



# **Resource Team Report Clark, South Dakota**

*November 7-9, 2005*

*A Governors 2010 Initiative*

## *Acknowledgements*



The Community Resource Team Assessment Program is coordinated by the South Dakota Rural Development Council to help fulfill Goal #4 of the Governors 2010 Initiative to “*Brand and Develop South Dakota’s Quality of Life as the Best in America by 2010*” by stabilizing rural populations through community development.



This program is made possible through the collaborative efforts of over 150 volunteers representing 50 plus organizations throughout South Dakota.



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At the local level, this process would not possible without the many hours of volunteer service from your local planning taskforce, Clark Chamber of Commerce, City of Clark, and Clark County.



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South Dakota  
Community Foundation

Thank you to everyone who contributed to making this Assessment a success!

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# Executive Summary

Clark is an extremely impressive community. I have had the opportunity to visit many rural communities throughout South Dakota, and one of the things that strikes me about Clark is the innovative strategies and actions you have already taken to improve the local community and economy. You have very strong, proactive, and progressive organizations like your chamber, economic development corporation, city, civic organizations, churches, school, private businesses and county that have each played a part in helping to make Clark a better place to live, work, and play.

Many rural communities would like to have just one very active and engaged organization helping to coordinate their community and economic development activities. Clark is blessed to have several, and has done extraordinary things with predominantly volunteer labor.

Having very proactive organizations can also be a challenge, however, as you look to better coordinate your efforts to maximize the impact of your activities, create efficiencies through partnerships and collaboration, and work collectively for the betterment of the entire community.

Like many rural communities, Clark is facing its own set of unique challenges. It is important to remember, however, that there is nothing that your community cannot accomplish if you focus your efforts on a select set of shared objectives.

While it is sometime to see all the issues that we face as rural communities, we fail to see and capitalize on the assets we have – and believe me – Clark has many, many assets that other communities would love to have. Things like active churches and civic organizations, local medical services, nursing and assisted living facilities, new housing development areas, a fitness facility, strong school, grocery store, etc. All of these things come together to make Clark an outstanding place to live. And most of all, you all recognize how you can come together in times of need and crisis to support one another. That is something truly unique to our rural communities and cannot be appreciated enough.

The most important thing, as you move forward, is to recognize that you have all the things necessary to grow into a vibrant and sustainable community. When necessary, look to outside assistance to help you as you move forward with any initiatives you decide to pursue coming out of this assessment. There are many people willing to help you in any way that they can, as long as you ask. But the core responsibilities for developing these ideas and making sure that things move forward resides at the local level.

The various recommendations contained in this report cover a broad range of issues. Some are large projects that will require many years to complete. The work is not just on big jobs, however, but also on smaller efforts that you can achieve more quickly. Use the success of these achievements to help build momentum on other projects important to

your community. These recommendations provide a place to start. Moving forward with any initiative will require more research to flesh out how they might work in your community.

Setting your priorities is the first step. Participation in the upcoming priority-setting meeting is critical. The efforts must reflect your entire community and that requires everyone's participation – both great and small. Once this has been done, you can begin to develop strategies for how you want to accomplish your objectives over the next 2, 5, 10 or 20 years.

On behalf of the Resource Team, I want to personally thank your community for the warm welcome that we received while we were in your community. A special thank you to all those that helped to plan this assessment at the local level. You did an exceptional job.

The South Dakota Rural Development Council is here to help you in any way that we can. Please feel free to call upon any of the resource team members for additional advice as you move forward with your efforts. We had a great time and look forward to seeing your progress in the future

Sincerely,

**Shawn Pritchett, Resource Team Leader**

## Introductions by Resource Team Members

**Vonnie Barnet (Enterprise Institute):** I want to thank the Clark community for your warm welcome and hospitality during our stay in your wonderful town. It has been a few years since I spent a great deal of time in your community, and I must say that I was impressed with all of the improvements that have been made. I appreciated the opportunity to work with other resource members, the volunteers who coordinated our visit in Clark and everyone who participated in the listening sessions. Thank you for your willingness to offer your input and thoughtfully listen to differing opinions. It will be a key component as you move forward in planning what Clark will look like in 5, 10 and 20 years. Please contact me if I may be of assistance at any time.

**Karen Burket (Platte Economic Development Corporation):** I would like to thank the Clark community for your warm hospitality and enthusiastic involvement during your community assessment. Time and time again I heard in the listening sessions that Clark's biggest asset is its people. No one would have had to say it, we figured it out ourselves. I could not have asked for a better community to be involved with or a better team to work with. The food was exceptional; one more day and I would have had to visit the Fieldhouse!

Clark has so many things to be proud of! Celebrate them! Clark residents enjoy a high quality of life, one many other small towns in South Dakota would envy. I encourage each and every one of you to embrace your town's slogan of, "Growing Together." Don't look at it in just terms of physical growth from outside sources, like manufacturing plants and housing. Look at it as growing together as a community of friends and neighbors who all feel passionately about a place they choose to call home.

I'm glad our two cities are far enough away from each other that we don't have to compete! Clark is a community I plan on keeping a watchful eye on in the future...I love small town success stories and I know there will be a lot of them coming from Clark, SD in the near and distant future.

**Ben Hanson (Northeast South Dakota Economic Development Corporation):** I was very honored to participate in the Clark Community Assessment. I was amazed to see what the community already has going for it. From the Fieldhouse to the new Industrial Park, Clark has many assets that you should be proud of. One thing that really caught my eye during my time in Clark was the people and the feeling of safety that a person gets from being in the community. I just want to remind everyone to patronize what you already have. I know that it is easy to drive to Watertown to shop and get supplies, and there will be items you cannot get in Clark, but be sure to patronize what you do have. Once again, thanks for the opportunity and I hope that our recommendations will help Clark to flourish in the future.

**Al Herrboldt (Professor Emeritus – University of Sioux Falls):** I wish to thank the community of Clark for their warm hospitality shown to the resource team during our visit. I appreciated the openness of everyone and their willingness to share during the listening sessions. Everyone walked the talk signifying Clark's greatest strength, its caring people. I was impressed with your leadership at all levels in the community and schools. The young people on the student council are sharp and have pride in their school and community. The tour was enjoyable and provided valuable insight into the physical assets of the community. I hope your community will find the recommendations from the team useful and will compliment what is already being done.

**Sara Kleinschmit (South Eastern Council of Governments):** I would like to thank the City of Clark for the warm welcome and the wonderful hospitality given to the Resource Team members. It was great to see so many different faces in the listening sessions with all of the feedback given. This community is one that has proved it can pull together in times of need and shows a sense of pride throughout. The Community Assessment Clark went through is the first step to discovering where Clark is and where you want it to go. Now is the time for Clark to pull together to carry this assessment to the next level: action. With the help and cooperation of everyone, I believe this community can thrive and grow in the manner that was talked about in the listening sessions. Clark has many great assets including the school, the history surrounding Clark, the outdoor recreational activities, the medical center and among others, the most important asset, the people of Clark. You truly are a great community and I thank you for inviting us to share your community for a short time. Please feel free to contact me if I can be of assistance in any way. Thanks again and best wishes!

**Linda Salmonson (East River Electric):** It was a pleasure to spend time in Clark listening to people talk about the town's strengths, challenges and opportunities. It was evident in every session that the people of Clark have a great deal of pride and truly care about the future, both for themselves and for future generations. I learned by listening to you that Clark has the key ingredients needed to thrive: local investment, committed leadership, youth involvement and entrepreneurs. These are all human resources and need to be honored, cared for and replenished on an ongoing basis. I sensed that many of you are looking for ways to be actively involved in moving the Clark community forward.

Please take time to read the assessment and recommendations. Identify roles you want to play in Clark's future. Talk about your ideas with anyone who will listen, and be sure to ask about and listen to other people's ideas, too. Charting Clark's successful future begins here. It won't be easy. Roll up your sleeves for discussion, confrontation and compromise. Be patient. Understand that it will take broad based participation from every citizen that cares, and I'm betting that's just about everyone in Clark. Good luck. Keep in touch.

# **Process for the Development of This Report**

The South Dakota Rural Development Council (SDRDC) has provided a Resource Team to assist the city of Clark, South Dakota in evaluating the community's assets and liabilities and in developing suggestions for improving the environmental, social and economic future of Clark.

The Clark Chamber of Commerce, in cooperation with the City of Clark and Clark County, coordinated the Community Assessment locally with financial support provided through a grant from the South Dakota Community Foundation. Gary Heineman served as the community planning leader and, with the help of many local volunteers serving on the planning taskforce, developed the agenda, coordinated logistics, and publicized the assessment within the local community.

The Resource Team toured the town and surrounding area and interviewed over 245 individuals during the three-day period from November 7-9, 2005. The team interviewed representatives from the following segments of the Clark community: Healthcare, Law Enforcement, Emergency Services, Families & Childcare Providers, Food Service and Lodging establishments, Educators and School Administration, Youth, City Council, County Commissioners, School Board, Churches, Non Profits, Chamber, Agri-Business and Farmers, Economic Development Groups, Seniors, and more. Each participant was asked to respond to three questions designed to begin communication and discussion and to serve as a basis for developing an action plan. The three questions were:

- **What do you think are the major problems and challenges in Clark?**
- **What do you think are the major strengths and assets of Clark?**
- **What projects would you like to see completed in two, five, ten, and twenty years in Clark?**

Upon completion of the interviews, the team met to compare notes and share comments following three days of intense study. 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 then forward these items to be combined into SDRDC's final report to Clark.

An oral report was presented to the residents of Clark on November 9, 2005. Following the oral report, a formal written report was prepared and presented to the community of Clark. A community follow-up and prioritization meeting will be held in Clark after this report is distributed and made available to the community at large.

# Resource Team Members

*Clark, South Dakota*  
*November 7-9, 2005*

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# Clark Community Assessment Agenda

## November 7-9, 2005

### Monday, 11/7/05

TIME	TITLE
4:30 pm – 6:00 pm	Resource Team Meets
6:00 pm – 7:00 pm	Listening Session: Healthcare, Law Enforcement, Emergency Services
7:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Listening Session: General Open, Families, Child Care
8:00 pm – 9:00 pm	Listening Session: Food Service & Lodging

### Tuesday, 11/8/05

TIME	TITLE
7:00 am – 8:00 am	Listening Session: Teachers / Administration
9:00 am – 10:00 am	Listening Session: Youth
10:00 am – 12:30 pm	Community Tour
1:30 pm – 2:30 pm	Listening Session: City Council / County Commissioners / School Board
3:00 pm – 4:00 pm	Listening Session: Ministerial / Churches / Non Profits
6:00 pm – 7:00 pm	Listening Session: Chamber
7:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Listening Session: Ag Businesses and Farmers

### Wednesday, 11/9/05

TIME	TITLE
7:30 am – 8:30 am	Listening Session: Development Groups
8:30 am – 9:30 am	Listening Session: Farmers (Active & Retired)
10:30 am – 11:30 am	Listening Session: Seniors
1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	Listening Session: General Open Session
2:00 pm – 6:00 pm	Resource Team Preparation
6:30 pm – 7:30 pm	Town Hall Meeting



*The Governors 2010 Initiative is the comprehensive strategic plan for economic development in the State of South Dakota over the next five years. The Community Resource Team Assessment Program is one piece of this initiative, with the mission of helping rural communities advance their community planning. The Community Assessment Program helps to develop a local community/economic development plan that is unique to the community, while at the same time, fitting in with the state's overall 2010 Initiative*

**The following Goals and Objectives were  
identified in the Governors Statewide 2010 Initiative**

**Goal 1: Double Visitor Spending from \$600 Million to \$1.2 Billion by 2010**

- 1A. Change the way we market South Dakota
- 1B. Focus new energy and investment on expanding the fall shoulder season for visitors in order to increase the percentage of tourism revenues for this season to 42 percent
- 1C. Expand investment in tourism's peak season through greater use of partnership and cooperative efforts
- 1D. Develop a statewide "One-Click, on-call" reservation system by 2005
- 1E. Capitalize on the existing outdoor opportunities in our state

**Goal 2: Increase GSP (Gross State Product) by \$10 billion by 2010**

- 2A. Promote the creation and development of new businesses that will contribute \$6 billion to the GSP
- 2B. Promote the growth / expansion of existing businesses that will contribute \$4 billion to GSP
- 2C. Promote agricultural and natural resource development in South Dakota

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
*Industrial Development*

**Goal 3: Become a Recognized Leader in Research and Technology Development by 2010**

- 3A. Secure Homestake Mine for use as an underground science laboratory
- 3B. Improve ranking to at least 30<sup>th</sup> nationally for NSF funding
- 3C. Development research and technology infrastructure at our universities with the private sector  
(Emphasis on research that can be commercialized and will benefit South Dakota)

**Goal 4: Brand and Development South Dakota's Quality of Life as the Best in America by 2010**

- 4A. Enhance South Dakota's image to young people in an effort to retain and import young adults
- 4B. Enhance History and Arts as a tool for economic development and cultural tourism
- 4C. Stabilize rural populations through community development
- 4D. Stimulate affordable homeownership, rental housing, and day care facilities in South Dakota communities which evidence a need.
- 4E. Improve cooperative efforts with the Native American Tribes

**Goal 5: Uphold Our Commitment to the 2010 Initiative as a Work in Progress**

- 5A. Assign implementation to Department of Tourism and State Development
- 5B. Create ongoing update and accountability structure for 2010 Initiative

***Following distribution of this Community Resource Team Assessment Report, the South Dakota Rural Development Council will convene a follow up priority-setting meeting in Clark to help the community focus on select set of goals and objectives based on the data collected during the assessment and the recommendations included in this report.***

## What We Heard From What Was Said

After listening to citizens of Clark, the Resource Team reviewed what was said and condensed the comments down to major themes that will be addressed in the team member reports. (These are in no particular order or priority)

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# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**SUB THEME: Industrial Development**

**Challenge:** Through much hard work by residents in the community, Clark has a very nice and mostly developed industrial park. The challenge is utilizing this resource to its fullest potential in order to enhance industrial development in the community.

**Recommendation:** This recommendation will cover several areas including infrastructure (industrial park), approach, marketing, and management.

## Infrastructure

The community of Clark has been extremely savvy in the past in tapping into various programs to assist with its industrial development and your development corporation should be commended for its efforts in this regard. Your results have been very successful thus far. You have a relatively fully developed industrial park in a prime location. This part of the recommendation will deal with what programs are available for industrial park development, many of which you have or are in the process of already tapping into.

Your choice of locating the industrial park is a good one. It is located near a major highway, which provides easy access to those looking to locate there. It also provides a prominent area for businesses to locate, giving them immediate visibility.

Some of the programs available to assist with industrial park development include:

1. Community Development Block Grant Program: (I believe your community has already tapped this program for your industrial park). The South Dakota CDBG program can be of assistance for infrastructure development of the industrial park. There are qualifications and procedures that must be met and followed, and the community must first complete an analysis of all of the costs, and identify other resources, looking to the CDBG program last for any gap financing needed. As with other programs, the community must first have a “bird in hand”. For additional information, contact Steve Harding in the Governors Office of Economic Development or your local planning district (First District).

2. Economic Development Administration: Has the following programs available to assist rural areas:

**Public Works:** The Public Works Program empowers distressed communities to revitalize, expand, and upgrade their physical infrastructure to attract new industry, encourage business expansion, diversify local economies, and generate or retain long-term, private sector jobs and investment.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### *Industrial Development*

Economic Adjustment Assistance Program: The Economic Adjustment Program assists state and local interests to design and implement strategies to adjust or bring about change to an economy. The program focuses on areas that have experienced or are under threat of serious structural damage to the underlying economic base.

3. USDA Rural Development: Rural Business Enterprise Program – *(I believe you community has already tapped this program as well)*. This program provides competitive grants to rural communities for projects such as starting a revolving loan fund to provide loans for local businesses and to provide funding for special projects like spec buildings.

4. South Dakota Department of Transportation: Has the following programs to assist with road construction within industrial parks. *(I believe it was stated that Clark already has applications prepared and ready to go in the event that another business, of sufficient size, locates in the park):*

The Industrial Park grants are made to local unit of governments, on a competitive basis, for the development of roads to new and expanded access for new industries located within industrial parks.

The Agri-Business Access Grants are made to local unit of government, on a competitive basis, for the development of roads accessing new or expanded agri-business industries.

### Approach

Often the approach for industrial development in small town South Dakota has been on industrial recruitment and attraction. While this is an important element, it should be paired with other strategies such as nurturing existing businesses or creation of new local businesses (more on this later under “Business Creation / Entrepreneurship”) as well as capitalizing on your local resources.

First, it is extremely important that you capitalize on local opportunities to develop and grow businesses. You have a vinyl extrusion plant project, that if it becomes a reality, could be a great success for your community. First, it has the potential to generate quality and decent paying jobs for local residents (or potential residents). In addition, it will create a business with true commitment to the community. Developing local businesses really does take commitment. Certainly, you have to “want” to start your business in a small town like Clark because doing so can be more challenging than trying to create the business in a larger community like Sioux Falls or Watertown. There are challenges to creating these local businesses, but once they are established, they are golden. The best manufacturing firms, that I have seen in rural South Dakota, were started locally, grew out of something smaller, and remain locally owned. It is these businesses that commit to a community long term, not pulling up stakes when it is cheaper to produce somewhere else. Small town business is partially about making a profit, but it is equally about giving back to the community in a way that is meaningful.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### *Industrial Development*

When these opportunities arise, you must give them your full support to whatever extent possible. Be vigilant and proactive about trying to make these things happen. Long term, this can have the greatest economic impact in the community.

Additionally, capitalize on your local assets. Agriculture remains a significant part of your community and agri-business should be part of your industrial development strategy. There should be agricultural representation on both you chamber and economic development corporation. You might consider starting an ag sub committee to pursue potential ag related projects. More on this in the recommendation further on in this report regarding “Value Added Agriculture”

### Marketing

A big piece of industrial recruitment is marketing. When I go to the Clark web site at [www.clarksd.com](http://www.clarksd.com), one of the things that I notice is the lack of information about industrial or economic development (unless it is listed on another web site that I am not aware of). What I did notice is that you have to go to City of Clark link to view the information on the Industrial Development Corporation. This is not necessarily a natural spot to look at if you are a business scoping out locations for an expansion.

First, I have to say that I am very impressed with the overall “look and feel” of this web site. It looks professionally done and is easy to navigate through. The chamber should be commended for the work that they have done on this. While this is a web site maintained by the Chamber, I think it is a missed opportunity not to include prominent information on the front page of the web site promoting business development and the development corporation. This should lead to other pages that provide information on various financial incentives that might be offered by the city or county, labor statistics, pictures of your industrial park along with information on lots available there, etc. Don’t forget to list what a great community Clark is and all the wonderful assets that you have such as the housing developments that are in progress, the local school system, curb & gutter, and so on.

Use the information from the Governors Office of Economic Development (GOED) web site ([www.sdgreatprofits.com](http://www.sdgreatprofits.com)) to help provide information for your own website. Examples might include tax incentives available in South Dakota, financial incentives offered through the state and other entities, etc. You have information regarding your industrial park on the GOED web site. Make sure to include this on your local web site as well.

At the annual GOED conference held each April in Pierre, there is usually an opportunity to have a specialist review your web site and give you suggestions on ways that you can change your website to be more attractive to economic and business development. Here are some web sites developed around an economic development theme that can serve as good references:

- Sioux Falls Development Foundation - <http://www.siouxfallsdevelopment.com/>
- Dakota Dunes - [www.dakotadevelopment.com](http://www.dakotadevelopment.com)
- Brookings Economic Development - <http://swiftel.net/brkecon/>
- Aberdeen Economic Development - <http://www.adcsd.com/>
- De Smet Economic Development - <http://www.desmetdevelopment.com/>

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### *Industrial Development*

- Freeman - <http://www.freemansd.com/freeman/edev.txt>
- Madison's Lakes Area Improvement Corporation - <http://www.madisonworks.com/home.aspx>
- Chamberlain's Lake Francis Case Development corporation - <http://www.chamberlainsd.org>

Also, be sure to develop a brochure with similar information as what you put together for the website, highlighting the benefits of the area, the industrial park, etc.

The most successful recruiting efforts in economic development are typically the result of some type of connection to the area. That connection might be a person, or something unique about the area. For example, that person might have graduated from Clark High School, went to college, and now works for a large corporation somewhere that might be looking to establish a small manufacturing facility. Something unique about the area means capitalizing on your assets such as small town life, great local infrastructure, relative location to Watertown and the interstate, location on a major highway, etc.

Relationship marketing involves (1) establishing a relationship (with alumni, with organizations, with companies that have some connection to the area, suppliers, etc). (2) Building the relationship through continuous communication; and (3) nurturing the relationship by sharing information and through customized follow up.

You have several alumni that have left Clark and now work in a variety of fields. This is one of your best resources in terms of fundraising and business prospects. If you have not done so yet, assemble the list of alumni from Clark High School. Survey these individuals to determine where they work, what they do, if they interested in starting a business, and do they have an interest in investing in their "home" community of Clark.

### Management

It is my understanding that the industrial park is controlled and managed by the development corporation (in connection with the City). This is not uncommon. Much of the funding for development of the industrial park came through city appropriated funds and grants such as CDBG and USDA Rural Development.

I know that there has been discussion about the structure of the Industrial Development Corporation. As I understand it, this organization was not formally incorporated, but instead operates as an extension of the city – although it maintains a quasi-independent status with a separate board of directors appointed by the Mayor with various terms assigned.

Think carefully as you look to reorganize. Evaluate the structures of similar organizations in communities similar to your size (such as Britton, Arlington, Flandreau, De Smet, etc). Do your homework in terms of ascertaining copies of these organizations' bylaws. It will be important to build a membership style organization so that the corporation is broad and representative of the community. Assign terms to directors and allow for membership roles in the director appointment process. This will help to ensure a board that is accountable to the corporation's membership.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### *Industrial Development*

I will warn you against creating too large of a separation between the city and the development corporation. You are both working toward the same goal and much of what you do can overlap or relate. Be careful that you continue to support each other as organizations. In addition, work to nurture a closer relationship with the Chamber. In many communities, these organizations might share staffing or have interlocking boards. Again, much of what you do is similar in nature and you want to make sure that you are not duplicating efforts (more on this later under the recommendation regarding “communication”).

Hiring a full time or part time executive director for economic development is becoming increasingly popular across South Dakota either on a community-by-community, or countywide basis. Usually funding for these positions comes from city or county funds, income off of revolving loan funds, or other means (stipends from local utilities, grants, etc). It almost always involves some public funds, which means that there is an ongoing connection between local governments and the economic development board. As is stated under the recommendation dealing with “communication”, this can be a difficult issue that requires trust from all parties involved and a very savvy and personable economic development professional.

The roles and responsibilities of a coordinator can vary from community to community. Some function strictly as economic development coordinators for a single community, countywide, or on a multiple county basis. Other coordinators work strictly with promotion through chambers or visitors bureaus. Yet others focus strictly on business development, and working one-on-one with prospective startup businesses.

The following is a list (variety) of some economic and community development entities in the state:

<b>Entity</b>	<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Focus</b>
Mark Kasten (Full Time), Parker Economic Development Corporation	City	Community, Economic, and Business Development
Karen Burkett (Part Time), Platte Economic Development Corporation	City	Community, Economic and Business Development
Sharon Schmaber (Full Time), Freeman Development Corporation	City (Trade Area)	Community, Economic and Business Development
Laura Kieser (Part Time), Wessington Springs Development Corporation	Countywide	Community, Economic and Business Development
Jessica Schoenhard (Full Time), Lake Francis Case Economic Development Corporation and Chamberlain/Oacoma Chamber of Commerce	Multiple Communities	Community, Economic and Business Development
Vacant (Full Time), On Hand Economic Development	Countywide (Hand County)	Community, Economic and Business Development
Joe Bartmann (Full Time), Mc Cook County Economic Development	Countywide	Community, Economic and Business Development
Nancy Larsen (Full Time), Southeast Enterprise Facilitation Project	Multiple Counties	Exclusively Business Development
Freya Simpson (Full Time), Badlands –	Multiple	Exclusively Business

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### *Industrial Development*

South Central Enterprise Facilitation	Counties	Development
Jackie Heil (Full Time), North Central Economic Development Corporation	Multiple Counties	Community, Economic and Business Development
Jeff Eckhoff (Full Time), Lincoln and Minnehaha Counties Economic Development Associations	Multiple Counties	Economic and Business Development

The benefit of having a shared position (shared among several communities) is that no single community bears the burden of funding this position and you foster a regional approach to economic development. The downside is that you don't necessarily get the full attention of this person for your own community.

