

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) 2025



2025 Community Meeting Recap for the Community of Ashland

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 surveys 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 findings 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)

www.semdc.org

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Ashland CEDS Meeting 2025

Strengths

Agriculture	Natural Resources
Bank	New Street Lights
Buildings Available for Businesses	Outdoor recreation
Current Demographics and income levels help	Pending RV Park with Cabins
EMS Service	St. Labre
Fire Department Improvements/Equipment Upgrades	Tourism & Educational opportunities
Grocery Stores (2)	Transportation corridor
Improvements to Hwy 212 walkway/safety	TRECO
Health Care Clinic	US and private forest land
Heritage Living Center	US Forest Service Complex
Hunting Opportunities	Vacant Convenience Store re-opened
Improved Cell Phone Service – pretty good coverage	Very Basic Services Offered
Law Enforcement Satellite Site	Very diverse cultures represented
Lodging, fuel, food	Hunting Opportunities

Concerns

Basic services – limited with construction	Lack of Chamber of Commerce
Broadband Availability/ Cell Service Reliability	Lack of Public High Schools in the Community
Business for Sale- Too Many-Main Street	Lack of sidewalks- TA grant for sidewalks
Childcare	Lack of Tourism Draw or Focus
Clearance to log on Federal Land	Limited air Transportation/Emergency Flights / Medical Evac Air Transport
Clinic has limited operating hours and provides few services, no emergency services and struggles to retain staff.	Limited EMS Staffing/Major Highway / Lack of EMTs to transport/Ambulance
Competition for current jobs when higher pay jobs	Marijuana Shops - 3
Costs associated with upkeep etc. of roads and infrastructure development	Mental Health
Environmental Rules/Regulations	Need for SPED \$\$ at school
Floodplain issues – Otter Creek/Tongue River	Public Schools Upgrade
Housing – Shortages (All types)	Senior Transition Housing
Hwy 212 Deadliest Hwy in Montana 2019	Traffic Speed/Law Enforcement thru town
Infrastructure – water/electricity/sewer	Water Tower- Leaking
Impact of recent fires on forest	Workforce availability/hard to attract law enforcement. Labor Force competition/lack of workers/teachers
	Youth Center

Housing, Quality of Life, Services

Heritage Center

There are many facility issues within the center that need fixed or replaced such as a water pump for 50K, kitchen appliances for 52K, an ADA van that needs to be purchased, fire system Upgrades, and new air handlers to move fresh air

Housing

Housing for residential and attract workforce.

Speed Limit Signs

The east end of town does not have flashing lights, warning trucks to reduce speed as they come into Ashland. Need more emphasis on speed reduction through Ashland to encourage safety.

Infrastructure

Ashland Public School Upgrades

The K-6 school in Ashland needs funding to complete upgrades to their cafeteria/kitchen area.

Emergency Operation Center

Building that will house the Ambulance, EMT, and Fire Department.

Fill Station

The Fire Department needs a fill station to accommodate trucks, especially during fire season. The current system is inadequate and does not allow for quick filling.

Highway 212

Continue to work toward more safety and enforcement on Highway 212 between MDT, Highway Patrol, local law enforcement and lawmakers.

Lift-Station (Main)

The community needs a new lift station.

Youth Center/Activities Program

Develop a center for youth to utilize after school and on weekends. Provide programs for healthy activities.