage redevelopment and recruiting of businesses. Such as dining options.

Skilled Workforce Development

Offer education, training, and job placement to equip and enable economic growth and empowers individuals to adapt to technological shifts.

Housing/Quality of Life

Additional Youth Activities

Develop options for young people to be involved in the community.

Housing Issues

Assisted Living Center/Retirement Community development and workforce housing; potentially conduct housing study to guide efforts and affordable housing / rentals.

Senior Citizen Services

In-home care is needed.

Study for OHV & Mountain Bike Recreation

Determine state specific and environmental guidelines for establishing this kind of recreation in the community.

Infrastructure

Colstrip City Street Repairs

Implement plans to repair streets in accordance with PASER Study.

Improve Broadband / Internet Security

Continue to improve broadband speed, capacity, and reliability (expansion).

Sludge Management

Proceed with sludge management plans.

Water Issues

Public Water Systems & Future Access