In the future, it will be up to your community to decide if you think it merits hiring a part-time or full time economic or community development director specifically for your community, or in conjunction with other surrounding communities. This is becoming increasingly common in rural towns similar in size to Clark, and at some point, may be necessary in order to have a local "champion" leading and coordinating your economic, community and business development efforts.

### **Resources:**

#### For Industrial Development

Mark Vaux  
Regional Representative  
Governor's Office of Economic Development  
711 East Wells Avenue  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-725-2700  
mark.vaux@state.sd.us

South Dakota Department of Transportation  
700 E. Broadway Ave.  
Becker-Hansen Building  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-773-3265  
www.sddot.com

Community Development Block Grant Program  
Steve Harding  
Governor's Office of Economic Development  
711 East Wells Ave.  
Pierre, SD 57501  
Phone: 605-773-3301 or 1-800-872-6190

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
*Industrial Development*

**Resources (Continued):**

Local contact for EDA and CDBG Programs:  
First District Association of Local Governments  
124 1st Avenue NW  
PO Box 1207  
Watertown, SD 57201  
605-882-5115  
605-882-5049 (Fax)

Economic Development Coordinators (Examples)

Southeast Enterprise Facilitation Project  
Nancy Larsen, Facilitator  
PO Box 106  
501 S. Broadway  
Marion, SD 57043  
605-648-2909  
sefp@southeasternelectric.com

Badlands / South Central Enterprise Facilitation  
Freya Simpson  
32551 271st St.  
Hamill, SD 57534  
605-842-3220  
fsimpson@gwtc.net

Freeman Economic Development Corporation  
Sharon Schamber, Development Coordinator  
PO Box 43  
Freeman, SD 57029  
605-925-4444  
freemansd@gwtc.net

On Hand Economic Development Corporation  
Vacant, Executive Director  
224 N. Broadway  
Miller, SD 57362  
605-853-3098  
605-853-32765 (Fax)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
*Industrial Development*

**Resources (Continued):**

Greater McCook Development Alliance  
Joe Bartmann, Executive Director  
100 Main Street Suite B  
PO Box 217  
Montrose, SD 57048  
605-363-3020  
mccookalliance@dtnspeed.net

Platte Development Corporation  
Karen Burket, Executive Director  
PO Box 393  
500 S. Main St..  
Platte, SD 57369-0393  
605-337-3921  
mkb@midstatesd.net

North Central South Dakota Economic Development Corporation  
Jackie Heil, Executive Director  
Mobridge, SD 57601  
605-845-5202  
ncsded@westriv.com

Parker Development Corp., Inc.  
Mark Kasten, Economic Development Coordinator  
PO Box 57  
Parker, SD 57053-0057  
605-297-4305  
info@parkersd.org  
www.parkersd.org

Minnehaha / Lincoln County Economic Development Association  
Jeff Eckhoff  
200 N. Phillips Avenue, #101  
Sioux Falls, SD 57101  
605-339-0103  
jeffe@siouxfalls.com

Lake Francis Case Economic Development Corporation  
Jessica Schoenhard, Executive Director  
115 West Lawler St.  
Chamberlain, SD 57325  
605-734-4418  
lfc@midstatesd.net  
www.dakotadevelopment.com

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
*Retail / Main Street Development*

**SUB THEME:      Retail / Main Street Development**

**Challenge:** Maintaining a vibrant and sustainable Main Street is a goal in many rural communities. I think that Clark already has a very nice Main Street that many rural communities would love to have. The challenge is to continue supporting retail development on your Main Street corridor.

**Recommendation:** You already have some great amenities on your Main Street like the local coffee shop, mercantile, and all the other businesses located downtown. One of the keys to downtown success is making sure to get the people and customers downtown to utilize and support these businesses. Main Street viability ties in with business creation, retention, expansion, and supporting local businesses, as covered later on in this report.

There are essentially two parts to Main Street Development. There is the business side and then there is the aesthetics of the downtown area including infrastructure.

Downtown Business Development

As stated previously, this is really a function of business development strategies covered in the recommendations later in this report. At times, it is easy to limit Main Street development strictly to a historic preservation or an infrastructural component. The real key is getting customers in the door, and the aesthetics of the downtown area will often take care of itself.

Your Chamber is already doing a great job of this. By planning special events for the area like the “Spooktacular” celebration and Potato Days, you are conducting events with the purpose of not only providing entertainment value in the community, but also attracting people to come downtown and shop your local businesses. Pursue these and other opportunities to enhance the traffic downtown. The clinic that is being built downtown is a great example of this. Downtown businesses will benefit from this new traffic in the downtown area and potential new customers that might stop by going to and from an appointment. Be sure to capitalize on this by having brochures and other marketing materials available in the clinic, or having coupons available for downtown establishments, for people using the clinic.

Development of shopping local strategies also plays into this, and is covered in a recommendation later in this report. People need to be educated on the importance of shopping locally and be proactive about purchasing as many goods and services as possible from local businesses.

Downtown Preservation and Aesthetics

Local clubs and service organizations can be instrumental in helping to beautify the downtown area. The placement of small planters, benches, small gardens, and so on, can help to give the downtown area a “picturesque” quality. The worst thing you can see, as an outsider, is empty storefronts. Even in empty buildings, be sure to cover the windows with artistic designs, or show

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### *Retail / Main Street Development*

various art or personal collections through the windows temporarily until the building finds an alternative use.

I would recommend that you do an assessment of the eyesore buildings on Main Street to determine if they are viable buildings that can be worked with to improve their looks. If the building is in major need of structural repairs, it may be the best to find a way to work with the owners to get it out of there. If the buildings are in good shape, but in need of minor repairs, these are a lot easier to deal with, possibly with some tax incentives for fixing up the buildings.

One strategy being utilized in other communities is to have a local service organization identify one building a year to help improve the storefront. A fresh coat of paint and a few minor repairs can do wonders for the appearance of a building and the Main Street in general. This could be a once-a-summer weekend project coordinated by a local organization(s).

One way to revitalize the downtown area is to combine historic preservation and economic development. Doing this can encourage the preservation and enhancement of historic buildings and recruit new businesses and business expansions in the downtown area. Historical properties can be improved through a variety of programs that offer tax incentives and/or technical support.

There are several organizations that might assist or fund downtown revitalization:

The National Main Street Center's technical services (through the National Trust for Historic Preservation) group offers comprehensive revitalization program development assistance to downtowns of smaller cities and rural communities. Technical assistance includes areas such as organizing your program, economic development, preservation planning, marketing your commercial district, and small town programs.

Seriously committing to downtown preservation would probably require the establishment of a Main Street organization dedicated to this task (or a subcommittee of the Chamber). If formed as a 501(c)(3), this group could accept donations, grants, etc. The most common Main Street organizations are those formed in collaboration with the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street Program. Some states have a statewide Main Street program (Wyoming and Iowa for example). South Dakota used to, but no longer has a statewide Main Street organization - although we do have a couple of local-level Main Street Programs in the state (Brookings and Sioux Falls for example).

The Main Street Center also recently created a new historic tax credit fund—the Small Deal Fund—to help bring investment to the smaller rehabilitation projects often found on Main Street. This new fund invests in smaller rehabilitation projects that are typically too small to attract conventional tax credit investors. The program purchases state historic tax credits, including South Dakota.

The State Historical Society also manages the Rehabilitation Tax credit program. This tax credit program promotes the rehabilitation of historic buildings or buildings built before 1936 by providing federal tax incentives based on the rehabilitation costs. Any work on the interior or exterior of the building qualifies for the tax credit. The South Dakota Legislature has also

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### *Retail / Main Street Development*

provided for certain property tax benefits for the rehabilitation of historic structures in SDCL-19A-20. If a historic building qualifies for the tax benefit, an eight-year moratorium is placed on the property tax assessment of certified improvements. Property tax assessments may not be increased due to certified rehabilitation of the building.

Preserve South Dakota is another resource for dealing with issues of historic preservation and economic development. Preserve South Dakota provides technical assistance services, in addition to various financial assistance programs such as the Historic Preservation Revolving Loan Fund and the Façade Easement Program. For more information, contact PreserveSD or see their website listed below.

*See other suggestions for Main Street Beautification under the recommendation regarding “Beautification” further on in this report.*

### **Resources:**

First District Association of Local Governments  
Dick Edenstrom, Executive Director  
First District Association of Local Governments  
124 1st Avenue NW  
PO Box 1207  
Watertown, SD 57201  
605-882-5115  
605-882-5049 (Fax)  
dick@1stdistrict.org

South Dakota State Historical Society  
900 Governors Drive  
Pierre, SD 57501  
773-3458

Preserve South Dakota  
PO Box 113  
105 S. Pierre St.  
Pierre, SD 57501  
945-0409

Doris Roden  
Downtown Brookings, Inc.  
308 Fourth Street  
Brookings, SD 57006  
692-1554

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### *Value-Added Agriculture*

#### **Resources (Continued):**

Preserve South Dakota  
*Assistance with preservation of structures and low interest loans*  
P.O. Box 113 105 S. Pierre Street  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-945-0409  
www.preservesd.org

National Trust for Historic Preservation  
1785 Massachusetts Ave. N. W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036  
1-202-588-6000  
1-202-588-6038 fax  
www.nationaltrust.org

<b>SUB THEME:      Value Added Agriculture</b>
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**Challenge:** Participants indicated that the Clark economy relies a great deal on the support of area agriculture producers and their patronage of local businesses. Having lost an agriculture processing plant when McCain Foods closed has changed the nature of agriculture and community prosperity. Not only was McCain's cited as an ag processor, but as a good employer and corporate citizen, supporting both local businesses and philanthropic aspects of community. After roughly two years of searching for a new owner, the former McCain property has been turned over to a new company that has not yet, and might not be able to, achieve the economic impact of McCain Foods. This was noted as unfortunate and disheartening in many of the listening sessions. It was also noted that there are fewer, but larger farms and that many ag producers and their families need off-farm employment.

**Recommendation:** In light of recent developments in agriculture processing in the Clark area, there is a significant opportunity for area producers and local businesses to capitalize on Clark's location on Highway 212 between two ethanol plants, Glacial Lakes Energy in Watertown and Redfield Energy, scheduled to begin construction near Redfield. The highway is a key transportation route from Redfield to I29 and from Watertown to Redfield. It is very likely that highway use will increase due to transportation of both raw materials and finished product to and from the plants, and right through Clark. Clark is well situated to capture some of the economic impact that comes from this type of large scale processing.

Processing corn into ethanol and distillers dry grain is an economic engine in rural South Dakota. Each plant will process about 20 million bushels of corn annually into 50-60 million gallons of ethanol and will have an impact of about \$50 million per year per plant on the area economy. The Watertown plant has been in operation for a few years, and is affiliated with the Redfield plant. More importantly, the Redfield plant will begin construction in 2006. Important to Clark,

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### *Value-Added Agriculture*

in addition to direct employment of about 35-40 persons at the plant, is the estimated that 600-700 indirect, but permanent, jobs that will be created in support industries within the area as a result of Redfield Energy. These jobs will be in trucking and rail, parts and supply, equipment and repair, concrete and steel construction, natural gas, propane, electricity and food service. Many of these jobs can be in or near Clark. Entrepreneurial ag-producers, business owners and citizens can all capitalize on this opportunity.

In addition to ethanol, the plant will produce distiller's dry grain, a high protein livestock feed. Producers in the Clark area are well positioned to purchase the feed for local use if they act now, while the plant is still in the construction phase.

A recommendation would be to form a Value-Added Ag task force through the local chamber of commerce or economic development corporation, that would explore value-added ag development activities that "fit" the local community and capitalize on value added ag opportunities in the surrounding area.

There are several sources of technical and financial assistance in the area of Value-Added Agriculture. A suggestion would be to recruit individuals from inside and outside the area for the value added task force that could provide their expertise and knowledge. Some possible suggestions would be USDA Rural Development or Cooperative Services, Cheri Rath (or designee) Director of the Value Added Ag Center, and the Governors Office of Economic Development (GOED).

Some of the potential areas of financial assistance include:

USDA Rural Development - Value Added Producer Grants or VAPG: Provide grants up to \$500,000 to help eligible independent producers, producer groups, farmer owned cooperatives, among others, develop business plans for viable marketing opportunities and develop strategies to create marketing opportunities.

USDA Rural Development – Rural Business Enterprise Grants or RBEG: Make grants to finance and facilitate the development of small and emerging private businesses in rural areas. Grants are made to non profit organizations and governmental entities to help facilitate business development.

USDA Rural Development – Rural Economic Development Grants/Loans (REDG/REDL): Provide loans and grants through Rural Utility Service borrowers to be used to promote rural economic development and job creation projects.

SD Department of Agriculture – Value-Added Agribusiness Relending Program or VAARP: Provides direct loans to assist with community development projects, the establishment of new businesses, expansion of existing businesses, creation of employment opportunities or saving existing jobs, and adding value to South Dakota agricultural commodities through further processing or marketing.

Governors Office of Economic Development - Value Added Agriculture REDI Subfund: Provides low interest loans to innovative value-added agri-business projects which are attempting to take an idea from conception to completion.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
*Value-Added Agriculture*

**Resources:**

- American Coalition for Ethanol, <http://ethanol.org>
- SD Corn Utilization Council and SD Corn Growers, <http://sdcorn.org>
- Farmer commodity organizations, grain elevators, agronomists
- Glacial Lakes Ethanol and Redfield Energy

Kelly Rasmussen  
Value-Added Agricultural Subfund  
Governor's Office of Economic Development  
711 E. Wells Ave.  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-773-5032  
goedinfo@state.sd.us  
www.sdgreatprofits.com

Cheri Rath, Executive Director  
Value-Added Agriculture Development Center  
303 Illinois Avenue, SW  
Huron, SD 57350  
Phone: 605-352-9177  
Cell: 605-350-3128  
cherirath@yahoo.com  
www.sdvalueadded.coop

Value-Added Agribusiness Relending Program – VAARP  
South Dakota Department of Agriculture  
Division of Agricultural Development  
523 E. Capitol Ave.  
Pierre, SD 57501-3182  
605-773-3375  
agmail@state.sd.us  
www.state.sd.us/doa

USDA Rural Development  
810 Jenson Avenue, SE, Suite 2  
Watertown, SD 57201-5256  
605-886-8202  
www.rurdev.usda.gov/sd/

**SUB THEME: Business Creation & Entrepreneurship**

**Challenge:** Promoting small business development as an economic development tool for the Clark community.

**Recommendation:** Focusing on the development of small businesses in rural communities has become a “hot” topic in economic development circles, and it is becoming more and more prominent as communities struggle to attract that one golden manufacturer to locate in their community. Through entrepreneurship, communities are attempting to create opportunities where none previously existed. There are strategies, some simple, and others more complex, that you can implement to support small business development in your community. This is a slow process for economic development, and it requires a large commitment on the part of the community, but it can produce substantial benefits in terms of creating businesses that are committed to Clark long term.

Some characteristics of a business-friendly community include:

- A local group that is responsible for business development and then recognition by all organizations that business development is a major community priority that requires their input and resources (time and money).
- A contact person who local businesses or potential businesses feel comfortable with contacting concerning business ideas and needs, and a local organization to support the contact person. To access available business resources, a business often needs a local contact person to provide continuity, give appropriate referrals, follow-up during the process, and offer advice. Assistance should be given on a one-on-one, confidential basis by the contact person.
- The infrastructure (sewer, water, roads, etc.) to provide businesses the resources needed to operate profitably.
- A risk adverse attitude: Rural communities, like the entrepreneurs themselves, must be willing to take risks.

Some suggestions for promoting new business development include:

- Having a local contact or organization designated to assist new business development and expansion
- Developing a directory of technical and financial resources available for starting a business in Clark
- Starting a business development and support roundtable
- Compiling a local services directory
- Hosting a business development workshop locally (using technical assistance providers) or sponsoring scholarships to send potential participants to workshops held across the state.
- Hosting a Business Plan Competition
- Starting a Revolving Loan Fund

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### *Business Creation & Entrepreneurship*

#### Local contact person or organization to assist in new business development

This is covered briefly in the previous recommendation as well, but you will want to think thoughtfully about hiring a local economic or business development coordinator to spearhead your efforts. This should be a contact person who local businesses or potential businesses feel comfortable with contacting concerning business ideas and needs. To access available business resources, a business often needs a local contact person to provide continuity, appropriate referrals, follow-up during the process, and advice. One possible option in fulfilling this role is identifying one or more retired business owners or managers still in the community that might be willing to help serve in this capacity.

Some other communities in the state have come together to hire enterprise facilitators, who act as coaches for people looking to start businesses in area communities. Badlands / South Central Enterprise Facilitation and the Southeastern Enterprise Facilitation Project (contact information in the resources section) are two such examples in South Dakota.

Another possibility is making this a potential focus of your Chamber and utilizing your existing business owners to act as mentors to people looking to start business (on a confidential basis). To do this, the Chamber needs to be recognized and marketed in the community as the lead organization in these efforts.

#### Local Resource Directory

Help businesses navigate the complex and often overwhelming myriad of financial and technical resources available to them. Draft a short list of financial resources available locally, or on a statewide basis, and distribute this to the businesses in your community. The SD Resources Directory lists most of the primary business development programs throughout the state. Use this as a resource to draft your own local directory.

#### Business Support Roundtable

Another idea is to start a business support group to share information and ideas among existing businesses and individuals potentially interested in starting their own business. This could be very informal and simply consist of meeting for coffee on a Wednesday morning once a month. Or this could be more formal and include a presentation by a technical or financial resource provider at every meeting. Again, this is another project that could be spearheaded by the Chamber.

#### Technical Assistance and Skills Development for Businesses

There are also a lot of technical assistance programs offered throughout the state on a regular basis, often at no charge. Organizations like the Small Business Development Centers, Enterprise Institute, Women's Business Center, Office of Tourism, Governor's Office of Economic Development, SD Department of Revenue, and others, offer courses and workshops at various locations or via the DDN Network. SDSU also offers an Entrepreneurship Certificate.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### *Business Creation & Entrepreneurship*

This program, with DDN courses that are offered on a two year rotation schedule, is designed to give individuals the skills to start their own business and pursue product and development ideas. Updates on many of these events are available through various sources (checking the organizations' websites). The SD Rural Development Council also tries to maintain an up-to-date list of events on its calendar page at [www.SDCommunityNetwork.com](http://www.SDCommunityNetwork.com).

There are numerous technical resources available in South Dakota, and on-line, to support new business development. Assistance and skills development services provided by these resources include business planning, business start-up assistance, financial and technical analysis, human resources management and much more. Many of these support services are provided free of charge. If there is a specific need addressed by local businesses about fine tuning skills in particular areas (i.e. marketing, business planning, etc), work with the Small Business Development Center and SBA to try to coordinate a local workshop. Or, you might consider offering small scholarships or stipends to send local business owners and managers to workshops offered throughout the state.

#### Hosting a Business Planning Competition

Another project you might look to implement would be hosting a business plan competition. These competitions review business plans put together by people in the community and provide a cash award or in-kind services (i.e. a certain number of donated hours of services from an accountant, lawyer, advertising, etc) to the competition's winner. The Governors Giant Vision Awards is an example of a similar type of competition done on a statewide basis. Information about the Giant Vision Awards is available online at [www.2010initiative.com/gva/index.htm](http://www.2010initiative.com/gva/index.htm), and provides a basis for crafting your own business plan competition.

#### Funding Business Assistance Activities and Revolving Loan Funds

Grants are another financial resource that can help fund some of your economic development activities – through it is important to point out that grants are becoming even more competitive than they were in the past and there are increasingly limited opportunities for grants.

There are various grant opportunities, available through USDA Rural Development, that I want to specifically highlight.

The first is the Rural Business Opportunities Grant or RBOG. This program is designed to promote sustainable economic development in rural areas by making grants to organizations to provide for economic development planning, technical assistance for rural businesses, or training activities that improve economic conditions. The applicant must be a public body or nonprofit corporation. These grants are extremely competitive and award a max of \$50,000 per project. You must provide a 1:1 cash or in-kind match to score competitively. Applicants compete nationally, and there is usually one or fewer applications accepted in the State of South Dakota each year.

The Rural Business Enterprise Grant or RBEG is a grant to a public body or a non profit corporation that assists small businesses enterprises by providing technical assistance or to

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### *Business Creation & Entrepreneurship*

establish a revolving loan fund. Examples of the assistance that could be provided include: market studies, business plans, feasibility studies, or to provide financial assistance to third parties through a loan. This grant program is slightly less competitive with more funds reserved specifically for South Dakota. RBEG funds can also be secured for starting a local Revolving Loan Fund.

The Intermediary Relending Program works to alleviate poverty and increase economic activity and employment in rural communities, especially disadvantaged and remote communities. These funds are targeted primarily toward smaller and emerging businesses, in partnership with other public and private resources, and in accordance with state and regional strategies based on identified community needs. This purpose is achieved through loans made to intermediaries that establish programs for the purpose of providing loans to ultimate recipients for business facilities and community development in a rural areas.

The Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program (REDLG) provides loans and grants, through a cooperating local utility (Rural Utility Service borrower), to promote rural economic development and job creation projects. Loan funds may be used to promote economic development and/or job creation projects including, but not limited to, start up costs, incubator projects, and other reasonable expenses.

Finally, there is the Rural Community Development Initiative or RCDI program. RCDI provides grants to qualified intermediary organizations that will provide financial and technical assistance to recipients to develop their capacity and ability to undertake projects related to housing, community facilities, or community and economic development.

Several of the programs listed above, including the RBEG, IRP, and REDLG programs can provide funds to support the development of a local revolving loan fund. This can help to provide gap financing for newly created or expanding businesses in the community. You can also take advantage of larger regional and statewide revolving loan funds such as those provided through NESDEC, REED, GOED, and First District (contact information listed below).

### Alternative Financing Opportunities for Entrepreneurs

The Enterprise Angels™ is a recently formed network of accredited angel investors and angel associations with support services provided by the Enterprise Institute. The Enterprise Angels™ provides an array of services such as quality deal sourcing for high growth ventures, educational opportunities and a vehicle to establish business relationships. The group meets quarterly for entrepreneur presentations. Participation in Enterprise Angels™ carries annual dues that entitle individuals or groups to meetings and resources including business plan filtering and “members only” deal access.

RAIN® Funds pool intellectual and financial resources of accredited individuals and institutional investors to offer an alternative form of investing in South Dakota communities. The Funds provide seed and growth equity capital for emerging companies. Each fund has from 7 to 25 members to capitalize the fund at a minimum of \$500,000 which is then used to invest \$100,000 to \$200,000 per project. RAIN® Fund investors screen and scrub deals and then vote on

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
*Business Creation & Entrepreneurship*

proposals. The Enterprise Institute administers RAIN® Fund groups in South Dakota in partnership with the Minnesota Investment Network with deal flow and investment tracking.

Other Entrepreneur Related Resources

I want to reference a book recently published that is dedicated to developing entrepreneurship in rural communities. The book is entitled “Energized Entrepreneurs: Charting a Course for Rural Communities” and it is available from the Heartland Center for \$23 by calling 800-927-1115 or going online to [www.heartlandcenter.info](http://www.heartlandcenter.info).

There is a website called “Energizing Entrepreneurship”, which is also dedicated exclusively to walking rural communities through the vital steps of becoming entrepreneurially friendly. This web site provides valuable information and tools to help your community be more supportive of small business creation. Use of this web site is free of charge, but you must register. It is available at [www.energizingentrepreneurs.org](http://www.energizingentrepreneurs.org).

Finally, keep copies of start up tools at a central location in the community for people that might be interested in starting a business. For example, the Governors Office of Economic Development has a business startup manual that addresses various issues (regulatory and otherwise) for new and prospective businesses.

**Resources:**

Business Technical Assistance Providers

Governor’s Office of Economic Development  
Mark Vaux, Regional Representative  
711 East Wells Avenue  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-725-2700  
mark.vaux@state.sd.us

*A variety of business and community development resources are available through GOED, including the South Dakota “Business Start-Up Packet” - providing helpful information on starting a business in South Dakota.*

*Website: [www.sdgreatprofits.com](http://www.sdgreatprofits.com)*

*Plus a number of financial assistance programs. Please don’t hesitate to contact Mark for additional information, or to visit about which program would be best to meet your needs at the lowest costs. GOED strives to match you with whatever program is best – whether that be a State program, Federal, regional or local.*

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
*Business Creation & Entrepreneurship*

**Resources (Continued):**

Small Business Development Center – Watertown  
Belinda Engelhart, Regional Director  
124 First Ave. N.W.  
PO Box 1207  
Watertown, SD 57201-3503  
605-882-5115  
sbdc@dailypost.com

Enterprise Institute  
Vonnie Barnett  
815 Medary Avenue, Suite 201  
Brookings, SD 57006  
605-697-5015  
vonnieb@sdei.org  
www.sdei.org

Dakota Manufacturing Extension Partnership  
101 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE  
PO Box 1533  
Watertown, SD 57201  
605-753-0153  
Info@ndmep.com  
www.dakotamep.com

Rural Initiative Center  
100 South Spring Ave., Suite 106  
Sioux Falls, SD 57104-3626  
605-334-1980  
office@accsd.org  
www.accsd.org/RIC.html

Center for Women Business Institute  
Contact: Bernie Schram  
University of Sioux Falls  
1101 W. 22<sup>nd</sup> Street  
Sioux Falls, SD 57105  
605-331-6697  
www.sdbusinesssuccess.org

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
*Business Creation & Entrepreneurship*

**Resources (Continued):**

South Dakota Family Business Association  
Beth Adamson, Executive Director  
USDSU Campus  
2205 North Career Ave., Rm 265  
Sioux Falls, SD 57107  
605-782-3225  
badamson@usd.edu

SDSU Entrepreneurship Certificate Program  
Barb Heller, Program Coordinator  
Box 2201, ADM 101  
Brookings, SD 57007  
605-688-6522  
barb.heller@sdstate.edu  
<http://entr.sdstate.edu/>      *Click on Certificate*

Examples of Local Business Assistance Providers (Enterprise Facilitators)

Badlands / South Central Enterprise Facilitation  
Freya Simpson  
32551 271st St.  
Hamill, SD 57534  
605-842-3220  
fsimpson@gwtc.net

Southeast Enterprise Facilitation Project  
Nancy Larsen, Facilitator  
PO Box 106  
501 S. Broadway  
Marion, SD 57043  
605-648-2909  
605-648-3778 (Fax)  
sefp@southeasternelectric.com

Financial Assistance Providers (Loans, etc)

Small Business Administration  
2329 North Career Avenue, Ste. 105  
Sioux Falls, SD 57101  
Phone: 605-330-4231  
Fax: 605-330-4215  
[www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov)  
Online Training Tools available at [www.sba.gov/training](http://www.sba.gov/training)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
*Business Creation & Entrepreneurship*

**Resources (Continued):**

Governor's Office of Economic Development  
Mark Vaux, Regional Representative  
711 East Wells Avenue  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-725-2700  
mark.vaux@state.sd.us

First District Development Company  
Roger Clark  
124 First Ave. N.W.  
PO Box 1207  
Watertown, SD 57201  
605-882-5115  
rogerc@firstdistrict.org  
www.1stdistrict.org/FDDC

Northeast South Dakota Economic Development Corporation – NESDEC  
Ben Hansen  
414 Third Ave. E.  
Sisseton, SD 57262  
605-698-7654  
nesdec@nesdcap-nesdec.org

Rural Electric Economic Development – REED Fund  
East River Electric Cooperative  
PO Box 227  
Madison, SD 57042  
605-256-4536  
lsalmonson@eastriver.coop

USDA Rural Development  
810 Jenson Avenue, SE, Suite 2  
Watertown, SD 57201-5256  
605-886-8202  
www.rurdev.usda.gov/sd/

Financing Business Assistance Activities

USDA Rural Development  
(RBOG, RBEG, REDLG, IRP and RCDI Programs)  
1717 N. Lincoln Ave., Suite 102  
Pierre, SD 57501-3109  
605-224-8870  
www.rurdev.usda.gov/sd/

**Resources (Continued):**

Alternative Financing Opportunities for Entrepreneurs

Enterprise Angels™/RAIN© Fund

Mari Beth Baumberger

Enterprise Institute

815 Medary Avenue, Suite 201

Brookings, SD 57006

605-275-2833

maribethb@sdei.org

www.sdei.org

Other Resources

RUPRI Center for Rural Entrepreneurship

www.ruraleship.org

Heartland Center for Leadership Development

www.heartlandcenter.info

Energizing Entrepreneurship

www.energizingentrepreneurs.org

South Dakota Community Foundation

Bob Sutton, Director

207 E. Capitol Ave.

Pierre, SD 57501

605.224.1025

bsutton44@sdcommunityfoundation.org

www.sdcommunityfoundation.org

# COMMUNITY BETTERMENT

**SUB THEME:** Leadership Development

**Challenge:** The challenges are many—loss of a major employer, population decline, declining school enrollment, loss of local businesses, low commodity prices, competition from larger towns, need for affordable housing, increasing fuel prices. The opportunities are also many—great students, great community to live in, community pride, good school system, good community support, stepping up to help those in need, potential for new industry. The Team heard many times both the challenges and the opportunities in Clark. We also heard how hard it was to maintain effective communication and the difficulties volunteers and leaders face. There are many opinions, both pro and con, on many issues facing the town.

How does one sift through the gossip to glean the needed information to support local initiatives? Leaders are volunteers and do the best they can. Great things do happen, like the community benefit, and the Spooktacular, charitable giving to the city and health care system. There are many challenges given a shrinking tax base and scarce local resources. Life isn't easy in a small town where everyone knows everyone. Overall, Clark's citizens are where they want to be, in Clark—this is where they choose to be. The challenge to Clark, and many other small towns, is how to make it better, vibrant, prosperous, bring people back home.

**Recommendation:** It starts with identifying the assets—what is GOOD about Clark. The next step is to strengthen and building on the community's assets. Doing this means accepting new ideas and letting go of old grudges. It may mean getting to know your neighbors again. Seek out other community's solutions, test them in Clark. It means putting together a plan and then working the plan. And planning should not be left on the shoulders of elected officials and community leaders. True community planning is asking for and accepting everyone's ideas and energy. It is the whole community's responsibility. Always remember the goal—to make Clark a better place to live and work—and focus on the positive, not the negative. The following reading list and resources have helped countless other communities take charge of their futures. It's up to you, Clark, to find the solutions that will work for you.

One suggestion is the implementation of a Leadership Training program. LeadershipPlenty offers training to existing and emerging leaders, helping them to identify assets, develop strategic partnership, plan for the future, implement action plans and evaluate their success. LeadershipPlenty is for both youth and adults, a mixed group of potential leaders, emerging and experienced is an ideal group. The program is a first step and has been implemented in Marshall/Day County, Chamberlain-Oacoma region, Custer, Parkston, Hutchinson/Douglas County, Winner and many other communities in SD. The curriculum comes from the Pew Foundation, so is nationally recognized, tested and dynamite. It is delivered by experienced facilitators who care about people and communities. Check out the web site and contact

## COMMUNITY BETTERMENT

### *Leadership Development*

graduates for a recommendation. LeadershipPlenty providers in South Dakota include SDREI, SD Cooperative Extension, and planning districts like First District Council of Governments.

The Clark Community Assessment was the first step to beginning a strategic planning process. Now the real work starts. Dig out all the plans that have gone before, a zoning plan, and economic development plan, plans that organizations have put together, and compare them. Work together across the community to build trust and ultimately a strategic plan that focuses on the future of Clark. The recommended method of planning is to involve a wide variety of both ages and interest groups and open the process to the public. However, to be successful there must be specific goals and timelines, and people need to be empowered to take action. Remember to celebrate success, no matter how small. It keeps people engaged and focuses on positive action. As you achieve short term goals, move on to longer term goals and don't forget to dream big. Just remember that a goal has a deadline but a dream does not.

Keep the plan in a public location and encourage participation from the public. Strategic Plans for communities are valuable when applying for a variety of grants and loans so you can show what you have accomplished and what you intend to achieve in the near future. Remember to plan your work and work your plan. It will take some time to get together and brainstorm different projects and ideas that will benefit all aspects of your community. It may be necessary to delegate different aspects of the plan to different groups. For example, city infrastructure improvement—city council; Main street activities—chamber of commerce, health care and wellness to the health care community, special projects—students and school system, etc.

### **Resources:**

#### LeadershipPlenty Providers

Leadership Plenty South Dakota  
South Dakota Rural Enterprises  
Beth Davis  
605-978-2804  
leaders@leadershipplentysd.org  
www.leadershipplentysd.org

#### Cooperative Extension's Leadership Plenty Program

Cheryl Jacobs  
917 N. Main  
Mobridge, SD 57601  
605-230-0077  
jacobs.cheryl@ces.sdstate.edu

#### First District Association of Local Governments

PO Box 1207  
Watertown, SD 57201-6207  
605-882-5115  
605-882-5049  
E-mail: dick@1stdistrict.org

COMMUNITY BETTERMENT  
*Volunteerism & Civic Responsibility*

**Resources (Continued):**

Strategic Planning Resources

First District Association of Local Governments  
PO Box 1207  
Watertown, SD 57201-6207  
605-882-5115  
605-882-5049  
E-mail: dick@1stdistrict.org

Carl Moore  
Community Store  
www.thecommunitystore.com

Reading List

- “Getting to Yes” by Roger Fischer & William Ury;
- “Smart Communities” by Suzanne Morse
- “Rural Communities” by Cornelia Butler Flora and Jay Flora
- “Boomtown USA: 7 1/2 Keys to Big Success in Small Towns” by Jack Schultz
- “Energizing Entrepreneurship: Charting a Course for Rural Communities” by Deb Markley, Don Mackey and Vickie Luther;
- “A Guide to Strategic Planning for Rural Communities” by USDA Rural Development – Office of Community Development

<b>SUB THEME: Volunteerism / Civic Responsibility (Including EMS)</b>
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**THEME: COMMUNITY BETTERMENT**

**Subtheme:** Volunteerism/Civic Responsibility (including EMS)

**Challenge:** While the residents of Clark have a strong tradition of sharing time and talents, getting more people involved on a continuing basis is a challenge. EMS recruitment was mentioned as a specific concern.

**Recommendation:** During our tour of your city, the Community Assessment Team saw substantial improvements in Clark accomplished through the efforts of civic, religious and youth organizations and individual volunteers. Conducting this Community Assessment was a “call to action” for every resident, asking for each person’s input while respecting differing viewpoints. Here are some suggestions for consideration:

1. Use this Community Assessment as a “springboard” in recruiting volunteers. Encourage participation by a diverse group of citizens throughout the strategic planning process.

## COMMUNITY BETTERMENT

### *Volunteerism & Civic Responsibility*

Everyone has different experiences and different amounts of time that they can give. By using flyers and the newspaper, keep the public informed of not only goals and progress, but also volunteer needs to meet those goals. In addition, this is an opportunity to have the governmental, civic and religious organization prioritize their goals to best meet the community's needs. Also, see COMMUNITY BETTERMENT: Leadership Development.

2. Ask for volunteers. In a survey conducted by the Points of Light Foundation, the number one reason that people do not volunteer is that no one asked them. The Community Assessment Team had the privilege of learning how this community came together to support a family in their time of need. Each contributed in his or her own way. Include a volunteer booth at events or hold a volunteer fair at the Community Center. The HELP!Line Center in Sioux Falls has an on-line database that lists how volunteers are utilized in different non-profit/governmental organizations. Create a list of family volunteer opportunities so the families can get involved together.
3. EMS volunteer recruitment. If someone says no to volunteering, ask why he/she does not want to serve. Perhaps there are ways to overcome some of these obstacles. Again, inform the public of the need for volunteers. Publicize a volunteer recruitment week campaign. Have a current EMS volunteer share why they got involved, why they love volunteering. Another consideration would be to work with the high school to arrange students for "shadowing" an EMS volunteer as a means to assess different career alternatives.
4. Engage youth and seniors. Today's youth are tomorrow's leaders, and participation in different committees offers them an opportunity to learn and retain the importance of civic engagement. Community involvement is an important factor in college and scholarship acceptance. Invite youth to attend or be a representative on different governmental or civic committees. Younger students look up to the high school students. Explore a Big Buddy program where high school students can spend time with the grade school students. The Points of Light Foundation is a national organization that promotes National Seasons of Service Days, such as Make a Difference Day. They also have an on-line resource library with information on engaging youth as volunteers, community volunteer efforts and ideas for volunteer activities. Some of the Seasons of Service Days include grant opportunities.

The seniors offer a wealth of knowledge and experience. Look for ways that they can get involved, whether reading to children at school or sharing the wonderful history of Clark County as a tour guide at your museum. The RSVP organization offers ideas on engaging senior volunteers. Contact the South Dakota Department of Social Services—Division of Adult Services and Aging to see if there is funding for senior transportation to volunteer services. An opportunity for youth and seniors to collaborate is the Veterans History project, a nationwide effort that relies on volunteers to collect and preserve veteran's memories. High school students record local veteran's personal narratives and this information is submitted to the Library of Congress where it will be stored. In South Dakota, Senator Johnson' field offices have been helping to facilitate this process and provide the packets needed for gathering the information.

## COMMUNITY BETTERMENT

### *Volunteerism & Civic Responsibility*

5. Celebrate volunteer efforts. Every volunteer wants to be recognized in a different way. For some, it is a phone call or written note; for others, they are comfortable in a more public setting. Consider an annual city wide volunteer recognition event. This is also an opportunity to thank local businesses for allowing flexibility for EMS volunteers. One idea would be to offer a program where residents could log their volunteer hours at City Hall at a “Sharing Tree”, where everyone could physically watch the hours “grow” over time.
6. Consider an annual or semi-annual city wide volunteer event. There may be households that are unable to maintain their properties. Older families or single heads of households may not be able to maintain their homes or yards because of physical and/or monetary restrictions. A social, church or youth group could lead the efforts in a “lend-a-hand” group to meet these needs. It might start out as leaf raking/yard cleaning event that occurs in the spring and in the fall. This event could also include the parks, ball diamonds and pool facilities. The volunteers might subsequently identify other repair needs for the homeowner that can be confidentially forwarded onto other groups that can assist with these needs.

### **Resources:**

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program – RSVP

Program information: [www.seniorcoprs.org/joining/rsvp/](http://www.seniorcoprs.org/joining/rsvp/)

List of RSVP programs operating in SD

[www.seniorcorps.org/joining/rsvp/state.asp?usestateabbr=sd](http://www.seniorcorps.org/joining/rsvp/state.asp?usestateabbr=sd)

SD Department of Social Services

Division of Adult Services and Aging

Watertown Office

605.882.5005

Volunteer Center

Watertown

605.882.5270

Volunteer HELP!Line Center

Sara Carothers

1000 N West Ave #310

Sioux Falls SD 57104

605.274.1407

[www.helplinecenter.org](http://www.helplinecenter.org)

<http://www.volunteersolutions.org/volhelp/volunteer/>

Project CAR

An ecumenical organization that provides transportation to older adults to and from volunteer tasks.

Kate Heligas

605.332.2777

COMMUNITY BETTERMENT  
*Volunteerism & Civic Responsibility*

**Resources (Continued):**

Workers on Wheels

A senior services program designed to assist the frail elderly in remaining in their homes by providing light maintenance and repair services, provided by volunteers. Each fall, they have an event called Rake the Town.

Kristen Lueth

Workers on Wheels Coordinator

23000 W 26<sup>th</sup> St

Sioux Falls, SD 57105

605.333.3317

<http://centerforactivegenerations.org/Social%20Services.htm>

Office of Emergency Medical Services

South Dakota Department of Public Safety

118 W Capitol

Pierre SD 57501

Bob.graff@state.sd.us

[www.state.sd.us/dps/EMS](http://www.state.sd.us/dps/EMS)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services—A potential source of funding for EMS

Health Resource Services Administration

Evan Mayfield – Program Contact

301.443.0835

[emayfield@hrsa.gov](mailto:emayfield@hrsa.gov)

Points of Light Foundation

<http://www.pointsoflight.org/resources/volunteerresource/>

Veterans History Project

<http://www.loc.gov/vets/>

To obtain project kits, contact Senator Johnson's office.

715 S Minnesota Ave

Sioux Falls SD 57104

605.332.8896

Resource Book

*“The Successful Volunteer Organization: Getting Started & Getting Results in Nonprofit, Charitable, Grass Roots & Community Groups”* – Flanagan, Joan.

*“Volunteer Recruiting & Retention: A Marketing Approach”* -- Macduff, Nancy.

*“101 Ideas for Volunteer Programs”* – McCurley, Stephen & Vineyard, Sue.

*“Recruiting Youth Volunteers for Your Organization”* A publication from the SDSU Cooperative Extension Service, available online at <http://agbiopubs.sdstate.edu/index.cfm>

## COMMUNITY BETTERMENT

### *Long Range Planning*

**SUB THEME: Long Range Planning**

**Challenge:** Strategic Planning/Comprehensive Planning/Zoning

**Recommendation:** Planning is a vital tool for any community. It allows for the community to change and grow in a way that involves the entire community. A plan can assist the community in accomplishing goals within a desired timeframe and gives the direction on where to go after that. It also allows the community to prepare for major events and to use the plan as a reference point.

There are three main parts of the planning process: the planning stage, the implementation stage and the evaluation stage. The planning stage sets up a vision for the community. This vision is the core of your plan and needs the support of the community as a whole. Once you have a vision, you are able to set up goals to enforce that vision. With those goals, it is imperative to set up objectives to reach goals. The objectives need a timeline to gauge the progress and stay on track. Once the planning stage is completed, the next step is to implement the plan. This will take effort from the entire community, including volunteers. And lastly, the evaluation stage is the final and ongoing step in your plan. This evaluation is important to document the success of your efforts and also to improve aspects of the program that may not be working. If something is not working or is leading you in the wrong direction, evaluation also gives you the opportunity to revise the plan to a more effective method. Remember that plans may have to be revised and revisited many times.

It was mentioned in several listening sessions that the City of Clark needs a long term plan. A strategic plan is a way to look at where you are at and where you would like the community to go. To start the strategic planning process, outline your strengths, weaknesses and projects as seen through the eyes of the community as a whole. This gives Clark a better understanding of the position it currently stands. Clark started this process by participating in the Community Assessment. Through this process, Clark received the insight as to what the citizens would like to see from their community and what they like about the community. From these answers, Clark should be able to develop a vision as to what Clark should be in the next two, five, ten and twenty years and longer.

The community should participate in the last town meeting which will set up priorities for the community to pursue in the short term. These will act as some objectives to reach the goal of the vision of the community.

I have included an example of how to continue your strategic plan step-by-step below:

1. Convene a Joint Visioning Taskforce that consists of at least one representative from each of the relevant organization in the community (i.e. school, city, Economic Development Corporation, business community, agricultural community, civic and social organizations, ministerial group, etc).

## COMMUNITY BETTERMENT

### *Long Range Planning*

2. Review the themes and responses from the assessment report. Utilize the priorities established in the Assessment's follow up priority setting meeting to provide the starting point for establishing your objectives or goals for your Vision or strategic action plan.
3. Establish timelines for when you want to meet your objectives.
4. Establish who or what organization is going to take the lead in moving each objective forward (this is why it is important to include multiple organizations as part of this joint taskforce).
5. Identify potential resources available for each objective using the recommendation in this report and other reference materials (such as the SD Resource Directory).
6. Share this Vision with the entire community and allow for public comment. Adjust your plans accordingly.
7. Recruit a list of interested volunteers to help execute each portion of the plan. You might establish sub committees for each objective where there is not a single organization that is willing or able to take the lead on a particular objective.
8. Begin implementation of your plan. Plan your work and work your plan.
9. Track your progress over time. Share this with the community. This will keep people interested and build momentum over time as you start to see the successes of your efforts.
10. Remember to celebrate the accomplishments, even small ones, to keep the motivation continuous.

This process takes the commitment from more than the Council members as it is also the responsibility of the citizens to keep the strategic plan going. This would include recruiting volunteers to participate in the process.

A good example of this type of planning is the Governors 2010 Initiative. This model provides a strategy for statewide economic development through 2010 and describes measurable objectives to attain during that time. A copy of this plan can be viewed at:  
<http://2010initiative.com/2010initiative.htm>

Another example of a process for long range planning is Hometown Competitiveness. Hometown Competitiveness is a systematic process for rural communities to become competitive. Hometown Competitiveness is based on energizing leaders, donors, entrepreneurs and youth in rural communities in ways that will revitalize the community and create a cycle to support investment, growth and succession planning in all aspects of community and economic development. This concept is not a program, but a locally driven system that centers on people not things (i.e. business and industry, education, etc.) Go online to [www.ruraleship.org](http://www.ruraleship.org) for information and registration for the National HTC Academy taking place on February 21-23, 2006 in Lincoln, Nebraska.

### Comprehensive Planning

A comprehensive plan can be used as a tool for your strategic plan and is a very important part of community planning. Clark currently has a Comprehensive Plan that was completed in 2000 by Todd Kays with the First District Association of Local Governments. This comprehensive plan addresses the why, how, where, and when to develop various areas of the community. It is also a statement of policy that will guide the decisions made by the City Planning and Zoning

## COMMUNITY BETTERMENT

### *Long Range Planning*

Commission, City Council and various other municipal officials. The document can assist in answering future questions concerning budgeting, capital improvements, zoning, and subdivision regulations.

This comprehensive plan was created with the notion to be reviewed after five years and updated after ten. The reviewing process should be done within the next year to make sure the plan is up-to-date. If the community is unsure on how to pursue this, Todd Kays is willing to come to the community to help with this process and provide training if Clark so wishes. When reviewing this plan, the City is required to conduct several public hearings to ensure that all issues of the long-term plan are addressed. Please contact Todd Kays with First District Association of Local Governments for more information at 605-882-5115.

### Zoning Ordinances

Moving down the line with objectives to reach your long term goals, zoning regulations are another important part of the planning process. The zoning ordinances are a tool for the implementation of the comprehensive plan. They divide the City into “districts” to help preserve certain areas for industrial, residential, commercial and agricultural development. Enforcement of these regulations is vital to protect residents from the uncontrolled actions of others and promotes efficient, orderly development. Clark’s Zoning Ordinance was adopted within the last four to five years, making it relatively new. If there are any reoccurring problems that continue to surface with zoning ordinances, revisions should be made with the update of the comprehensive plan.

Subdivision ordinances address new residential development and provide a legal basis of land registration. It is a document that assures new buildings are properly located on the lot; infrastructure such as streets, water and sewer is constructed to match current city designs and establishes the division of lots with the services that the developer is responsible to provide.

If Clark has questions regarding zoning or subdivision regulations, feel free to contact Todd Kays with First District Association of Local Governments. He is a great resource in this area as well. He is very knowledgeable and willing to help or answer any questions the City may have and is also a member of the South Dakota Planners Association.

### Capital Improvements Plan (CIP)

A Capital Improvements Plan can help the City properly manage for the financing and construction of needed public improvements or facilities. A properly designed CIP enables a community to identify its capital needs, rank them by priority, coordinate their scheduling and determine the best method of paying for them within the community’s financial capacity. The CIP should be based on the comprehensive and strategic plan and schedule capital improvements over a shorter period of time within the next 6 years or so.

Make sure Clark’s Capital Improvements Plan is up-to-date and use it as a tool for your community planning process.

## COMMUNITY BETTERMENT

### *Long Range Planning*

All of the tools mentioned above work together to provide a solid overall plan for the City to move forward in the way that promotes Clark and its values.

#### Resources:

*LeadershipPlenty*® can be a very effective program to take part in. It is a comprehensive program focusing on how groups of citizens can learn to work together and take action on behalf of their community. It is a tool to better prepare citizens with the skills, attitudes and relationships to make lasting changes in the community. This equips the citizens with the knowledge to plan and implement programs. It is offered for free through First District Association of Local Governments in Watertown or it is also offered through South Dakota Rural Enterprise Incorporated.

#### First District Association of Local Governments

Todd Kays

PO Box 1207

Watertown, SD 57201-6207

Phone: (605) 882-5115

Fax: (605) 882-5049

E-mail: [todd@1stdistrict.org](mailto:todd@1stdistrict.org)

#### South Dakota Rural Enterprise Incorporated

Beth Davis, President

PO Box 802

Sioux Falls, SD 57101-0802

Phone: (605) 978-2804

Fax: (605) 978-2805

[beth@sdrei.org](mailto:beth@sdrei.org)

Publication: A Guide to Strategic Planning for Rural Communities

<http://www.ezec.gov/About/strategic.pdf>

Publication: Community Participation- How People Power Brings Sustainable Benefits to Communities. Available online at <http://www.ezec.gov/Pubs/commparticrept.pdf>

## COMMUNITY BETTERMENT

### *Philanthropy*

**SUB THEME:     Philanthropy**

**Challenge:** How to put the commitment and attitude exhibited at the benefit held in Clark shortly before the Community Assessment to work everyday.

**Solution:** Just recognizing the community's commitment to help and support those in need is the first step. I see this as part of the strategic plan. The community is in the process of starting a community foundation. To paraphrase Bob Sutton, director of the SD Community Foundation, people in South Dakota are some of the most giving people in the country. The SD Community Foundation is helping communities create savings accounts that allow citizens, alumni and others to contribute to the long term success of their towns and counties.

A community foundation is a wonderful way to create a lasting legacy for your town. The principal, individual contributions, is invested permanently and a portion of the earnings are given to a community selected governing board to determine how best to invest them in Clark. It creates a perpetual resource of capital for the community.

Clark also has major philanthropists in the community, The city hall and proposed health care center are examples of significant giving. Just because some individuals can make large donations shouldn't stop everyone from giving a little. All giving is important. Fund drives have proven very successful even in very small communities. Here's a challenge: Britton raised \$5 million for a wellness center from private contributions using a well organized strategy and professional education. Clark could do that, too, for a project important to the community.

Also, your upcoming Centennial celebration provides an excellent opportunity to tap into people that have moved away from Clark, but still have their heart back in their "home" community. If you are planning an all school reunion, be sure to tap into these returning alumni not just for potential charitable contributions to your community foundation and other local projects, but also as an economic development tool. Develop a database of what the alumni are up to, who they work for, and what field they work professionally. This can be beneficial information for your fundraising and economic development efforts.

#### **Resources:**

South Dakota Community Foundation  
Bob Sutton, Executive Director  
605-224-1025  
[www.sdcommunityfoudnation.org](http://www.sdcommunityfoudnation.org)

Diane Frederickson  
Hospital Board Chairman  
Britton, SD  
605-448-5129

COMMUNITY BETTERMENT  
*Communication – Inter Organizational*

**SUB THEME:      Communication – Inter Organizational**

**Challenge:** Initiating and maintaining good communication and cooperation among many community groups and organizations.

**Recommendation:** Communication: Gotta have it. If we don't communicate effectively between organizations, those organizations are simply not as effective or as efficient as they could be. Clark has so many great organizations with phenomenal leaders, think of the mountains you could move if everyone were on the same page!

Before I launch into my recommendation, I want you to know I really struggled with this part of the assessment. The best way I can think of helping you help yourselves is to give you an example of a community that had the same issues to tackle. I totally understand Platte and Clark are not the same communities and I struggle with the idea of this part being dubbed the "Platte Chronicles." I do not want to sound as if I'm preaching, that is not my intent. We were asked to address these specific issues, so I'll tread lightly and hope you don't run me out of town the next time I visit.

Communication was a problem in Platte and I have the assessment process to thank for helping fix it. The economic development corporation, Chamber of Commerce and City Council were all working as different entities. All of the groups had the same goal of making our community the best it can possibly be, but we were all going about it in different ways. It was as if one hand didn't know what the other hand was doing. And...I'll be honest, there was a huge conflict between the Platte Development Corporation (PDC) and the mayor.

Then an assessment team came to Platte in February of last year. We were a community divided over some recent controversies. We aired our dirty laundry to seven strangers for three days and then had a town hall meeting. I have to admit I felt almost smug in that I had gotten to gripe for the past three days about the some of the seemingly senseless things the mayor and council had done. I was ready to sit back and hear the panel tell the council just exactly how stupid they were! Then Kristen Hamm of the Lemmon Economic Development (she's just a little thing with a drawl) said some words I'll never forget, "Y'all gotta get over it...Let it go, people!"

What!? Where was my justice?! My revenge?! I wasn't thrilled, in fact, I was kind of ticked off. I left feeling like, "What the Heck does she know? She's not from here, she doesn't know what we're dealing with!" But, as a few days passed, I knew she had hit the nail on the head. That was why it hurt.

It was a personal wake up call for me. I decided change was going to start with me, now. Was it easy? Absolutely, not. Who likes to swallow their pride? But...I let it go, and I'm thrilled I did. You will be, too. I guarantee it.

## COMMUNITY BETTERMENT

### *Communication – Inter Organizational*

Now as I look back at it, I feel a sense of relief. I don't carry around the anger anymore and I'm more effective at my job. Life is by no means perfect. There is, and will continue to be, conflict, but that's OK. At least I'm not in the middle of it, or worse, causing it.

We decided to improve the communication by having liaisons from organizations serve on each other's boards. For example, I sit on the Chamber of Commerce board to report in on what the development corporation is doing. I also visit frequently with a member of the city council (who happens to be my neighbor!) to keep up on what they are doing. I married the hospital administrator, so I know what they are working on. As a substitute teacher, I also am able to keep up on school projects. Some may even think I'm snoopy, but it is an invaluable asset!

It is vital that the liaison be a "people person." It has to be someone that people trust and aren't afraid to be honest with. A sense of humor goes a long way! It is a tough job to coordinate between different entities, I would suggest hiring someone to do that. Give them a title like executive director/peacemaker and have communication between entities be part of their job. It is money well spent.

We also have biannual meetings where representatives from different organizations meet to do an update on goals for Platte. The assessment helped us set the goals, we get together to see how we can accomplish them efficiently. This helps reduce the duplication of projects, increases coordination among organizations and allows more people the opportunity to be involved in projects of particular interest to them.

Just a little bit about my job, so the next part makes sense...I am the executive director of the Platte Development Corporation. I answer to a seven member board (which we hand pick, probably not politically correct, but it works for our community). The PDC receives a stipend of \$1,200 from the City each month. My part-time salary and expenses come out of that. It doesn't leave a lot to work with, but we do get financial support from the City at times for special projects.

The conflict occurred in the fact that the Council felt they were in the dark about the PDC's activities. At the same time, my board and I didn't appreciate the council passing down duties for me and holding the stipend over our heads. But, now I can see how the Council was looking at it. While we (the PDC) knew we were working hard with limited resources, the Council didn't. How could we have expected them to? The "secrecy" led them to be suspicious of our being lazy.

Now I send a copy of the development corporation meeting minutes to the City Council each month. My board struggled with this as we felt there was a confidentiality issue involved. My group decided we would send everything to them that we could, but if it was a confidentiality issue that would not be in the minutes they received.

This had a huge impact on our communication. The council found they were more than getting their stipend's worth and they were able to keep up on what we were doing. It also helped them develop a trust in the development corporation. My group's agenda wasn't a "big secret" and they found out just exactly how hard we do work!

## COMMUNITY BETTERMENT

### *Communication – Inter Organizational*

I do want it to be said that there are things in economic development that cannot be shared with other people. Some see this as being a control issue. It's not. If a company or individual asks for confidentiality on a prospective business, that absolutely, positively, no doubt about it has to be granted. I have things that go across my desk on a monthly basis that I do not even discuss with my board because it is the client's preference. But, my board trusts me, and they know I will inform them of any developments as soon as I am able. Trust is huge! I also want it to be said that economic development is not easy. For every 10 leads I get on companies or new businesses, maybe one is a go. The competition is fierce, and quite frankly, there aren't a lot of Fortune 500 companies looking at moving to small town SD. If I took every rejection I've had in the past four years personally, I'd be insane.

How does all of this pertain to Clark? I want to touch on just a couple of things specifically because we were asked to.

It seems as if there is a rift between the development corporation, the council, the mayor, and other entities in the community. If the development corporation is receiving public funding, I strongly feel they need to explain how it is used. Taxpayers are entitled to know how their tax dollars are used. Now, keep in mind that I know for a fact there are issues the development corporation cannot discuss. You have to find a happy medium. In exchange for information, the council needs to trust the development corporation to do the best they can.

I also believe there are some personalities that can make or break the communication process between entities. If there is someone that makes people's blood pressure rise, they certainly shouldn't be a person that gives out information to the public. I really think it's necessary for Clark to find a real "people person" to bridge the divides between groups and to do some PR.

Banking...I heard a couple of times the banks are not supporting local businesses. That, understandably, infuriates people. I would like to caution the community to hate the message, not the messenger. I would also caution you that very few people know all the facts behind how these deals are put together. Where there are information gaps, often rumors and miscommunication arise. This is problematic, and difficult to solve. But it must be understood that people that work for your local banks have the same interests in making your community economically sustainable that you all do. But various barriers and challenges arise as to how they can work with the community and local businesses to make this happen. In general, many "small town" banks in rural South Dakota are branches of huge banks from out of state that might have no idea what small town SD is all about. To us, it's a no brainer to support new businesses. For them, it's an investment that needs to fit into some perfect category on a loan application sheet. Times are changing and a small town bank isn't what it used to be. Clark is by no means the only community in SD with this obstacle.

Vinyl plant...I am so excited for this project in Clark! I know it has been a lot of sweat and tears, but you guys can do it! This project has been a victim of the rumor mill. Hindsight is 20/20, but I feel there is a lesson to be learned. Again, there is absolutely, positively, no way possible that all of the information involved could have been shared with the public, or the City Council for that matter. If a board member says it is confidential, you have to trust them and

COMMUNITY BETTERMENT  
*Communication – Inter Organizational*

leave it at that. Believe me...if they could have passed on information, they would have, because who would want to be persecuted in a small community?

The passion that fuels our communities has a funny way of showing itself sometimes. I see it in this project. The people of Clark want a good, quality plant to replace the jobs that were lost when McLean's left. You want it so badly, that it has almost become desperation. Pair that desperation with lack of information, and there is a whole lot of fuel for the rumor mill. But look what you've done! You are getting through it, and there 92 people that came up with \$800,000 in a short amount of time! How can this be anything but exhilarating?! Focus on that, not the bad. More on this in the "celebrate achievements."

To end my sermon, I want to add that Clark has so many things to be proud of! Celebrate them! I have a saying I coined after Platte's community assessment, "Pride runs deep, but it can also cut your throat." (Charming, isn't it?) Everyone in your community is truly passionate about Clark and its future. You are all working toward the same goal, which is the future viability of Clark. Unfortunately, sometimes past history, pride, or personality conflicts interfere with progress. Keep your eye on the goal!

**Resources:**

I encourage you to contact me if you have any questions, as I'm dubbing myself the poster child of communication. If this hits a nerve, call the next two people on the list...Just kidding.

Karen Burket  
PO Box 393  
Platte, SD 57369  
605-337-2895 Home Office  
605-337-3921 City Office

I received my words of wisdom from:

Centerville Promotional Cooperative  
Pat Norin, Chairperson  
46470 303<sup>rd</sup> St  
Centerville, SD 57014  
Phone: 605-253-2580

*Or*

Bill Hansen  
Centerville Development Corporation  
2201 State St.  
Centerville, SD 57014  
605-201-7593  
bjhansen@hcinet.net

COMMUNITY BETTERMENT  
*Communication – General Public*

**SUB THEME:**      **Communication – General Public**

**Challenge:** Improving communication to the general public.

**Recommendations:** Quality communication to the general public is a must. Residents of small communities have a sense of “entitlement” to information. If we’re paying their salary, we have a right to know what’s going on, right? I’m on the fence about this one, because not all information can go to public. But we need to make a concerted effort to inform on the subjects we can.

The absolute best resource I can think of is your excellent newspaper, the *Clark County Courier*. Accurate reporting of public meetings is a must. It is not out of line to ask the reporter that is covering a meeting if you could proof the article before it goes to print. I do this all the time. Sometimes it’s not necessarily what is said, it’s how it’s said. The president of each group should have a good idea of what the slant on the story should be, have them proof the story to make sure it is passed on to the reader.

Again, I’m going to plug an employee that does public relations between different organizations in your community. They are also the person the public goes to with questions on projects. The more people feel they have access to information, the more comfortable they feel with letting community leaders do their jobs.

Many Chambers of Commerce organizations do newsletters to not only their members, but the general public. It doesn’t have to be elaborate or expensive, it just has to be an update of different projects that are going on in the community. If the Chamber is in charge of the newsletter, try to include information from the development corporation, schools, etc... To save on postage, ask the grocery store or banks to distribute them to patrons.

Sometimes I think groups trivialize what they do or just assume people know about it. Each organization plays a vital part in their community. Don’t assume, get the word out! Frequent and positive communication is everyone’s responsibility. One way to do this is to set up a semi-annual public report to the community from the various local entities (school, chamber, development corporation, city, Rotary, Lions, etc). Provide a venue to share and celebrate what each organization has done and is currently working on. Yes, not all information can be shared with the public, but you must be proactive about sharing whatever information you can. And don’t forget about follow up communication. For confidentiality reasons, you may not be able to share all information about economic development project as they come together, but nothing prevents you from sharing as much information as possible “after the fact” as to why things transpired the way that they did.

The semi-annual report to the community will not only let the public stay aware of what organizations have done or are working on, but also it will help to bring these participating organizations together to think cooperatively about how your work more effectively on similar types of projects.

COMMUNITY BETTERMENT  
*Communication – Embracing New Ideas*

It begins with this assessment and can grow from there. In the Long Range Planning recommendation above, we discuss the need for a visioning taskforce for the community. At the Assessment’s follow up meeting (scheduled after distribution of this report), you will have an opportunity, as a community, to outline your economic and community development goals, objectives, roles, and responsibilities for the community over the next several years. Set up the visioning taskforce as it recommended in the previous recommendation on “Long Range Planning” to make sure that you continue to move these objectives forward, after the assessment, in a cooperative manner – with all organizations sharing a portion of the responsibility to working on these various objectives. Make sure the public is informed on these meetings, your progress in meeting your objectives, and any changes you have made to this “vision” for your community. Use the semi-annual reports to the community, detailed in the two paragraphs above, to help you open this communication with the general public.

<b>SUB THEME:      Communication – Embracing New Ideas</b>
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**Challenge:** Understanding that the future of Clark relies on a willingness to change and overcome past issues.

**Recommendation:** Change is tough for small, rural communities. We are fighting to stay alive and maintain our identity. How can we keep that identity and at the same time be a viable, thriving community in the future?

Early last summer I came across a quote that I think pertains to rural South Dakota like none other. It is four simple words, “Grow, change, or die.” If we don’t choose the first two options of grow or change, the third option chooses us.

Change and growth require us to get out of our comfort zones, and a lot of times there is conflict involved. Rather than waiting for conflict to arise and then dealing with it, take a proactive approach. Long and short term planning can assist with this. Strategic planning helps show people the “big picture.” If people know where the ship is going, they are more likely to get on!

Communication through meetings, word of mouth and print helps people know what new projects are in the works. This helps build support and unity so different projects can move forward. People in small communities don’t like surprises such as “we’re putting in curb and gutter...next week!” Start the dialogue for future projects now.

Give people an input on the planning as much as possible; when people have input, they, understandably, feel they have ownership in it.

**COMMUNITY BETTERMENT**  
*Communication – Celebrating Achievements*

No matter how much communication and planning takes place, acknowledge that there will be controversy. We need to know there will be different points-of-view and accept it. But people want and need to be heard and I encourage compromise whenever and wherever possible.

Before the planning and communication, your community needs to move beyond past hurts. It is virtually impossible to move forward without doing this first. The community of Eureka took an innovative approach when they staged an event aimed at burying the past. Community members were invited to write down past grudges, dislikes, bad attitudes, or whatever else they considered detrimental to the town. The notecards were cremated (with the fire dept. in attendance) and buried at a gravesite behind the visitor's center.

Some thought town leadership had gone insane, others loved it. Whatever... it helped change attitudes and the direction of the community. I encourage the people of the Clark community to do the same. Even if you don't do this particular event, bury the hatchet, you'll be glad you did.

**Resources:**

Wanda Jundt  
Eureka Economic Development Corporation  
PO Box 134  
Eureka, SD 57437  
605-284-2130  
ecdc@valleytel.net

Strategic planning assistance could be guided by  
Governors 2010 Initiative  
[www.2010initiative.com](http://www.2010initiative.com)

*See also the recommendation regarding Long Range Planning above.*

<b>SUB THEME:      Communication – Celebrating Achievements</b>
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**Challenge:** Celebrating the achievements of the Clark community and using those positives to move forward.

**Recommendation:** William Arthur Ward, once said, "We can choose to throw stones, to stumble over them, to climb over them or to build with them." How true for rural communities. We work so hard to accomplish things, that when a success occurs, all we can think of is, "It's about time!"

Achievements both big and small need to be celebrated because they give people a chance to reflect and give thanks for a job well done. It also gives a positive spin to the work, and sometimes controversy, that is involved with development. Clark has so many projects to be proud of! Celebrate them!

## COMMUNITY BETTERMENT

*Communication – Celebrating Achievements*

Again, it's important to use the local paper to let people know what is going on. The *Platte Enterprise* has a Gold Star of the Week, where people can go to the newspaper office and write a quick paragraph as to why someone or group are nominated. Then the paper prints just a little blurb about it in the editorials. Examples of past Gold Stars: The fire department for braving a blizzard to put out a fire. Another was three elderly ladies who pulled weeds one morning in front of the post office. It's not huge, but little things like that give people a sense of pride in their community and puts a smile on people's faces.

We have a local Modern Woodmen of America chapter that gives a plaque to honor a community member or group that helps improve our community. The Platte Chamber gives a "Pride in Platte" award that honors businesses or community members that have gone above and beyond to make Platte a better place. After a few years, these awards have become quite an honor because of past recipients.

I thought the Chamber at 5 get together during the assessment was a good idea. I would encourage the Chamber to do that, only invite the development group and/or housing group, etc... I'd keep it informal at first, but maybe in the future, it could be used for informational meetings where spokespeople from each group gave a very brief synopsis of what each are working on. Keep the tone positive! To ensure good attendance, have a "people person" call and individually express an invitation to attendees.

Letters to the Editor are excellent ways to both thank individuals and groups involved in projects. Newspaper articles are great facts and details, but sometimes the "warm, fuzzy" feeling can be better said in a letter.

When a new business opens or one expands, do an open house. This may sound like a given, but don't just host tours. Have a program where people involved in the success are recognized and thanked for their part. The people involved know how much effort is involved in development, make sure everyone else does, also!

Another idea I've seen in some research...the community of Rutland has a Rutland Rocks! Festival every year. It is a fundraiser for a convenience store which is operated by the student body. Maybe Clark could do a similar event that is a celebration of your wonderful community. Get the school kids involved. They'd be a great source of enthusiasm, ideas and energy!

Earlier a Chamber of Commerce newsletter was suggested to help with communication. That would also be an excellent place to give credit to individuals and/or groups that are involved in community improvement.

# INFRASTRUCTURE

**SUB THEME:**     **Beautification**

**Challenge:** General beautification of the community to give it a lasting, positive impression to visitors.

**Recommendation:** Your community has been very proactive in improving the general appearance of the city, by elimination of unsightly buildings/homes through utilization of the Spruce Up South Dakota program and by holding annual clean up days. You have a unique opportunity to impact travelers on both the highway and Main Street. Here are some suggestions for consideration:

## Main Street

One of the things that struck me when I visited Clark was a “Mayberrylike” atmosphere. The old-fashioned houses with covered porches, the museum and Main Street give an ambiance of a step back in time. The quaintness is something that could be built on and marketed. I think it would give a distinct impression to visitors in your community. A lot can be done for a fairly small amount of money.

A couple of suggestions would be placing old fashioned benches at storefronts on Main Street. Plant some trees to add some greenery in the warmer months, then put clear lights on them in the winter. Some of the businesses had huge flower planters in front of them, they look great, add even more. Earlier in the report a suggestion was made to redo some of the storefronts.

1. One of the things that struck me when I visited Clark was a “Mayberrylike” atmosphere. The old-fashioned houses with covered porches, the museum and Main Street give an ambiance of a step back in time. The quaintness is something that could be built on and marketed. I think it would give a distinct impression to visitors in your community. A lot can be done for a fairly small amount of money.

Develop a task force of a diverse group of individuals to identify a theme and develop a vision for Main Street. You might hold a contest to get people of all ages involved in the visioning process. This process will require a strategic plan with goals to be accomplished each year.

A couple of suggestions would be placing old fashioned benches at storefronts on Main Street. Plant some trees to add some greenery in the warmer months, then put clear lights on them in the winter. Some of the businesses had huge flower planters in front of them, they look great, add even more. Get some sort of a color scheme for all of the businesses. Even if all the businesses don’t totally redo their facades, simple painting would help with the

## INFRASTRUCTURE

### *Beautification*

continuity. Again, it's just a suggestion, but go for the old-fashioned Main Street look. It would be different from the commercialized fronts of larger, surrounding towns.

The First District Association of Local Governments is a resource for identifying funding opportunities to support this effort. Vermillion recently received national funding to improve the appearance of their main street. Explore funding opportunities with any buildings that qualify for historic preservation. Consider engaging a teen volunteer in the grant writing process.

2. The SD Department of Agriculture has the BOSDRC (Building Our South Dakota Rural Communities Grant) program. This grant program is available to any 4-H club, FFA chapter, or FCCLA chapter located in South Dakota. Maximum grant amount for the BASIC grant is \$750. Any project that beautifies a rural community in which youth involvement is eligible. The major objectives are a community need, education benefit, and youth participation in the actual facilitation of the project.
3. The Nonprofit Management Institute (NPMI) at Dakota State University provides public service assistance for both non-profits and for-profit organizations in South Dakota. Through the NPMI, organizations may receive assistance with a variety of steps in the grant writing process, strategic planning, find appropriate resources, and other areas.

### Highway

1. Ask for input from residents about what towns they have visited that have an attractive presence along the highway. Find out what makes these cities memorable. Remember that duplication is the best form of flattery.

### Other

1. Since the curb and gutter project is underway, consider forming a volunteer crew to assist with general clean up in those blocks once the curbs and gutters are installed. Examples of volunteer activities might include: tree trimming, hauling away appliances or cars that are sitting outside and some exterior painting. To get everyone involved, you will want to consider child care and the availability of equipment to handle large items.
2. If you have a potentially polluted property such as an old gravel pit, abandoned gas station, etc. your community might qualify for a Brownfields cleanup grant. This program helps to clean up potentially contaminated property and prepare it for alternative use. The community of Parker has creatively used grants through this program to clean up two old gravel pits located adjacent to the community. One is being turned into a housing development and the other is being used to expand a recreation area/park. Also, there are grants available from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources for tire and battery clean up. These are usually applied for by the city or county government.
3. Paint-South Dakota is a program through the South Dakota Housing Development Authority that provides paint and supplies to community groups that volunteer their time to help fix up and paint houses in their community. For more information, contact the South Dakota Housing Development Authority.
4. Inter-Lakes Community Action (ICAP) offers a Housing Repair/Rehabilitation program for eligible persons and families. The HOME program funds are made available to eligible

## INFRASTRUCTURE

### *Beautification*

persons/families on a zero-interest, five year decreasing balance loan, as long as the homeowner remains eligible for the program. HOME funds can be used for accessibility modifications for persons with disabilities, in addition to make necessary repairs for safety and code compliance.

- Other housing rehab programs are available that address health and safety concerns. These programs are covered under the next recommendation regarding “Housing Rehabilitation”.

### **Resources:**

First District Association of Local Governments  
PO Box 1207  
Watertown, SD 57201  
605.882.5115

SD Department of Agriculture  
Division of Ag Development  
523 E Capitol, Foss Building  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605.773.3481

Non-Profit Management Institute  
Lowry Hall  
820 N Washington  
Madison SD 57042  
605.256.5100  
<http://www.departments.dsu.edu/npmi/>

Downtown Brookings, Inc.  
308 Fourth St  
Brookings, SD 57006  
[jroden@brookings.net](mailto:jroden@brookings.net)

Parker Economic Development Corporation  
PO Box 57  
Parker, SD 57053  
605.297.4305  
[info@parkersd.org](mailto:info@parkersd.org)

Kim McIntosh  
SD Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
605.773.3296  
[www.state.sd.us/denr/DES/Ground/Brownfields/Brownfields.htm](http://www.state.sd.us/denr/DES/Ground/Brownfields/Brownfields.htm)  
[kim.mcintosh@state.sd.us](mailto:kim.mcintosh@state.sd.us)

## INFRASTRUCTURE

### *Housing*

#### **Resources (Continued):**

South Dakota Housing Development Authority  
Paint SD  
PO Box 1237  
221 S Central Ave  
Pierre SD 57501  
605.773.3181  
www.sdhda.org

Inter-Lakes Community Action  
Clark County  
201 N Commercial  
Clark SD 57225  
605.532.3722  
jguest@interlakescap.com

<b>SUB THEME:</b> <b>Housing</b>
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- **Affordable Housing**
- **Rental Housing**
- **Rehab**

**Challenge:** Clark is currently working to resolve some of its housing concerns through the development of some new housing areas. The major issues that came up during the assessment were the availability of quality affordable housing, quality rental housing, and housing rehabilitation.

**Recommendation:** Housing may be one of the most important aspects of economic development. When an industry looks at your community for a possible relocation or start up, one of the first questions asked “Is there any housing for my employees available?” Don’t let it break a deal for your community. Having quality affordable housing is one aspect of a broad-based economic development strategy.

You are to be applauded on your current housing development efforts. Use this to build momentum to other projects you might look to undertake over the next several years.

#### Affordable Housing - Development

Affordable Housing can be broken down into two specific areas: Affordable Housing Development and Home Ownership. Each of these areas will be discussed separately.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

### *Housing*

In terms of Affordable Housing Development, the first thing to look at is the Governors House program through the South Dakota Housing Development Authority. This is a great place to start and a real learning experience. I know that one individual has incorporated some into this into a housing site in Clark, but this is a private development. So what the Housing Authority and/or Clark Development Corporation, or a similar group, need to do is look at developing “spec” homes on scattered sites throughout Clark (a good place to start would be the sites that have been tore down and cleaned up by the city, where it sits now an empty lot). The South Dakota Housing Development Authority (SDHDA) has a great program involving “limited” risk on the “locals” part. Contact the South Dakota Housing Development Authority for more information on this.

Some of these development resources (programs) that service your area include:

1. South Dakota Housing Development Authority: HOME program; Housing Tax Credit Program; Multifamily Bond Financing Program; Rural Site Development Program; Governor’s Homes
2. USDA Rural Development: Farm Labor Housing Grants & Loans; Rural Housing Preservation Grants; Rural Housing Site Loans; Rural Rental Housing Guaranteed Loans; Rural Rental Housing Loans; Technical Assistance for Self-Help Housing
3. Inter-Lakes Community Action Program: Mutual Self-Help Housing
4. Federal Home Loan Bank: Affordable Housing Grants provided through local member banks.
5. Housing Assistance Council: HAC Loan Program
6. US Department of Housing and Urban Development: Housing Counseling Grants; Rural Housing and Economic Development Grants; Supportive Housing for the Elderly Program; Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities; Youth Build

Most of these various programs specifically address affordable single-family and multi-family housing rather than mid or upper level housing. For full information on each of these programs, contact the various assistance providers (see contact information below) or for a short overview of the programs, you can go to [www.sdcommunitynetwork.com](http://www.sdcommunitynetwork.com) and click on Financial Resources, Housing Development section.

The next thing is to develop housing sites with infrastructure in place, ie water, sewer, street, curb, gutter, electric, phone, natural gas, etc. Clark does have some private developers, which many rural communities do not have. Be sure to support them. Perhaps the city can donate labor or materials, and promote Tax Increment Financing (TIFs) whenever possible as part of your housing development strategy. It is my understanding that TIF financing for infrastructure was part of the housing development projects now in progress in Clark. TIFs really help to create affordability and with infrastructural site development. For more information contact First District Association of Local Governments (1<sup>st</sup> District) in Watertown, or Northeast South Dakota Community Action Program (NESDCAP) in Sisseton.

To address your housing concerns, you might put together a joint taskforce or committee to assess local housing concerns involving multiple partners in the community (development corporation, city, housing organizations, etc). Invite key resource people (program sponsors) to

## INFRASTRUCTURE

### *Housing*

come and present at one or more of these joint taskforce meetings to provide overviews of their programs. This is an opportunity for you to engage these organizations one-on-one about ways that you might tap into their programs to address local housing issues. Have a brief 1 to 2 hour group session with a panel of experts. Involve the SDHDA, Rural Development, banks, utilities, 1<sup>st</sup> District, ICAP, a TIF expert, private developers, city, county, major employers, Dev. Corp, Housing Authority, etc.

Have the group select reps/volunteers to tour the Homes Are Possible, Inc. (HAPI) site in Aberdeen, its an eye opener. HAPI paired a strategy of using Governor's homes and turning them into split level homes with a strategy to use Tax Increment Financing for the site development expenses. The project did not use 100% TIF. Instead, this was moderated and used to buy down the cost of lots for lower income individuals.

*There will be a regional mini housing conference held in Aberdeen in early 2006, the theme will be "how to do the deal". A delegation from Clark should attend this nuts and bolts session.*

### Affordable Housing – Home Ownership Financing

As stated above, there are two pieces to providing affordable housing. There is the development piece, and then there is a piece that deals with helping individuals finance home ownership. There are a myriad of programs available to assist potential homeowners in financing a home purchase. As a community, you can help this process along by making sure that this information is available to potential homebuyers from several sources (i.e. from the bank, city, realtors, etc). Having a short and concise publication about these various financing alternatives readily available to potential homeowners will help to eliminate some of the gaps to this information and, hopefully, assist potential homeowners in Clark. I will list a few of these programs below. Again, for more detailed information on each of these financing sources, you can go to [www.sdcommunitynetwork.com](http://www.sdcommunitynetwork.com) and click on Financial Resources, Homeowner programs section. Or contact the various sources directly.

1. South Dakota Housing Development Authority (SDHDA)
  - Employer Mortgage Assistance Program (EMAP) – Works with employers to develop funds for down payment and closing cost assistance through low-interest second mortgages
  - First Time Home Buyers Program – below market fixed interest mortgages processed through a local bank
  - Governor's Home – Low cost home that is constructed off-site and placed on a lot.
  - Loan Assistance Program (LAP) – provides down payment, closing cost and gap financing in connection with a home purchase
  - Mortgage Assistance Program (MAP) – provides down payment and closing cost assistance in the form of a second mortgage not to exceed \$6,000.
2. USDA Rural Development
  - Guaranteed Rural Housing Loans – Guaranteed loans for home ownership in rural areas

## INFRASTRUCTURE

### *Housing*

- Home Ownership Loans – Direct loans through USDA Rural Development for up to 100 percent of appraised value of the home.
3. HUD
    - Insured mortgages for single family to four-family homes made through local banks.
  4. Veterans Administration
    - Home Loan Guaranty – Home loan guarantees for veterans, certain service personnel and unmarried surviving spouses.

Education on home ownership is also important. Contact inter-lakes community action for home ownership education assistance if you do not currently offer this service locally. Consider hosting a home ownership (and Home Rehabilitation) forum for the community. Set up booths/tables (school gym) after the group session for all the resource people that want one. Have them bring their experts and handouts so that they can visit one-on-one with community residents. USDA Rural Development has helped to coordinate these events for communities in the black hills region. Or First District might be able to help provide some assistance in this regard as well.

### Rental Housing

Shortage of rental housing surfaced as a problem at some of the listening sessions – or lack of affordable quality rentals. You have some houses for sale, but the property owners might not want to the hassle of having to manage rental housing such as having to collect rent checks and make sure the property is being maintained. Other housing might work for rentals, but need to be rehabbed (covered in more detail in the next section below).

This situation could also create an opportunity for economic development in the community as well as provide a solution to your rental housing shortage, through the creation of a property manager position. The property manager could manage the rentals, collect the rent, and routinely inspect the property to assure it is being adequately maintained. This could be accomplished through expanded responsibilities of your present realtors or a totally new position. The owners and property managers can be creative in developing lease-to-own agreements to achieve the owner's ultimate goal of selling the property. This could be paired with the strategy outlined, below, to work to rehab older housing in the community – some of which could be used as rental housing.

The USDA-RD also has programs for rental housing loans directed toward apartment style houses for persons with low to moderate incomes.

Rental housing can be developed in a number of ways. The city can negotiate with potential developers, offering incentives such as discounts on land, utility hookups, improvements and zoning.

Another strategy you might look to pursue, in partnership with the local housing authority, is using Essential Function Bonds to construct town homes with garages that appeal to older residents, but are open to anyone. This was done using EFB's in both Moberge and Centerville.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

### *Housing*

The local housing authority manages the units. These are not low income units and are open to any family or individual interested in renting. The units are low maintenance and very nice. Many times older residents move to the lower maintenance rentals, freeing up their larger homes for sale or rent.

#### Housing Rehabilitation

Clark again is to be commended for its proactive work in trying to tear down some of the older and unusable housing in the community as part of your ongoing beautification efforts. The city and county have already been committed to tearing down homes in the community and potentially freeing up lots for future development. Other houses might have usable value, and if there were a strategy in place to rehab some of this existing housing stock, some of these homes could be upgraded to be quality affordable housing or rental housing.

One of the things that you could do is to create a fund for the Housing Authority/Development Corp to buy older homes, rehab them (private contractors) and put them on the market using some of the rehab programs explained below. Involve local lenders to consider Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) credits to meet their requirements as part of your rehabilitation efforts.

Pull together a list of available home improvement resources and print them up. Tell people where repair funds are available and the terms. Get information into the newspaper. Have a youth group deliver info door-to-door or put an insert into local utility mailings.

Another option is to host a housing rehabilitation forum and invite sponsors of various programs to present basic information about their programs and how community residents can access them. This could be done in conjunction with a home ownership housing forum mentioned above, and integrated into a single session.

Some of the programs you may wish to highlight include:

1. USDA – Rural Development has the Section 504 Rural Home Repair Loan & Grant Program that is available to assist eligible very low income homeowners make repairs to their homes. Repairs can be made to improve or modernize the home, to make it safe, sanitary, or to remove health and safety hazards. Rates and terms are 1% with up to 20 years to repay the loan. Grants are available only for repairs that remove health or safety hazards. Applicants for the grants must be at least age 62.
2. USDA – Rural Development has the Direct 502 Housing Program available to eligible very Low, Low and Moderate income families to repair or improve their homes. This is a program with interest rates as low as 1%. Loans may be made for 100% of the appraisal with a maximum 33 year term.
3. USDA – Rural Development - Housing Preservation Grants - Assist very low and low income rural individuals homeowners assistance to repair or rehabilitate their buildings.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

### *Housing*

4. South Dakota Housing Development Authority (SDHDA) has a Community Home Improvement Program or CHIP. The program provides low interest loans to income eligible owners for repairs or improvements to their single family residence. The interest rate depends on the family income with a 7 year repayment term.
5. SDHDA HOME Program – Can provide funds for rehabilitation of affordable housing.
6. SDHDA Paint SD Program – Provides paint and supplies to community-based organization to paint one house in the community.
7. Inter-Lakes Community Action: The weatherization program could also be a resource for very low income homeowners. This program is limited to energy conservation type items like insulation, windows, furnaces, and wiring. No cosmetic repairs are available under this program.
8. Inter-Lakes Community Action: HOME Rehabilitation – Available to eligible persons / families on a zero-interest, five year decreasing balance loan. Funds can be used for accessibility modifications for persons with disabilities, in addition to making necessary repairs for health, safety, and code compliance.
9. Veterans Administration: Specially Adapted Housing for Disabled Veterans – Help certain severely disabled veterans acquire a home which is suitably adapted or to purchase equipment to adapt a current home to meet the special needs of the individual

Another program worth consideration is Youthworks. Youthworks is a Christian based ministry that will come to your community for free as a non-denominational youth ministry and may do various painting and rehabilitation projects, facilitate a Kids Club program or partner with other organizations, working to meet community needs. Youthworks firmly believes there is a need for people to have their homes painted and rehabilitated; a need for children to learn about the Bible through music, stories and games; and a need to serve existing community ministries. We know that paint on houses will eventually chip off, and that stories and games may be forgotten in time, but the relationships you develop with community members will create a vehicle for ministry to occur for a long time in the future.

Youthworks was invited to assist in Bennett, Jackson, and Shannon Counties by Badlands RC&D and the residents have been excited about the positive changes and results that Youthworks has brought not only to the buildings but to the people in the many areas they serve!

For more information on how Youthworks please contact Badlands RC&D or Youthworks. The contact information is listed in the Resources below.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

### *Housing*

#### **Resources:**

First District Association of Local Governments  
124 1st Avenue NW  
PO Box 1207  
Watertown, SD 57201  
605-882-5115  
605-882-5049 (Fax)

USDA – Rural Development  
810 Jenson Avenue, SE, Suite 2  
Watertown, SD 57201-5256  
605-886-8202  
605-882-3268 (Fax)

South Dakota Housing Development Authority  
PO Box 1237  
221 South Central Avenue  
Pierre, SD 57501  
Phone: 605-773-3181  
Fax: 605-773-5157  
[www.sdhda.org](http://www.sdhda.org)

US Department of Housing and Urban Development  
2400 West 49<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite I-201  
Sioux Falls, SD 57105  
Phone: 605-330-4223  
[www.hud.gov/southdakota](http://www.hud.gov/southdakota)

Federal Home Loan Bank – Des Moines  
Community Investment  
907 Walnut Street  
Des Moines, IA 50309  
800-544-3552 Ext. 1173  
[www.fhlbdm.com](http://www.fhlbdm.com)

U.S Department of Veterans Affairs  
VA Regional Loan Center  
1 Federal Drive  
St. Paul, MN 55111-4050  
800-827-0611  
[www.vba.va.gov/rostpaul.htm](http://www.vba.va.gov/rostpaul.htm)

## INFRASTRUCTURE

### *Housing*

#### **Resources (Continued):**

Inter-lakes Community Action  
111 N. Van Eps Ave, PO Box 268  
Madison, SD 57042  
605-256-6518

*See also your local Inter-Lakes CAP office in Clark.*

Housing Assistance Council, Midwest Office  
10920 Ambassador Dr., Suite 220  
Kansas City, MO 64153  
Phone: 816-880-0400  
Fax: 816-880-0500  
midwest@ruralhome.org  
www.ruralhome.org

Todd Meierhenry, Counsel  
(Has provided bond counsel services for many Essential Function Bond transactions and Tax Increment Financing)  
Danforth, Meierhenry & Meierhenry  
315 So. Phillips Avenue  
Sioux Falls, SD 57102  
605-336-3075  
todd@meierhenrylaw.com

F & L Development (Mobridge)  
Tom Serie  
(507)220-0808

Judy Richey  
Program Specialist  
Mobridge Housing & Redevelopment Commission  
(605)845-2560

Bonnie DeBondt  
Chairman  
Centerville Housing & Redevelopment Commission  
(605)563-2689

## INFRASTRUCTURE

### *Project Financing*

#### **Resources (Continued):**

Badlands RC&D  
Gayle Kocer, Executive Director  
Gerilyn Livermont, Administrative Assistant  
PO Box 314  
Martin, SD 57551  
605-685-6629  
605-685-6714  
gayle.kocer@rcdnet.net  
gerilyn.livermont@rcdnet.net  
badrcd@gwtc.net

YouthWorks, Inc.  
3530 East 28th Street  
Minneapolis, MN 55406  
phone: 612.729.5444  
toll-free: 800.968.8504  
fax: 612.729.4113  
YouthWorks Service Center  
servicecenter@youthworks.com  
www.youthworks.com

YouthWorks Recruiting Department  
Toll-free 1.877.249.9904 ext. 395  
recruitingteam@youthworks.com

NESDEC/NESDCAP (Contact regarding HAPI)  
Bob Hull  
414 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue East  
Sisseton, SD 57262  
605-698-7654

<b>SUB THEME:</b> <b>Project Financing</b>
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- **Economic Development**
- **Fire / EMS**
- **Community Development**

**Challenge:** Organizations in Clark are very savvy about tapping into various resources to assist you with your economic and community development efforts. Getting information and grant

## INFRASTRUCTURE

### *Project Financing*

writing assistance regarding various programs is always a challenge, however, for rural communities that do not have full time staff dedicated to this task.

**Recommendation:** First off, every idea may have merit. No matter how far fetched an idea may sound, it does not hurt to look into it. You may find a niche. Some ideas may never come to fruition, but don't sell them out too early.

While you may not have the capacity locally to apply for many of the grant opportunities that arise, you do have an excellent resource in the form of the First District Association of Local Governments. First District has staff experienced in grant writing and grant administration, and can assist you in identifying and applying for grant and loan opportunities related to various community and economic development projects.

If you are doing your own independent searches for potential grant opportunities, the following is a list of helpful directories that you can access online.

- SD Resource Directory ([www.sdcommunitynetwork.com](http://www.sdcommunitynetwork.com)): Provides helpful summary information regarding the primary technical and financial resources utilized for community, economic, and business development in South Dakota.
- Grants.gov ([www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov)): Provides a comprehensive list of grant opportunities as they are issued by the federal government. You can sign up to be notified by email when grant opportunities in certain topic areas (i.e. housing, economic development, etc) are issued by the federal government.
- Rural Information Center ([www.nal.usda.gov/ric/](http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/)): Comprehensive list of rural related resource categorized by topic (youth, seniors, infrastructure, etc) maintained by the US Department of Agriculture.
- SD Grants Directory ([www.sdstatelibrary.com/grants/index.cfm](http://www.sdstatelibrary.com/grants/index.cfm)): Comprehensive searchable database of foundations and other organizations that make grants for various projects in South Dakota. Maintained by the SD State Library.

Of course, this assessment report itself includes various grant and loan opportunities that you should continue to use as a central resource for projects you look to complete in the future.

### EMS and Fire Fighter Projects

One specific topic that was brought out in the assessment was the need for funding for various equipment and staffing issues related to these important community services. First District is the central point of contact for accessing some of the programs related to this area. From the health side, the SD Office of Rural Health is also an important point of contact. This office has been coordinating the development of the South Dakota Grantwriters' Network to help share information on grant opportunities and provide a mechanism for self-help technical assistance among grant writers in South Dakota.

Some of the various programs related to Emergency Services include:

## INFRASTRUCTURE

### *Project Financing*

- US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) - Rural Health Outreach Grant Program - The emphasis of this grant program is on service delivery through creative strategies requiring the grantee to form a network with at least two additional partners.
- HHS - Network Development Grant Program - These grants are designed to further ongoing collaborative relationships among health care organizations by funding rural health networks that focus on integrating clinical, information, administrative, and financial systems across members.
- HHS - Network Development Planning Grant Program - This new grant program provides one-year of funding to rural communities needing assistance in the development of an integrated healthcare network. The planning grants are to be used to develop a formal network with the purpose of improving the coordination of health services in rural communities and strengthening the rural health care system as a whole.
- HHS - Rural Access to Emergency Devices (RAED) Grant Program - The Rural Access to Emergency Devices (RAED) Grant Program provides funding to rural communities to purchase automated external defibrillators (AEDs) and provide training in their use and maintenance.
- HHS – Rural Emergency Medical Services Training and Equipment Assistance Program (REMSTEP) - The REMSTEP grant program seeks to fund eligible entities that propose to develop improved emergency medical services (EMS) in rural areas. This program provides funds to help recruit and train emergency services personnel. It can also be used to acquire emergency medical services equipment and acquire personal protective equipment.
- Department of Homeland Security (DHS) – Assistance to Firefighter Grants - The AFG program awards grants directly to fire departments of a State to enhance their ability to protect the health and safety of the public and firefighting personnel, with respect to fire and fire-related hazards. Grants are awarded on a competitive basis to applicants that address AFG program priorities, demonstrate financial need, and demonstrate the benefit to be derived from their projects.
- DHS – Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grants - The purpose of the SAFER grants is to award grants directly to volunteer, combination, and career fire departments to help the departments increase their cadre of firefighters. The SAFER grants have two activities that will help grantees attain this goal: 1) hiring of firefighters and 2) recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters.
- USDA Rural Development – Community Facilities Guaranteed Loans, Direct Loans, and Grants – Provides funds to construct, enlarge, extend, or otherwise improve community facilities providing essential services to rural residents.
- Community Development Block Grants (GOED) – Can be used for the construction or expansion of essential community facilities.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

### *Project Financing*

#### Business Development Resources

For business development, one of the central resources you have is the Small Business Development Center located in Watertown. This is a free service which specializes in business plans and financial projections. Any financial institution you approach for a loan will ask for this paperwork and you need to be prepared when you walk in for a loan to have these items completed. Another great resource for business development is the Enterprise Institute, which has locations in Brookings, Sioux Falls, and Yankton. They can help with a long list of matters, from patent searches to finding a market niche. Do not be afraid to use these services as they do not find you.

When necessary paperwork is in order, approach your local lending institutions, who usually are more than willing to help better their community. When a local lender is not enough to get the project off the ground, seek regional loan funds which usually partner with your local bank and offer reduced interest rates to help the project get the necessary funding. Some of these funds include the Northeast South Dakota Economic Corp. (NESDEC), Rural Electric Economic Development (REED), First District Association of Local Governments, and Interstate Telecommunications Cooperative (ITC). These revolving loan funds are usually the bridge that fill the gap needed for a project to get off the ground.

Also, consider organizing a local area revolving loan fund that can only be used in the Clark county area, allowing people to invest in this fund. This is discussed in more detail in previous recommendations.

#### **Resources:**

First District Association of Local Governments  
124 1st Avenue NW  
PO Box 1207  
Watertown, SD 57201  
605-882-5115  
605-882-5049 (Fax)

SD Office of Rural Health  
Bernie Osberg, Director  
207 E. Missouri Avenue  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-773-3366  
<http://www.state.sd.us/doh/rural/index.htm>

US Department of Health and Human Services  
Office of Rural Health  
<http://ruralhealth.hrsa.gov/overview/>

## INFRASTRUCTURE

### *Project Financing*

#### **Resources (Continued):**

Department of Homeland Security  
Assistance to Fire Fighter Grant Program  
<http://www.firegrantsupport.com/>

Steve Harding  
Governors Office of Economic Development – GOED  
Department of State Development  
711 E. Wells Ave.  
Pierre, SD 57501  
1-605-773-5032

USDA Rural Development  
810 Jenson Avenue, SE, Suite 2  
Watertown, SD 57201-5256  
605-886-8202  
[www.rurdev.usda.gov/sd/](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/sd/)

Small Business Development Center  
124 First Ave. N.W.  
PO Box 1207  
Watertown, SD 57201  
605-882-5049  
[bengelha@usd.edu](mailto:bengelha@usd.edu)  
[www.sdsbdc.org](http://www.sdsbdc.org)

Enterprise Institute  
823 Mendary Avenue, Ste. 201  
Brookings, SD 57006  
605-697-5015  
[www.sdei.org](http://www.sdei.org)

First District Development Company – Revolving Loan Fund  
*See contact information for First District  
Association of Local Governments Above*

Northeast South Dakota Economic Corporation  
414 Third Av. E.  
Sisseton, SD 57262  
605-698-7654  
[nesdec@nesdcap-nesdec.org](mailto:nesdec@nesdcap-nesdec.org)

## INFRASTRUCTURE

### *Water & Waste*

#### **Resources (Continued):**

Rural Electric Economic Development Fund (REED)

East River Electric

Linda Salmonson

121 SE First Street

PO Box 227

Madison, SD 57042

605-256-4536

lsalmonson@eastriver.coop

Interstate Telecommunications Cooperative (ITC) – REDI Fund

Todd Morris

107 Second Avenue Northwest

Clark, SD 57225

toddm@itctel.com

<b>SUB THEME:</b> <b>Water &amp; Waste</b>
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**Challenge:** Water lines are old in the majority of the town and there is concern that the capacity of the wastewater treatment facility may be hindering economic development.

**Recommendation:** Adequate capacity of the water and wastewater systems is an important issue to address in any community. Unfortunately, it is hard to tell where exactly a system is at until a study is conducted.

It is my understanding that the City of Clark is currently taking action to upgrade the water and sewer lines in two phases. Clark has signed an agreement to have a study conducted on the collection portion of the system. I would recommend that Clark also conduct a study of the treatment system to find out exactly where the capacity is at and what would need to be done to bring the facility up-to-date if needed. With the blizzard in December, the treatment facility was out of power because the City generator does not reach out to the treatment plant. This issue may need to be addressed soon.

A Small Community Planning Grant could be utilized for this process. Clark is currently running approximately 75,000-80,000 gallons of waste through the treatment plant per day and has the capacity to run up to 350,000 gallons. It would seem that the plant has adequate capacity to support an industry, but it would depend on what type of industry it was and how much wastewater it was using per day.

Clark's treatment plant is a mechanical plant that was built in the 1980's. This may seem old to some and new to others. The realistic truth is that everything has a lifeline and this treatment

## INFRASTRUCTURE

### *Water & Waste*

plant may have many years left to service Clark or may be close to being replaced. Eventually, Clark will need to repair or replace the plant and if this is the case, the following funding sources can help with this project or others. The most important thing to do is to plan for this and other repairs in your Capital Improvements Plan. As stated earlier, EVERYTHING has a lifespan and will need to be replaced, just make sure you are ready for it when it does happen.

Many of the programs mentioned have substantial paperwork and a long process that, if done incorrectly, may take the funding away or draw out the process even further. A major resource for the City of Clark is the First District Council of Governments. This planning district has worked extensively with many of the programs and would know the details surrounding funding sources.

#### South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has several funding sources to aid communities in planning for and implementing projects to improve its infrastructure systems.

**Small Community Planning Grant:** This program was established to promote a proactive approach to water and wastewater infrastructure management. It provides small communities with funds to hire an engineering consultant to develop a project specific engineering report or to hire a recognized technical assistance provider or financial planning professional competent in providing a utility rate analysis.

- Available to cities/towns with a population of 2,500 or fewer.
- Communities will be reimbursed 80% of the cost of the engineering study upon completion of the engineering report.
- The maximum reimbursement a community may receive is \$6,000 for a water or wastewater engineering study.
- Wastewater related studies may receive reimbursement up to \$8,000 if activities related to infiltration and inflow (I/I) analysis is conducted.
- Communities conducting a utility rate analysis and review study may receive reimbursement of 80% of costs up to \$1,600. The study must be an analysis using the Show-me Ratemaker™ process.
- Grants are made on a first come, first serve basis.

Currently, Clark is going through the Ratemaker™ process to configure an analysis of where Clark is at for funding and an approximation of where they need to be to fund any upcoming projects within the next five years.

**Consolidated Water Facilities Construction Program:** This program was established to provide grants and loans for water, wastewater and storm sewer projects.

- Projects must be listed on the State Water Plan before sending in an application.
- Water and Sewer Rates must meet the minimum requirements before an applicant is eligible to apply.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

### *Water & Waste*

Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Loan: This program was established to provide low interest loans for drinking water projects. The funds available are dependent upon appropriations from the U.S. Congress and repayments from funds previously loaned.

- Projects must be listed on the State Water Plan before sending in an application.
- The rates and terms are established each year by the board and available on the DENR website. Currently the rates are 3.25% with a 20 year term or 2.5% with a 10 year term. There are also “disadvantaged” rates for communities with median household incomes lower than the states median household income. This enables a community to access lower interest rates and/or longer terms.
- This loan **cannot** be used for funding growth projects.

Clean Water State Revolving Fund Loan: This program was established to provide low interest loans to governmental entities for clean water and non-point source pollution control projects. The amount of funds available is dependent upon the amount of appropriation from the U.S. Congress and the amount of repayments from funds previously loaned.

- Projects must be listed on the State Water Plan before sending in an application.
- The rates and terms are established each year by the board and available on the DENR website. Currently the rates are 3.25% with a 20 year term or 2.5% with a 10 year term.
- This loan **can** be used for funding growth projects.

### Midwest Assistance Program (MAP)

This program provides technical assistance to small communities, most of which is free of charge.

#### Technical Assistance - Development:

- Provided to help communities obtain or expand water or wastewater facilities.
- Includes needs assessments, income surveys, dealing with engineers, financial packaging, application preparation, construction supervision, and many other kinds of “front-end” work necessary to put facilities into place.

#### Technical Assistance – Support:

- Provided to help communities manage operate and maintain facilities that are already in place.
- May include operator training, improving financial management systems, setting rates, or other items to help systems work more effectively.

#### Community Revolving Loan Fund:

- Created to provide loans to finance pre-development activities, interim financing, construction loans, gap financing, and equipment.
- Given to communities with a population of 3,000 or less.

### Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

These are federal funds given to the state and are administered by the Department of Tourism and State Development through the Governors Office of Economic Development.

- Types of projects that may be funded include water, sewer, fire halls, community centers, storm sewers and health care clinics.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

### *Water & Waste*

- At least 51% of those being serviced by the project must be low/moderate income households.
- CDBG staff expects applicants to utilize planning district staff in the application and administration of these grants as the requirements are cumbersome, although, not insurmountable. The planning district staff is well knowledgeable in this area and is in constant contact with the CDBG staff.

### USDA Rural Development

RD Water and Wastewater Program: Grants and loans are available to assist with economic development

- Used to construct, repair or expand water and/or wastewater systems and storm sewer systems, acquire water rights, pay necessary fees for legal and engineering services and other development related costs.
- Grants are **not** available for storm sewer projects.
- Interest rates may change every quarter and depend on the US Treasury rate and on the service area of the borrower.
- The loan and grant rate is determined by the median household income of those served.
- Before grant funds are available, water and sewer rates have to be at a normal rate and a health hazard must be shown.
- Infrastructure for new housing development can be financed by site development loan programs.

### Rural Electric Loan Funds (REED)

Provide low interest loans for projects which are beneficial to the area as a whole.

- Includes medical clinics, street projects, fire halls/ambulance shelters, fire truck/ambulances, fire equipments, water and sewer projects.
- The project area does not have to purchase the electricity from the local rural electric co-op.

### South Dakota Housing Development Authority

This program's mission is dedicated to the preservation, rehabilitation, purchase and development of both affordable single and multifamily housing units and daycare facilities.

- Programs range from tax credits to rural site development programs
- Grant programs for domestic crisis centers, emergency shelters and youth centers.
- Infrastructure for new housing development can be financed by site development loan programs

Depending on the project Congressional Line Items in Federal Budget such as Housing and Urban Development Economic Development Initiative Grants and/or Environmental Protection Agency State and Tribal Assistance Grants can be utilized for future development and/or improvements of existing infrastructure. Contact a congressional person and/or their staff.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

### *Water & Waste*

The list above includes just general information about each program. Please contact the appropriate agency or First District Association of Local Governments for more information on any one of the programs.

As with any grant or loan, please keep in mind that not all projects get funded. It is normally a very competitive process, but with the right planning, most projects will be able to get financing in one form or another.

#### **Resources:**

First District Association of Local Governments  
Greg Maag  
PO Box 1207  
Watertown, SD 57201-6207  
(605) 882-5115  
greg@1stdistrict.org

Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
Division of Financial and Technical Assistance  
523 East Capitol Avenue  
Pierre, SD 57501-3182  
(605) 773-4216  
denrinternet@state.sd.us  
<http://www.state.sd.us/denr>

Midwest Assistance Program/SD Field Office  
PO Box 1093  
Hill City, SD 57745-1093  
(605) 574-4795  
sdmap@aol.com

Community Development Block Grant Program  
SD Department of Tourism and State Development  
Steve Harding/Dale Knapp  
Capitol Lake Plaza  
711 East Wells Avenue  
Pierre, SD 57501  
(605) 773-5032  
steve.harding@state.sd.us  
dale.knapp@state.sd.us

## INFRASTRUCTURE

### *Water & Waste*

#### **Resources (Continued):**

USDA Rural Development/Rural Utility Service  
810 Jensen Ave, Suite 2  
Watertown, SD 57201  
(605) 886-8202

Rural Electric Cooperative  
Linda Salmonson  
PO Box 227  
Madison, SD 57042  
(605) 256-4536  
lsalmonson@eastriver.coop

Planning and Housing Development  
South Dakota Housing Development Authority  
PO Box 1237  
Pierre, SD 57501  
(605) 773-4567

South Dakota Association of Rural Water Systems  
Cedar Plaza, Suite 5  
5009 West 12<sup>th</sup> Street  
Sioux Falls, SD 57106-0379

South Dakota Lakes and Streams Association  
PO Box 608  
South Shore, SD 57263-0608

# PROMOTING CLARK

<b>SUB THEMES:</b> <b>Destination</b>
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**Challenge:** Identifying an area attraction that will draw regional residents and tourists to Clark. An example given during a listening session was Storybook Land in Aberdeen.

**Recommendation:** Clark holds some successful special event activities such as Potato Days, rodeos and the County Fair. The upcoming Centennial will be an opportunity to showcase your wonderful community. Below are some suggestions for consideration in creating an area attraction:

1. Ask for volunteers to serve on a task force to explore ideas for an area attraction. The task force might conduct a survey to gather input. Lawrence Diggs is an entrepreneur who started the International Vinegar Museum in Roslyn. The museum has received visitors from all over the world and Vinegar Festival is held annually. Lawrence may be a resource to assist with visioning and marketing your attraction.
2. Utilize economic development resources to explore grants and other funding opportunities. The South Dakota Community Network website contains a Resource Directory as well as Grant Announcements.
3. Promote your attraction, regionally and nationally. The South Dakota Department of Tourism provides many avenues for marketing your attraction. In addition, they have a number of programs, including Agri-Tourism (Agri Tourism is addressed as a topic later in this report and ties back to creating a destination attraction for Clark). The South Dakota Newspaper Association offers another means to promote your attraction statewide. For \$139, a 2x2 display ad can be run in almost every newspaper in South Dakota. Clark County Courier publisher, Bill Krikac is a member of the association's Board of Directors.
4. Ideas for an attraction. As we heard during one listening session, Clark is the setting for an author's books. Perhaps a mystery dinner theater or even a mystery weekend could be held. The museum with all of its wonderful buildings may serve as an ideal venue.

**Resources:**

Lawrence Diggs  
International Vinegar Museum  
502 Main St  
Roslyn SD 57261  
486.0075  
[www.vinegarman.com](http://www.vinegarman.com)

## PROMOTING CLARK

*Web Site*

### **Resources (Continued):**

Shawn Pritchett  
South Dakota Community Network  
<http://www.sdcommunitynetwork.com/>

Mark Vaux  
Governors Office of Economic Development (GOED)  
711 E. Wells Ave.  
Pierre, SD 57501-3369  
773-3301  
[www.sdgreatprofits.com](http://www.sdgreatprofits.com)

South Dakota Department of Tourism  
711 E. Wells Ave.  
Pierre, SD 57501-3369  
605-773-3301  
<http://www.travelsd.com/>

South Dakota Newspaper Association  
PO Box 8100  
Brookings SD 57006  
1.800.658.3697  
[www.sna.com](http://www.sna.com)  
[sdna@sdna.com](mailto:sdna@sdna.com)

Yahoo directory of mystery dinner theaters, including mystery weekends.  
[http://dir.yahoo.com/Arts/Performing\\_Arts/Theater/Theater\\_Companies/Dinner\\_Theater/Mystery\\_Dinner\\_Theater/?o=a](http://dir.yahoo.com/Arts/Performing_Arts/Theater/Theater_Companies/Dinner_Theater/Mystery_Dinner_Theater/?o=a)

<b>SUB THEME:      Web Site</b>
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**Challenge:** Promoting Clark through the use of an effective and attractive website.

**Recommendation:** Effective website development for communities is a must. The site should be visually appealing and easy to navigate. Clark's website is very informative. It gives the user opportunity to check out a number of possibilities in your community.

As with anything, there is always room for improvement. One of the best recommendations I can make is to put your high school students to work in a graphics class and have them update the site. Our own students are some of the best untapped talent communities can find.

## PROMOTING CLARK

### *Web Site*

More pictures would add appeal to the site. It also needs to be updated on a timely basis. With the huge amount of hunting that occurs each autumn in Clark County, there should be more of a focus to promote it on the website. Add pictures of your beautiful community, the golf course, and definitely your modern schools. Those are impressive...show them off!

When working on the site, be sure to include a number of key words that will the Clark site pop up on searches. For example, if a pheasant hunter in New Jersey wants to hunt pheasants in SD and he does a general search for "pheasant hunting in SD," make sure Clark comes up on the search because of key words that send them to the site. Many people are indifferent where they hunt in SD. Be sure your community stands a chance in initial searches. The website should be used as a tool for economic development. It may be advantageous to have the Clark Industrial Development Corporation on the Home Page with some expanded information. Someone looking to expand or relocate a business could see what Clark has to offer (*More about the Web Site as an economic development tool is discussed earlier in the report in the recommendation regarding "Industrial Development"*).

The best way to go about deciding what you want on a website is to beg, borrow or steal ideas from other SD websites. One that I have been especially impressed with is [www.lakeandes.com](http://www.lakeandes.com) It was done by a high school computer teacher at a very reasonable price. There are lots of pictures and the site is easy to navigate.

Remember to add the website address to any and all advertising, brochures and press releases.

### **Resources:**

South Dakota Office of Tourism  
Kerry Frei, Rural Tourism Manager  
711 East Wells Ave.  
Pierre, SD 57501  
(605) 773-5034  
Kerry.Frei@state.sd.us  
www.travelsd.com  
www.sdvisit.com

South Dakota State Parks  
523 E. Capitol Ave.  
Pierre, SD 57501  
(605)773-3391  
www.sdgap.info/parks

## PROMOTING CLARK

### *Signage*

<b>SUB THEME:      Signage</b>
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**Challenge:** City signage directing both residents and visitors to local attractions and businesses needs to be improved.

**Recommendation:** Communities cannot assume people know what they have to offer or where it is. Signage is a vital tool for promoting your community. The “Welcome to Clark” signs on 212 are an excellent start.

It is important to place signs that point the way to various points of interest. Don’t assume people know where the school’s athletic complex is, point people in the right direction. Signage should also point out the business district, the golf course (it lets people know you have a golf course!), the swimming pool/parks and historic sites, including your museum. Currently, the only sign for the museum is located at the location and may be difficult for travelers to see. Perhaps a sign just outside of town that lists all of the different buildings, hours of operation, etc. would be helpful. If applicable, include the distance to the destination.

The signage project can be something the city and/or county chooses to tackle. Another idea is to set up a program in which certain signs are sponsored by local businesses as an advertising tool for them as well as a promotional tool for the town. Maybe a civic group like the Rotary would be interested in sponsoring part of it. In Watertown, the school was a catalyst in signage for the city and you can contact Kay Solberg to find out more about their process and resources.

I would also suggest placing some advertising on the Interstate in terms of billboards. If Watertown is a shopping destination, then surely Clark is the outdoorsmen’s dream come true! Let people know about it! Again, use the city slogan and the website on it if possible.

#### **Resources:**

Kay Solberg, Classroom Connection  
Watertown, SD  
PH: 605.886.3040

TODS (Tourist Oriented Directional Signs) link  
Chapter70:04:07.<http://legis.state.sd.us/rules/rules/7004.htm#70:04:07>

South Dakota Department of Transportation  
605.773.3265

PROMOTING CLARK  
*Special Events / Appreciation / Centennial*

<b>SUB THEME:      Special Events / Appreciation / Centennial</b>
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**Challenge:** Using special events as a way to not only promote Clark, but also to celebrate the community's past, present and future.

**Recommendations:** Special events are great ways to promote a community and set it apart from others, but they also provide excellent opportunities to bring a community together as a whole. What else could bring neighbors together in Clark like your "Spooktacular" event!? It sounds like a lot of work, but look how it's grown to become something Clark truly looks forward to! Small towns need as much of that as possible.

Keep up the work with the Spooktacular event. What is it that makes that so appealing to not only Clark, but visitors? It's the small town atmosphere, with the "Mayberrylike" feeling. I truly believe that is the niche small, rural communities need to fill. We can't compete with events like Brookings' Arts in the Park Festival, but they can't compete with Clark's "Spooktacular," either! Special events should leave visitors, and locals, feeling like they visited or live in the best place in the world.

Another special event I know Clark has already had was the recent special benefit for a local family. The community opened their hearts and wallets to this wonderful cause. It made a huge impact on my opinion of the community. That special event is what small towns are all about. That is what Clark needs to package and sell.

Ideas for special events are as simple as pancake breakfasts for deer or pheasant hunters on opening weekends. Platte has an event that would be the equivalent of your "Spooktacular," we do a "Hillbilly Olympics" the second Saturday of every September. We do silly things like pumpkin catapults, bed races and minnow races. Some thought the Chamber had totally lost their minds. It brought over 1,000 to our Main Street in the second year and it's improving.

I referred to the "Rutland Rocks" Festival earlier...celebrate your community. I saw on the website, you have Potato Days. Make sure you are advertising that as well as possible, as it is something to build on. Mashed potato wrestling!? Does it get any better?!

In the listening sessions, many people mentioned they felt the agricultural community is sometimes forgotten for their contributions. It would be simple to have an ag. appreciation day by offering specials in town and maybe an appreciation picnic. Without farmers, our communities would not exist, we need to let the farmers know we appreciate them and what they do.

The upcoming centennial is a great opportunity to get word out about your community. Again, advertising is a must. I would recommend contacting other communities that have recently had centennials about what worked for them, and what didn't. Don't reinvent the wheel, there is nothing wrong with getting ideas from other communities and tailoring them to Clark.

PROMOTING CLARK  
*Special Events / Appreciation / Centennial*

The centennial is also a good time to survey alumni about what it is they would like to see in the community. Would they move back to Clark, if opportunity existed? If not, why? If so, how can we assist you? Communities are often surprised by the results.

Murdo did an assessment, and they were also planning for a centennial. I am going to pass on the information from that assessment in the next few paragraphs. Also included are a number of funding sources your centennial committee may be able to utilize. Their planning committee has been working with Kerri Frei with the South Dakota Office of Tourism. Kerri states that the SD Department of Tourism can assist with packaging and marketing assistance of the event.

The best way to market a community, attraction or event is through participation in the Office of Tourism's cooperative advertising opportunities. Advertising isn't always cheap. That is why Tourism firmly believes in pooling resources with partners from the private sector. When it comes to advertising, the more dollars available to spend, the further the message will go. Many of Tourism's co-op programs allow partners to reach markets they couldn't afford on their own. For a list of co-op programs, refer to the Office of Tourism's current annual report at [SDVisit.com](http://www.sdvisit.com) or contact the Office of Tourism. Be sure your local Chamber of Commerce gets involved in the marketing efforts. You can find all the info about the various marketing programs for the Department of Tourism at <http://www.sdvisit.com/programs/index.htm>, including the package program, calendar of events, etc.

The best way to fund a special event or a special promotion for your organization/community is through community participation. These events should have strong local support first, and depend upon outside interests (visitors, loans and grants) on a secondary basis.

Local business and civic organizations are the primary funding resources for this type of project. Find the niche that local businesses, groups and organizations may fit. Sell exhibit space and advertisements in program booklets.

Most local, state and federal agencies do not have programs to fund special events/promotions, but you can utilize them in other ways. For example, the Office of Tourism can help publicize your event by listing it on their calendar of events that is available to the traveling public, general media and travel writers who may be interested in attending or covering the event.

Melissa Bump would be the person to contact with the Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED) as they have a Tourism sub fund that can assist with Marketing and Research. They also have a Calendar of Events listing which the Centennial could be listed on for the event in 2006. The event could have been listed in the *Vacation Guide*, but the time limit for getting into the 2006 book has passed.

Preserve South Dakota provides assistance with preservation of structures and sites and provides low interest loans. There may be sites along with the Centennial Farms which could be honored at the event.

South Dakota Humanities Council gives assistance and financial support for public humanities programs. The South Dakota Arts Council and South Dakota Humanities Council provide

**PROMOTING CLARK**  
*Special Events / Appreciation / Centennial*

financial and technical assistance for a wide range of community-oriented arts and humanities projects to promote education, development and excellence in the arts/humanities. Consider including the arts and humanities in your special event. The South Dakota Arts Council makes quality arts accessible by providing grants, services and information. This would be helpful in accessing entertainment and speakers for the event as there are grants available for this.

The South Dakota Department of Agriculture provides assistance through marketing and loan programs. This would be the program to contact for assistance with the recognition of the Centennial Farms/homesteads.

South Dakota State Historical Society promotes the historical and cultural heritage of South Dakota assists with heritage tourism and historical projects research and publications.

Your flower shop already participates in the Made in SD promotion with their baskets. Made in South Dakota could be available for business ideas and promotion, which would be useful in many areas of the town as well as the Centennial Celebration. There are many items that are made in South Dakota which could be made such as buttons, hats, caps, visors, mugs, sweatshirts, t-shirts, and food items that could have the Clark Centennial logo emblazoned on them and sold for the event.

Arts Bank through the South Dakota Arts Council is a grants program that provides insurance of up to \$500 for performing arts events sponsored by nonprofit organizations in communities with populations fewer than 15,000.

Signs, posters, public service announcements and news articles are valuable in getting the word out to the public. Many newsletters, such as the Conservation Districts, Chamber and City newsletters, City and County Soil Conservation Districts, public utilities such as phone, water and electric, 4-H, Extension Service, are usually happy to help add an article or ad into their monthly newsletters or billings to tell people of the event and how they can become involved.

A monthly school newsletter or the Clark Website could help spread the word by asking the youth to create posters, articles or public service announcements and to help distribute the information. Don't forget that radio and television stations have events calendars that are free to the public as well.

**Resources:**

South Dakota Office of Tourism

*Promotes travel to South Dakota, provides marketing assistance, and other*

711 E. Wells Ave

Pierre, SD 57501-3369

(605) 773-3301

sdinfo@state.sd.us

TravelSD.com, for vacation planning

SDVisit.com, for South Dakota visitor industry information

<http://www.sdvisit.com/reference/TourAssistDir.pdf> - *To view the Tourism Assistance Directory online*

PROMOTING CLARK  
*Special Events / Appreciation / Centennial*

**Resources (Continued):**

Preserve South Dakota  
*Assistance with preservation of structures and sites, provides low interest loans*  
PO Box 113 105 S. Pierre St  
Pierre, SD 57501  
(605) 945-0409  
info@preservesd.org  
preservesd.org

South Dakota Humanities Council  
*Gives assistance and financial support for public humanities programs*  
University Station  
PO Box 7050  
Brookings, SD 57007  
(605) 688-6113  
SDSU SDHC@sdsu.edu

South Dakota Department of Agriculture  
*Provides assistance through marketing and loan programs*  
Division of Agricultural Development  
523 E. Capitol Ave.  
Pierre, SD 57501-3182  
(605) 773-3375  
agmail@state.sd.us  
www.state.sd.us/doa

Governor's Office of Economic Development  
711 E. Wells Ave.  
Pierre, SD 57501  
(800) 872-6190  
(605) 773-3301  
goedinfo@state.sd.us  
sdgreatprofits.com

South Dakota Arts Council  
*Makes quality arts accessible by providing grants, services and information*  
800 Governors Drive  
Pierre, SD 57501-2294  
(800) 423-6665 - in S.D.  
(605) 773-3131  
sdac@stlib.state.sd.us  
www.sdarts.org

## PROMOTING CLARK

*Shopping Local*

### **Resources (continued):**

South Dakota State Historical Society

*Promotes the historical and cultural heritage of South Dakota, assists with heritage tourism and historical projects*

900 Governors Drive

Pierre, SD 57501-2217

(605) 773-3458

sdshswebmaster@state.sd.us

www.sdhhistory.org

Made in South Dakota

Alice Wright, Director

711 E. Wells Ave.

Pierre, SD 57501

(605) 773-3301

MadeinSouthDakota.com

<b>SUB THEME:      Shopping Local</b>
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**Challenge:** For rural communities, shopping local is a must. Clark’s close proximity to larger cities makes this a tough issue to tackle.

**Recommendation:** The residents of Clark decide every day whether their community will continue to have a grocery store, convenience stores, restaurants, locker plant, etc. This is decided with dollars. If you spend your dollars in Clark, you continue to support the services offered. If you don’t spend dollars locally, you are making a decision of indifference for continued local services. This sounds exaggerated, but it is true. Businesses cannot survive without the dollars made from selling their goods or services. The people of Clark are those dollars to the businesses.

Shopping locally is a tough issue for communities, especially those that are so close to larger cities. Let’s face it; we all are guilty of shopping out of town. But what can we do to bolster local shopping? There are a number of ways to “stop the bleeding.”

There is absolutely nothing wrong with a “Shop Clark” campaign. There will always be die-hards that will shop out of town because something is cheaper. There are a majority of your residents that don’t want to lose a hardware store or a grocery store. Those are the people that need to be targeted with a shop local campaign.

Be absolutely sure that whenever a local business donates to a school project, sponsors a student to attend a seminar, etc..., that people know. An example would be a benefit breakfast for a

## PROMOTING CLARK

### *Shopping Local*

Pheasant's Forever Chapter. Let locals know the sausage was donated by the locker plant and the pancake batter by the grocery store. Do the big city stores do that for your community? (And be sure to thank the local businesses for their donations!)

Again, I want to give you some examples from Platte because I think we've come a long way in the past few years on shopping locally. The Platte Food Center put a sign in their entry way that states how much it costs to drive to the nearest large city (Mitchell) to shop. Then it asks if the shopper saved that amount in groceries that day. A number of people were almost offended at the sign. But it started a buzz, and it really made people think.

The editor of our newspaper is probably one of our best weapons in the war on large shopping centers. He will list the businesses that donated to different projects, and then list the large shopping centers that did not donate to the project. Funny, but at the same time informative. This is the same person who lives the mantra of, "If you can't buy it in Platte, you don't need it." The local paper, Chamber newsletter and website are vital for promotion of local shopping.

From what I read on Clark's website, you have a Christmas promotion. This is a great way to get people to shop in your stores. I would encourage Clark to rev that up even more. Many towns do a parade of lights to set off the holiday season and keep people in town. Maybe Clark could do a light up Main Street event where the downtown merchants have lights in windows and on the business fronts. You may also want to put a huge Christmas tree by the County Courthouse. Everyone gets together, sings carols, a switch is thrown and things light up. It's the whole Norman Rockwell, family Christmas idea. Then the town would be aesthetically appealing for shoppers driving through town, also. It would be an experience that would start a buzz for people back in their hometowns, and each year you could build on it.

It is vital that community organizations shop locally as often as possible. Even if supplies can be bought a bit cheaper at larger stores, those stores don't have owners that put students in your schools and support the community of Clark. This goes for City expenses, also. Your own businesses and government need to set the example for shopping in Clark.

Local businesses may not be able to offer the lowest price on all items, but they can offer a service that larger out-of-town businesses can't. Service, service, service. People will pay more for items, if they know the business goes above and beyond in the service department. Example: I bought an artificial Christmas tree at my local hardware store. I took it out of the box, set it up, and the pre-attached lights in the middle section didn't work. Called the store, the owner actually brought to my house a middle section to another tree he had on hand, set it up and I was thrilled! I paid \$ 20 extra for the tree by buying it locally, but it had service that I hadn't even imagined. Would larger stores have done it? The businessman didn't only sell a tree; he provided service that produced word-of-mouth advertising that can't be beaten.

It is also important that businesspeople look customers straight in the eye and say, "Thank you, we appreciate your business." A small gesture, but it makes people feel like they've done a good thing by keeping business in town.

## PROMOTING CLARK

### *Shopping Local*

The City of Howard (Minor County) is an excellent example of what a community can do to educate the residents in the community about the importance of shopping local. The youth, through the local school, got involved in conducting a shopping local study that looked at the impact on sales tax revenues if residents spend money locally and how many times money can turn over in a community when it is spent locally. I would ask for a copy of this study and the survey instrument used so that you could do a similar study.

If the city sales tax increases for a quarter, that's great news, report it. Let people know their shopping local makes a difference.

Don't forget about shoppers from smaller, surrounding towns. Clark needs them and they need you. If there is a void in the smaller community, look for how one of your businesses could fill it. An example, if Henry needs a place to buy just the basics in hardware, would it be possible for Clark's hardware store to set up a "skeleton inventory" in their town. Other communities do similar projects. It's not a full store, but it would offer a convenience to Henry shoppers. They wouldn't have to drive a distance to buy a pound of nails, and if they can't get something at the store in Henry, they will be loyal and pick it up in Clark. This isn't for every business, but it does work well in some. It may be more work on the part of the business, but they also broaden their customer base.

Another suggestion would be to have the paper write "business spotlights." This is a way to get some advertising, let the reader know what the business has to offer and add a personal interest perspective. Have each business owner fill out a questionnaire regarding their goods and services. Also have them answer why they chose the Clark community to live and work in.

Every time you have a choice to go out of town and shop, imagine what it would be like not to have that service or store in town at all. The more you spend in Clark the better the service, the more variety of retail and the better the economy is as a whole. Think of this before you decide to drive 30 miles to get a can of soup. Every little bit helps.

### **Resources:**

Minor County Community Renewal  
(Youth Shopping Local Study)  
Randy Parry  
605-772-5153  
parryr@alliancecom.net

## PROMOTING CLARK

*Strategies / Motto*

<b>SUB THEME:</b> <b>Strategies / Motto</b>
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**Challenge:** Promoting Clark through the use of a focused marketing strategy and motto.

**Recommendation:** The City's motto is an essential part of Clark's marketing campaign. But, just what is that motto? We asked three different groups, and came up with three different answers. The website touts Clark as being the "Potato Capital" and "A nice place to visit, a great place to call home." The water bottles for the community assessment said, "Growing together."

All three are great, but promotion materials need to focus on just one. Or, maybe an all new one needs to be chosen. Whatever it is, the motto should be drawn up into a logo of some sort. The colors, font and drawing on that logo should be the same on all advertising, letterhead, envelopes, website, etc. Take some time to decide and make it impressive, because it will be seen and used a lot in the future. When people think of Clark, what do they think of? Clark has this opportunity to be able to shape what people think of Clark by the motto they provide to those living outside of Clark.

An option to develop a motto would be to sponsor a contest of some sort. This would not only give the community a chance to get involved with the process, but also to be able to vote on the different options. Let people have a voice in the decision; they will be more apt to accept and like it.

I want the community to note that we did hear a few times that a lot of farmers do not even grow potatoes anymore. Some wondered if the "Potato Capital" was relevant. It is a part of your history, and it should be remembered. The community as a whole needs to decide if that part is significant enough to promote in the future. It very well could be, since Clark still has Potato Days and was featured on ESPN this year. But, once again, it should be the whole community who decides on the final say.

Once a logo and slogan are decided on, put it together and put it everywhere. Paint it on the water tower, paint it on the blank side of a main street business, place it on billboards, make window clings to put on vehicle windows (shows community pride and it's good advertising), put it on City, Chamber and development corporation stationary and include it on the website.

### **Resources:**

The greatest resource for this recommendation is your own community. Look to each other for ideas and support.

## PROMOTING CLARK

*Hunting / Agri Tourism*

<b>SUB THEME:     Hunting / Agri Tourism</b>
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**Challenge:** Hunting and outdoor recreation are staples in Clark. We heard concerns about absentee ownership of hunting land, possibly making some hunting areas cost prohibitive for local hunters, as well as the need to bring people to Clark to shop, eat and play. The issue is two-fold, how to capture out of town dollars that could be spent in Clark, and how to maintain public hunting areas for local sportsmen.

**Recommendation:** There is no easy solution if absentee ownership is already in full swing. However the community can make the best of the situation by making the hunters welcome, staging events and activities they can participate in, stocking the supplies they need to purchase while in Clark and collaborating with preserves and lodges to get the word out. Continue to strategize on how to seek and retain the patronage of both the hunters and the owners of the hunting lodges and properties. Not only is this good for local businesses, it contributes to local sales tax revenues as well.

Local land owners can also develop their own businesses around hunting or band together to do it collectively. Identify public shooting areas and work to build habitat through Duck Unlimited and other organizations.

Hunting and fishing are only one aspect of agri-tourism. SD Department of Tourism and Economic development has a great guide on agri-tourism and very knowledgeable staff to help the community and individuals with developing activities around agritourism. SD Tourism Conference is coming up in Pierre in January. Be sure to send a delegation to this event.

Ranch and farm experiences are increasing in popularity by leaps and bounds each year. There is a tremendous international market besides our own “city-folk”. Day trips to full blown Bed and Breakfast, Lodge or Bunk Houses are all popular.

For many folks, the agricultural experience is one that is “foreign” to them (tourists coming from large communities such as Chicago, Minneapolis, Omaha, etc) and yet they may have had a grandfather or other relative that was involved in agriculture. Many of these families want to give their children a taste of what this experience was like. You can work with interested local farmers and ranchers to develop agri-experience packages. Be sure to market these on your web site, as online vacation planning is a must.

Other areas that are increasing in interest to tourists include adventure tourism experiences such as ATV trails, bike trails, nature photography, etc. You have an opportunity to take advantage of some of these types of activities and draw tourists passing through Watertown for a side trip to Clark. Financing for trails is available through Game, Fish and Park’s Recreational Trail Program or Land & Water Conservation Fund, or through the Department of Transportation’s Transportation Enhancement Grants. Contact First District for more information on these programs.

## PROMOTING CLARK

*Hunting / Agri Tourism*

### **Resources:**

SD Department of Game, Fish and Parks  
*Recreational Trails Program or Land & Water Conservation Fund*  
Joe Foss Building  
523 East Capitol Avenue  
Pierre, SD 57501-3185

S.D. Office of Tourism  
Nicole Soukup  
711 Wells Ave.  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-773-3301  
nicole.soukup@state.sd.us

South Dakota Department of Transportation  
700 E. Broadway Ave.  
Becker-Hansen Building  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-773-3265  
www.sddot.com

First District Association of Local Governments  
PO Box 1207  
Watertown, SD 57201-6207  
605-882-5115  
dick@1stdistrict.org

# QUALITY OF LIFE

**SUB THEME:**     **Activities for Youth & Families**

**Challenge:** One of the problems addressed by the community of Clark was the need for more family and youth related activities.

**Recommendation:** Youth are our most valuable assets, keep them involved as much as possible. In listening to the youth, there is a lack of activities for them to be involved in after school and within the community. One idea that came to mind is a community movie theatre. There is no movie theatre in town; and many youth are forced to drive 30 miles to attend the latest releases. With the lack of businesses on Main Street there are vacant buildings that could be converted into a theatre, if there isn't already an old one that could be fixed up. To combat the problem of wages and overhead, have students from the community volunteer their time to run the theatre. A committee could be formed with a supervisor, to order movies, care for the theatre, and staff it for different nights, the theatre could be open Thursday thru Sunday. This would give the youth something to do, whether working at the theatre or attending the movies, as well as the members of the community and surrounding areas. Fundraisers may be needed to get the project off the ground. You might think this can't be done, but both Philip and Platte have accomplished this goal – with mostly volunteer and donated labor and materials. The result has been local “gems” on the Main Streets in both communities that is appreciated by families and youth alike. It can be done.

Possibly, you could tackle a variety store to be run by student/volunteer labor as another idea. The community of Rutland, SD manages a business through the school using youth in the community. This is seen as a learning experience for the youth as well as providing a valuable service the community at-large.

Keep youth involved, whether it be a seat on different organizations within the community or in local business ventures, that could be run using youth leadership.

Organize family nights at different local venues. These could take place at the Fieldhouse, pool, golf course, bowling alley, shooting range(if available), local churches, community cleanup projects, highway cleanup projects, etc. If activities are available the people of Clark will attend.

Organize a Clark area fundraiser, include all small towns that patronize Clark, ie. Garden City, Raymond, Willow Lake, Bradley, etc., raise funds that could be used to fix the pool, start a theatre, or to do projects in the communities that contributed.

QUALITY OF LIFE  
*Activities for Youth & Families*

A youth center, run by parent/student volunteers, with video games, televisions, ping pong, pool table, foosball, cards, etc, is another idea for actively engaging youth in creating a recreational opportunity for themselves. This is an area where the local churches could be actively involved.

One thing that has been done at local churches in other communities is the development of YACHT Clubs or (**Y**oung **A**dult **C**hristians **H**anging **T**ogether). The different churches and their leaders could work out a schedule to rotate the meetings around the community to be hosted by the different denominations. Young and older adults could come together for socializing, recreation, companionship or community service projects. The age requirement could be from the 9<sup>th</sup> grade with no upper limit (note that **Y**oung is a state of mind). By including this diverse group, mentoring of the young people could be a part of this Club. The meetings could be held once or twice a month.

Financing youth programs is always a challenge, but this could be turned into a learning opportunity for the youth. Work with the youth to get them engaged in developing the type of activities that they would want to participate in. If it requires funding (like a youth center), work with the youth to develop grant proposals. There are a variety of directories that provide information on various youth related grant opportunities, which are highlighted in the resources section below.

**Resources:**

Federal Grants Directory: [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) and [www.cfda.gov](http://www.cfda.gov)

South Dakota State Library Grants Director: [www.sdstatelibrary.com/grants/index.cfm](http://www.sdstatelibrary.com/grants/index.cfm)

Rural Information Center's Youth and Education Resources:  
<http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/ruralres/educate.htm>

Karen Burket  
Executive Director  
Platte Development Corporation  
PO Box 393  
500 S. Main St..  
Platte, SD 57369-0393  
605-337-3921  
605-337-3988  
[mkb@midstatesd.net](mailto:mkb@midstatesd.net)

Rutland High School  
Nancy Falor, Business Instructor  
102 North Main Street.  
Rutland, SD 57057  
605) 586-4352

QUALITY OF LIFE  
*Recreation*

**Resources (Continued):**

Shirley Chin, Coordinator  
Philip Chamber of Commerce  
PO Box 378  
Philip, SD 57567-0378  
605-859-2645  
philipcc@gwtc.net  
philipsouthdakota.com

**SUB THEME: Recreation (Pool, Tennis, Softball, etc.)**

**Challenge:** Many of the parks and recreational facilities in town are deteriorating, unsafe, costly and inadequate.

**Recommendation:** Most recreational activities and equipment are very costly and the financing options are very limited. I have addressed some project specific recommendations below. The financing options bulleted give a general idea of where to start looking for funds for any recreational project.

When the City starts looking for funds for any projects, contact First District Association of Local Governments for more information on funds that may be available. They are a very good resource to start from.

If there is interest in pursuing any recreational project, I would recommend forming a committee to look into all of the options for each project in great detail. This committee could plan for the design, financing and keep the motivation going throughout the community to ensure completion. The committee could hold public meetings to get the general public's comments and opinions.

Swimming Pool

In the listening sessions, it came up that the pool was too costly and in need of being replaced, the tennis courts are cracking and have weeds growing in the cracks, the softball diamonds need to be updated and the golf course needs another 9 holes.

I understand that the pool is costing the City quite a bit of money each year for repairs and maintenance. Unfortunately, swimming pools in most rural communities do lose money each year. The ways that different communities approach this issue varies from town to town. Before settling on building a new pool, doing the research to take a look at the pool you have and what it would take to fix it would give the City an idea of what the cost of each option would be.

## QUALITY OF LIFE

### *Recreation*

I thought the facility was very nice and it is very interesting that it was one of the first built in the state. This fact in itself may give the leverage needed to receive a grant for renovating it. Make sure to check the internet on any private grants that may be available through corporations or foundations throughout the United States.

If the City is planning on building a new one, use some of the sources listed below to try and finance it. Also look into how other communities have built new ones. Some good examples for you include Britton and Canistota. Many communities end up doing a general obligation bond by election to fund their pools.

Another option may be to approach the surrounding smaller communities, those who use your pool and don't have one of their own, to build a regional pool with the cooperation of everyone.

The main financing option for this through any governmental agency is with the South Dakota Land and Water Conservation Fund. Contact First District Association of Local Governments for more information.

#### Golf Course

There was some concern that the golf course is too small and needs to be expanded to 18 holes. The golf course land is publicly owned, however it is on a long term lease. The clubhouse is privately owned. Since the land of the golf course is owned by the City, if the City would like to make expanding it one of their future projects, they would be permitted to take out a general obligation bond by election to finance the project.

It is also noted that there may not be enough land to expand in that area. If the City continues to hold ownership of *any* land that would be used for the golf course, the same general obligation bond would be permitted.

Other financing options would be to use the REED fund or to raise membership costs for the golf course. A long range plan would help the community recognize that its leaders are working to address the community's needs and could encourage citizens to participate in the process as well. Researching costs and sources of funds is the first step. Lake Region Golf Club, Lake Poinsett just completed its second nine holes, this may be a good resource for the City to follow-up with to get some ideas.

#### Financing Options

SD Land and Water Conservation Funds:

- 50/50 matching grants for outdoor recreation improvements.
- Requests can be for no less than \$3,000 and no more than \$50,000.
- Projects may include: swimming pools, playground equipment, ball field development, etc.
- The park or recreation areas acquired, developed or improved must be dedicated to outdoor recreation use in perpetuity.
- This funding is very limited.

## QUALITY OF LIFE

### *Recreation*

#### Recreation Trails Grant Program:

- Up to 80% of the project financing can be provided through this program with a 20% local match.
- Used for the development and maintenance of trails including: pedestrian/walking paths, bicycling, in-line skating, equestrian use, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, off-road motorcycling, all-terrain vehicle riding, four-wheel drive use, other off-road motorized use, etc.
- Sidewalks are not eligible.

#### USDA Rural Development

##### Rural Economic Development Loan program:

- May provide 0% interest financing for a swimming facility.
- Loan is actually made to a local cooperative, who then reloans the funds to a local municipality of non profit at 0% interest for 10 years.

##### Community Facility Loan Guarantee program:

- Could guarantee a loan made for this type of a project.
- Contact your USDA Rural Development Office for more information.

#### Rural Electric Loan Funds (REED):

Provide low interest loans for projects which are beneficial to the area as a whole.

- Financing projects include but are not limited to healthcare, childcare, distance education, fire protection, community facilities, public recreation and the arts.
- May consider lending up to 50% of a project's need with the first \$100,000 at 3% interest for up to a 20 year term.
- The project area does not have to purchase the electricity from the local rural electric co-op.

#### South Dakota Community Foundation

- Grant funds available for several types of project areas.

#### Ronald McDonald Foundation

- Grant funds available for projects which are directly related to children's health and well being, including playground equipment.
- The applicant must be a non-profit or have 501I (3) status.
- This program generally has smaller awards of \$10,000 or less for projects or programs.

#### Other Options

- Conduct community fundraising activities.
- Another way of fundraising and is often very successful, is to sell bricks from the item of which you are fundraising. People can purchase bricks and their name of choosing is inscribed on the bricks. The bricks are then used as part of the project. Maybe charge businesses a bit more for the bricks since it will be considered advertising. The brick

## QUALITY OF LIFE

### *Recreation*

fundraising was done with the new Governor's residence in Pierre and also for new playground equipment in Lennox.

- Solicit volunteer labor to lower some of the costs. Sometimes local donated labor and other in-kind contributions can be documented and serve as part of the match for a grant or loan.
- Businesses and/or individuals might be more inclined to give material donations versus cash donations. In some instances, labor and/or equipment is donated from construction companies, etc.
- Have the City put projects into their Capital Improvements Plan to budget for it through their finances and to start planning now to reserve other financing options.
- You could have some high school class or volunteers help with any landscaping throughout town to save on cost and also give a sense of ownership.
- I also suggest that you complete Internet searches for the facilities and/or programs you would like to develop. Many private corporations have grant funds available, your project may qualify. Make sure to follow the directions the funding source is giving you and make sure to check into any deadlines the grant may have.

#### **Resources:**

First District Association of Local Governments

Greg Maag

PO Box 1207

Watertown, SD 57201-6207

(605) 882-5115

greg@1stdistrict.org

USDA Rural Development

810 Jensen Ave, Suite 2

Watertown, SD 57201

(605) 886-8202

Rural Electric Cooperative

Linda Salmonson

PO Box 227

Madison, SD 57042

(605) 256-4536

lsalmonson@eastriver.coop

South Dakota Community Foundation

Box 296

Pierre, SD 57501

(605) 224-1025

[www.sdcommunityfoundation.org](http://www.sdcommunityfoundation.org)

## QUALITY OF LIFE

### *Daycare*

#### **Recreation (Continued):**

RMHC of South Dakota, Inc.  
2001 South Norton Ave  
Sioux Falls, SD 57105  
(605) 336-6369  
[www.rmhc.com/grant/index.html](http://www.rmhc.com/grant/index.html)

<b>SUB THEME:    Daycare</b>
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**Challenge:** Maintaining high quality child care, and child/care giver ratios for infants, while supporting pre-school activities in the public education system. Continuing education and training for child care providers necessary to maintain licensure.

**Solution:** There appears to be good communication and coordination among the providers. The Clark County Cooperative Extension Services offered to be a liaison on the child care continuing education issues and advocate for bringing the education to Clark. On the issue of licensure and maintaining quality child care for infants, I think that the Extension Service would be a good place to start as well.

The important thing to remember is that Daycare is economic development. This might seem strange, but like the issue regarding lack of housing, lack of daycare in a community can be a significant limiting factor to your economic development efforts. Support your local daycare providers and work proactively with them to address any issues they might have.

One of the things that you might look into, once the daycare issue has been clarified further with the participation of the local in-home daycare providers, is the possibility of a daycare center. This has been a project taken on by various entities, including economic development corporations, in rural communities.

Local daycare providers must be involved as part of this process. The last thing you want to do is put local daycare providers out of business. They not only need to be involved, they need to be the core thrust and impetus for this type of project. Perhaps one or more of them would be interested in helping to form a daycare center with the assistance of the city, economic development corporation, school and/or chamber.

Some community's have pursued utilizing a Governor's Home (available through the South Dakota Housing Development Authority) as a converted daycare facility. This effort is usually led by the local economic development corporation as this endeavor would require a local non-profit group taking the lead in the development of this project. A good way to get started on this issue is by contacting the South Dakota Housing Development Authority. They have established

## QUALITY OF LIFE

### *Daycare*

a formal process for requesting Governor's homes for use as daycare facilities. Included as part of this process is a survey of the community and a feasibility study. SDHDA also provides a "Guide to Planning, Purchasing and Licensing" a daycare facility.

Communities have approached this issue in several different ways. One of the best examples is the City of Platte. They were able to secure a granted Governor's House to use as a daycare facility. The community came together to secure the land, prepare the site, do wiring, etc. They used USDA Rural Development Community Facilities financing to do the site preparation for the facility. Local volunteer labor also helped complete the facility. They purposefully located the facility next to the school so that the center could serve dual purposes as a daycare facility and a preschool (downstairs). Locating close to the school ensured that kids could go back and forth between the school and daycare with ease.

The unique thing about Platte's Governors Home daycare is that they secured the large Governors Home, as opposed to many rural communities that have secured the smaller version of the Governors Home. This provided the ability to service a larger number of kids, and spread their fixed cost over larger number of children. They also put the home over a full basement, that allowed them to do the preschool and after school programs right in the daycare.

One of the things that Clark might struggle with in trying to imitate this is that your school is already doing the preschool and after school programs. These items are what help to make the Platte daycare financially feasible. Thinking about this issue brought up the possibility of possibly locating a daycare center within your school in cooperation with local daycare in-home providers. You have the excess area to do this and the school is already covering a number of costs associated with this space (i.e. heating, etc). There is also the benefit of having a lunch room and library right on-site. I have no idea about the legal or insurance issues that might arise from trying to do this. It might not be feasible, but it might be worth exploring in conjunction and cooperation with local in-home daycare providers.

Another financial resource, not just for daycare centers, but in-home providers as well, is SDREI's First Children's Finance program. FCF offers low-interest loans to childcare businesses to create new childcare spaces or improve existing ones. First Children's Finance, DCC's Child Care Loan Fund may have money for technical assistance. FCF offers loan options for technical assistance and training, as well as for equipment, expansion, repairs, and working capital up to \$75,000. Loans for \$5,000 or less (Mini Loans) offer a simplified application process and reduced fee.

Finally, one last source that I want to reference is a directory maintained by the National Child Care Information Center (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services). The center provides comprehensive information on how to start a childcare center including published guides, funding sources, and state-by-state information about licensing and contacts. You can view this directory online at <http://nccic.org/poptopics/starting.html>.

### **Resources:**

## QUALITY OF LIFE

### *Daycare*

SD Cooperative Extension Service, Clark County  
Bobbi Larsen

Platte Development Corporation  
Karen Burket  
P O Box 336  
Platte SD 57369  
Phone: 605-337-2895

### Daycare Financial Resources

South Dakota Housing Development Authority  
PO Box 1237  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-773-3181  
[www.sdhda.org](http://www.sdhda.org)

USDA Rural Development  
810 Jenson Avenue, SE, Suite 2  
Watertown, SD 57201-5256  
605-886-8202  
[www.rurdev.usda.gov/sd/](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/sd/)

SDREI – First Children’s Finance  
Beth E. Davis, President  
625 S. Minnesota Ave. Suite 103 (57104)  
PO Box 802  
Sioux Falls, SD 57101-0802  
605-978-2804  
[info@sdrei.org](mailto:info@sdrei.org)

### Reference Information on Starting and Licensing a Daycare Facility

National Child Care Information Center  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Administration for Children and Families  
243 Church Street, NW 2nd Floor  
Vienna, Virginia 22180  
800-616-2242  
<http://nccic.org/>  
<http://nccic.org/poptopics/starting.html>

South Dakota Department of Education  
Child and Adult Nutrition Program

## QUALITY OF LIFE

### *Daycare*

700 Governors Drive  
Melissa Halling  
Pierre SD 57501  
Phone: 605-773-3413

South Dakota Department of Social Services  
Child Care Services  
700 Governors Drive  
Pierre, SD 57501  
800-227-3020  
<http://www.state.sd.us/social/ccs/ccshome.htm>

# ACTIVE GENERATIONS

**SUB THEME:**      **Preparing for Higher Education**

**Sub Theme:** Preparing for High Education

**Challenge:** Students felt that the school was academically and athletically strong with a good balance between them. They also felt that they were mostly well prepared in high school; however, many had a concern that they did not know how to study for semester examinations because they can be exempt from taking them based on attendance and grades. They fear that they will be unable to do well on college semester exams because they have not needed to prepare for them in high school.

**Recommendations:** As a former educator, I know that it is not the most pleasant job to prepare, administer and grade semester exams. Students don't find them fun either. However, comprehensive semester exams are a reality in many college and university classes. Specific college preparation courses could be identified that would require semester exams regardless of previous grades earned or attendance in class. Foreign languages could be started in earlier grades and more advanced classes held for upper grades. Two advanced placement classes are available over the DDN through Northern State University. Students should be polled as to additional courses desired with schedules flexible enough to allow for enrollment. Students wishing to earn college credit with advanced placement courses and exams would get the rigor to prepare them for higher education. Students need to be encouraged to begin to visit colleges and universities during their junior year in high school in order to get a good picture of academic requirements. This would help them in their course selection in their senior year of high school.

The South Dakota Board of Regents web site gives information regarding the performance high school graduates as freshmen at the state universities. Clark graduates' performance can be compared to the graduates of other high schools in the state. The web site also gives information as to curricular requirements for college bound high school graduates.

**Resources:**

Admission counselors of the various colleges and universities. Specifically, Department Chairpersons and professors of the academic areas in which the students wish to study. (Most love to visit with prospective students)

The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education  
Overcoming the Senior Slump: New Education Policies  
by Michael W. Kirst ( May 2001)  
[www.highereducation.org](http://www.highereducation.org)

ACTIVE GENERATIONS  
*Engaging and "Hearing" Youth*

**Resources (continued):**

South Dakota Board of Regents

<http://www.sdbor.edu>

- Click on "Publications", then click on the years designated under the title heading "High School Transition Report".

**SUB THEME: Engaging and "Hearing" Youth**

**Challenge:** Youth are looking to be involved and heard in the community.

**Recommendations:** Members of the student council showed a high interest in becoming involved in the community activities and governance of Clark. This is positive that should be capitalized upon. These students have a great deal of pride in their community and schools. They pointed out the cooperative work with Spooktacular and its success, but more of this type of activity is needed. It must go beyond the one time a year activity. If youth are to take ownership in a community, the schools, community and churches need to work cooperatively. It means that the youth are involved in community affairs including city government, economic development, service organizations and schools. Youth need to serve on these in pairs at a minimum. One youth by him/herself may feel intimidated. The student council would also like to see high school youth more actively engaged in the Character Counts program, as they felt that that younger youth really connected with the older youth through this program.. They feel that the younger kids would listen to them more than just to adults. This could be a cooperative program with the businesses.

The youth indicated their desire for a recreation center and a movie theater. With youth serving on the various decision making bodies, they can gain a better understanding of what it takes to get these up and running and operating successfully. They would have a stake in these when they become reality. Having youth involved in school operations, local government and economic development activities teaches them a long-term understanding of local needs and challenges. Involvement can help change attitudes as to their ability to live in Clark after graduation.

Youth can be a valuable resource of ideas and skills. Some suggestions include:

- Have the youth serve on sub committees or steering committees for the City Council or Clark Chamber of Commerce. (This has worked in several Wyoming communities)
- Have the youth work with the city web-master or aid in the development of other promotional materials for the city and its businesses.
- Have the youth participate in a long term planning process or visioning process.
- Service clubs could include the youth in service activities, which would provide for more person power and instill a service mentality for future service club members.

## ACTIVE GENERATIONS

### *Substance Abuse*

- Youth could do studies and research for the local chamber. Howard, in Miner County has used youth for similar purposes.

It is key that the community see its youth as a valuable asset and that their ideas and thoughts be listened to and put into action.

#### **Resources:**

Miner County Community Renewal  
Howard, SD  
Randy Parry  
605-772-5153  
parryr@alliancecom.net

*“Youth in the Community: They have a Lot to Contribute.”* A publication from the SDSU Cooperative Extension Service, available online at <http://agbiopubs.sdstate.edu/index.cfm> designed to help establish and maintain youth and adult partnerships in communities.

Town of Lovell, WY  
Angel Montanez, Councilman  
PO Box 188  
Lovell, WY 82431  
307-548-6551

<b>SUB THEME:</b> <b>Substance Abuse</b>
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**Sub theme:** Substance Abuse

**Challenge:** Issues for substance abuse for youth in the community came up during the listening sessions.

**Recommendation:** Rural communities continue to face issues with substance abuse, particularly with youth. The rising prevalence of methamphetamine is a growing concern for entire communities, not just for parents and law enforcement.

The D.A.R.E. program continues to enjoy success with younger school students, due to the efforts of local law enforcement. For older students, many schools have implemented peer counseling programs to give students the skills needed to help counsel other students. I am not sure if this is something that is available in your school. Information is available for starting a Peer Counseling Program through the Northeastern Prevention Resource Center (NEPRC) in Watertown. The contact information is listed below. Other services provided through this agency include:

## ACTIVE GENERATIONS

### *Substance Abuse*

- Prevention Resource Library
- Safe & Drug Free Schools and Community Services. Assists schools and community groups with grant writing, goal setting and evaluation of prevention efforts.
- Tobacco Prevention Services. Provides tobacco prevention materials and assists communities in creating tobacco prevention coalitions. Funding available.
- Community Prevention Services. Provide information and assistance in conducting student and community assessments and developing action plans to coordinate drug/alcohol abuse efforts.
- The parent organization of this program, Human Services Agency, also provides inpatient and outpatient chemical dependency treatment for adolescents, plus aftercare support groups.

Locally, the County Extension Services are a terrific resource and can be a vital component in community awareness and prevention efforts.

Another agency, Prairie View Prevention Services, offers a number of programs including:

- MAPP (Methamphetamine Awareness and Prevention Project) – South Dakota. Provide meth prevention education and resources to communities in South Dakota. There are no charges for the resources, and staff are available in Watertown.
- Partnership for a Drug Free South Dakota -- Community based prevention program that brings together individuals from all walks of life to form a coalition which addresses drug and alcohol issues.

A common theme heard from youth in many rural communities is that there is nothing to do. Members of the youth listening session (Student Council) indicated a willingness to get involved in addressing problems related to substance abuse and work to create alternative activities for your community's young adults. The youth indicated an interest in a youth recreation center and a week-end movie theater. These may provide for more wholesome activities in which youth may participate.

### **Resources:**

Dodi Haug  
Northeastern Prevention Resource Center  
123 19<sup>th</sup> St NE  
Watertown, SD 57201  
605.886.0123  
[www.humanserviceagency.org/neprc.htm](http://www.humanserviceagency.org/neprc.htm)

Bobbi L. Larsen  
Extension Educator – FCS  
200 N Commercial St  
Clark SD 57225  
605.532.3681  
[Bobbi.larsen@ces.state.edu](mailto:Bobbi.larsen@ces.state.edu)

## ACTIVE GENERATIONS

*Diversity*

### Resources (Continued):

Gilbert “Gib” Sudbeck, Director  
Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse  
East Hwy 34, Hillsview Plaza; 500 E Capital Ave  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605.773.3123  
[www.state.sd.us/dhs/ADA/Index.htm](http://www.state.sd.us/dhs/ADA/Index.htm)

Prairie View Prevention  
822 E 41<sup>st</sup> St, Ste 235  
Sioux Falls, SD 57105  
605.331.5724  
[www.prairieview.net](http://www.prairieview.net)

<b>SUB THEME:     Diversity</b>
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**Challenge:** To embrace diversity by finding common ground as well as enriching differences of style, perceptions, and perspectives.

**Recommendations:** There can be many misconceptions regarding diversity due to the many different meanings that is attached to the word. For our use, I would put forth the definition of diversity as not just about differences of race, gender, age and disability, but also of differences of behavior, ideas, tastes, and “hot buttons.” Clark has significant diversity today in age alone. There is also diversity in business ownership, older business persons, quite young business persons, men and women owners, agricultural related and non agricultural related businesses, and differences in size of the businesses. These are just a few examples of diversity of the businesses in Clark.

As the definition above reflects, diversity also includes different ideas and ways of doing things. In the listening sessions, it was expressed that new and different ideas are not listened to or accepted - especially when coming from a young adult. Efforts, by the appropriate bodies, should be made to listen to these young people and with their involvement, test the feasibility of their ideas. These young people are the future of the community. Needs were also expressed by the older population that has limited transportation. Some of these needs could be met by existing businesses by diversifying some of their product space and offerings. An example may be some basic dry goods such as yarn, shoestrings, etc that retired persons may wish to purchase.

“We need industries to come to Clark to bring jobs, increase population, bring in families and put kids in the school system.” This comment was heard many different times during the listening sessions. The community must realize that this will change the demographics as they are now. Things will not be as they were 10 or 15 years ago. However, research has shown that in many

## ACTIVE GENERATIONS

### *Diversity*

places, new persons of different cultural settlement patterns are contributing to the revitalization of small towns. New demands for housing, services, and education have been experienced. This means an increase in local shopping for services, groceries, health care, and educational and recreational opportunities. This may mean doing business a little differently than was done in the past. Policy makers need to understand the nature of demographic changes that may occur in the community in order to be better equipped to make effective and relevant policy. Whether Clark intentionally recruits new residents or whether the patterns continue on their own, policy makers in the community and school system alike will have to develop new strategies to ensure that schools can continue to best serve all their students and the community best serve all of its residents. Community leaders will have to be at the forefront in educating businesses, service providers, and residents of the needs of a diverse population.

#### **Resources:**

Rural Policy Matters

a newsletter of rural school and community action

October 2000, Vol. 2 Number 10

“The Changing Face of Rural America”

[www.ruraledu.org/rpm/210a.htm](http://www.ruraledu.org/rpm/210a.htm)

Amber Waves

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Economic Research Service

“Policy Options for a Changing Rural America”

[www.ers.usda.gov/AmberWaves/April05/Features/PolicyOptions.htm](http://www.ers.usda.gov/AmberWaves/April05/Features/PolicyOptions.htm)

Rural Development News

“Midwest Rural Communities in Transition

Hispanic Immigration”

Vol. 25 No. 1, 2001

[www.ag.iastate.edu/centers/rdev/newsletter/Vol25No1-2001/hispanic.html](http://www.ag.iastate.edu/centers/rdev/newsletter/Vol25No1-2001/hispanic.html)

Mr. Qadir Aware

Multicultural Center of Sioux Falls

515 N. Main

Sioux Falls, SD 57104

605-367-7400

**SUB THEME:      Attracting and Retaining Youth**

**Sub Theme:** Attracting and Retaining Youth

**Challenge:** Retaining the youth in Clark after high school or attracting them back to Clark after post high school education.

**Recommendations:** Most small rural communities are struggling with this same challenge. It is an issue that may involve not only economic concerns, but also quality of life issues. Thus communities need to address both of these and treat them as equally important. When the youth were asked if they would be willing to return to Clark after their post high school education and begin a business venture or to work, they said “no”. “The opportunities are not there, the businesses that are here could not handle us.”

When asked how many would come back to Clark if the opportunities were there, most raised their hands. This should encourage the community leaders of Clark to develop a strategic plan that addresses the fact that the youth would return if the opportunities existed or if support was available. One of the observations that became apparent was that the youth did not want to take the risk of starting a business because they felt that it would not succeed in Clark. They would work for someone else who has already established a successful business. I think that the entrepreneurial spirit needs to be kindled in the youth. Many felt that they needed some business courses at the Junior and Senior levels in high school beyond the freshman basic business course. A strong entrepreneurship course should be developed in the high school curriculum in partnership with local businesses. The Hitachi Foundation would be a resource that would provide entrepreneurial curricula development training and possible funding. Through the program, business plans are written, and possible new businesses can apply to local banks for start-up capital. Rutland, SD is an example of a community where the youth and the community partnered in the running of a local business. Rutland students manage a local convenience store, which provides a valuable service to the community while providing the students with a valuable learning experience. Maybe this could be replicated in Clark with a youth recreation center or weekend movie theater.

Another method of instilling entrepreneurial spirit is through the Youth Business Adventure (YBA). Juniors and seniors spend a week on a college campus, earning college credits while they learn about building a future business. YBA is sponsored by the South Dakota Chamber of Commerce and Industry and The Greater SD Education and Research Foundation. A similar experience is offered by the Center for Women Business Institute at the University of Sioux Falls. Young girls attend Camp CEO, a week long camp designed to teach small business development skills. The Center for Women Business Institute can also be a good source for entrepreneurial curriculum materials. Other organizations that work through schools are Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA) and Junior achievement.

## ACTIVE GENERATIONS

### *Attracting and Retaining Youth*

The community of Clark needs to develop a method of tracking its high school graduates once they leave the community to work or go on to higher education. These alumni could be recruited back into the community when business opportunities arise. Are there needs for an electrician, a plumber, an auto body repair shop, health care provider, chiropractor, attorney, or a CPA? A database of former youth could prove to be a valuable resource in the recruitment of young families back to Clark.

The community of Platte addresses the retention of youth through a shadowing/scholarship program. The program is under the Platte Development Corporation and it works with area businesses and the local high school. The basic concept has a student shadowing at a business during high school. After high school graduation, if the student and business both agree, a contract is entered into for tuition reimbursement to college. The PDC, business and student would be responsible for 1/3 of the student's tuition. The student is required to return to the business after graduation for four years, otherwise they repay the employer.

The concept is based on the Dakota Corp scholarship the state offers, only this is geared more toward the vo-tech schools. Businesses are in need of skilled labor and this is an attempt to fill that void with "homegrown" kids. Platte funded their program with a grant from the City of Platte and the South Dakota Community Foundation.

Quality of life issues are also important. Young families look for adequate and affordable housing, access to healthcare, available shopping and services. Recreational opportunities are also important along with active churches. Clean looking neighborhoods with good streets and parks with safe playground equipment are important to families with children. Clark has a great school system with wonderful facilities that can be used to help lure young families back to Clark. However, all the efforts to help maintain the youth or lure them back begins now by making sure that the youth have ownership and feel that they are heard and are part of the community.

One thing we heard in the youth session was how much the students enjoyed being part of the Character Counts program. They miss being a part of that. It's great that area businesspeople participate in the program, but if there is anyway possible, include the high school students again. By participating, it gives the students a chance to develop loyalty, pride and responsibility for their community. Whenever student assistance can be utilized, use it. They are rural community's most untapped resource

### **Resources:**

The Hitachi Foundation  
1509 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20037-1073  
202-457-0588  
202-296-1098 Fax  
Office hours: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Eastern Time

ACTIVE GENERATIONS  
*Attracting and Retaining Youth*

**Resources (Continued):**

Rutland High School  
Nancy Falor, Business Instructor  
102 North Main Street  
Ruthland, SD 57057  
605-586-4352

Junior Achievement  
1000 West Ave., Suite 110  
Sioux Falls, SD 57104-1314  
jasd@asd.org  
www.southdakota.ja.org

The Greater SD Education and Research Foundation  
PO Box 190, Pierre, SD 57501-0190  
Contact: Sylvia Moisan  
1-800-742-8112  
1-605-224-6161  
www.yba-sd.org

DECA-South Dakota  
Distributed Education Clubs of America  
Steven Rounds  
700 Governor's Place  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-773-4673  
Steven.rounds@state.sd.us

USF Center for Women Business Institute  
University of Sioux Falls  
1101 West 22<sup>nd</sup> Street  
Sioux Falls, SD 57105  
605-331-6744  
866-556-1778  
www.usiouxfalls.edu/als/bus\_istitute.htm

South Dakota Rural Enterprise, Inc (LeadershipPlenty)  
Beth Davis, President  
P.O. Box 802  
Sioux Falls, SD  
605-978-2804  
www.sdrei.org

ACTIVE GENERATIONS  
*Attracting and Retaining Youth*

**Resources (continued):**

Youth Venture  
1700 N. Moore St. Suite 2000  
Arlington, VA 22209  
703-527-4126  
[www.youthventure.org](http://www.youthventure.org)

Heartland Center for Leadership Development  
941 O Street, Suite 920  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508  
800-927-1115  
[www.heartlandcenter.info](http://www.heartlandcenter.info)

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Issues and Challenges*

#### **Responses to the Question: What are the major issues and challenges facing the Community of Clark?**

- We need jobs, industry, bring people back into the county.
- Getting out first responders trained up to a certain level
- Grants, getting money for volunteer fire department
- Kids coming to keep schools here
- Do something to get new people, new jobs, age level down a bit
- Lack of people, no work for them, businesses not producing enough paying wages
- Lack of jobs
- Ditto on everything before
- No volunteer base
- Overcome the demography, do not have the jobs that attract and keep the young people
- New clinic, with new modern services
- Offer more job for people to make career out of it
- Ag appreciation
- Lack of families, young people. Losing kids.
- Losing intellectual group
- Ditto to econ from above
- Ditto to above
- Grants for equipment to update the facilities for fire and sheriff
- I would like to see a greater depth to the services we already have.
- Lack of volunteers available. People simply do not have the time.
- Large portion of people that work here, both parents are working.
- Don't know where are county stands with emergency responses
- Expand volunteers
- Hwy 212 if that closes we are done
- Lack of entrepreneur ages in this town
- At the nursing home, we have approximately 50 employees but most of them live out of town.
- HWY 212 three times as much traffic that goes east than goes west. A lot of retail ends up going out of town.
- Declining enrollment of younger students. The basis is dwindling.
- Daycares are limited to a certain number of kids under the age of two. It is very hard for people to get babysitters for under the age of two because of the limit
- All of the daycares are full. Good quality daycare is always a challenge to find.
- Parents who have children do not have knowledge of the birth to three program and services that they offer
- Quality daycare an issue in a small town where they are all full.
- Declining enrollment which leads to a lot of problems.
- Affordable housing
- Employment is also a problem
- Small business trying to keep their head above water, also farmers keeping their head above water.

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Issues and Challenges*

- Everyone's trying to make ends meet
- Daycare programs income based and not all children are treated equal with the income guidelines
- Trying to get daycare when you have a job out of town. It forces people out of town.
- People have to offer better prices, not only daycare, but on everything else, to keep people in town.
- The community is the schools, churches, businesses, organizations. Our attendance everywhere is down. Struggle to keep the wolf away from the door.
- Hard to stay optimistic, but it is important.
- We don't have the base of the young kids, and the farms are getting bigger and bigger and more people are losing their small farms.
- People are the product of the former farmers. We have to keep the younger people staying here because they can't farm
- No houses to rent
- Businesses in the community
- Ditto businesses in the community
- People leaving
- People leaving especially young people
- Hard to get local people to patronize the local businesses
- Young people leaving. There is a big age discrepancy between working and retired
- Industrial development board, everything has to be a big secret and turns people off. Builds barriers
- Getting industry into town to employ young people
- Need younger people in town, too old of a community
- Agree with people leaving town and coming back into town with industry
- Keeping younger people in Clark, it would be a good thing to have young people on city council or development board for fresh ideas
- Retail recruitment
- Employment in area. Decent wage and keep the kids interested in the small town. The interest is there but the wages are not
- Agree with above. No job here for son to move back here, would love to but can't afford it.
- Six empty retail businesses within a block and a half here waiting to be filled
- Such competition with Watertown, people forget that we have businesses here.
- Clark doesn't advertise itself as a city or town. Be more welcoming to bring new things in and accept things
- Young people on city council.
- Very big denial with the problems with drugs and alcohol.
- People turn their heads and becomes a problem with alcohol and drugs
- All talk and no action with new businesses
- Fundraising efforts in the community takes business away from local business.
- Support local businesses
- Need more businesses in town that provide earnable wages for a young family
- Create a larger tax base—keep businesses viable

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Issues and Challenges*

- Increase our enrollment in schools. Leverage open enrollment
- Businesses and declining enrollment
- Declining enrollment
- Think of community as a whole, not just themselves. Take the “me” out of it.
- Variety of businesses to shop locally
- Businesses that will engage youth to stay
- Leaders more motivated, positive, hard working
- Housing
- Industry
- Better job opportunities, jobs with benefits
- Better benefits with the jobs
- More industry, more jobs for young people to stay around
- Farmers need better prices. If the farmers are doing well, the community is doing well.
- Increase enrollment at school. Need families with kids. More activities to keep youth her.
- Industry, family, higher wages.
- Variety store not in competition with what we already have.
- Industry to bring more families into town.
- Businesses with a good salary to bring businesses into town. Stores that provide the essentials, clothes.
- Losing the quality this town is used to. Loss of young civic minded people. We are used to having good civic programs. No one to keep up the good programming.
- More families, businesses to bring them in.
- Existing businesses be more competitive than they are.
- Positive leadership. Positive communication between leadership and community. Get younger people involved.
- Community leaders need to be willing to change. Open. More positive
- Better jobs to get more single women in town.
- We don't have enough businesses
- Not enough opportunities for families to stay here
- Broken down houses and businesses make us look bad
- Population going down
- Jobs
- We need more businesses that bring in families
- Not enough things for kids to do
- More businesses/families
- Kids keep leaving Clark, not staying around
- Not enough jobs/things for kids to do
- Not enough jobs for people/ kids and adults
- Ditto
- Not enough opportunities for young families and to bring people into the communities.
- Need community leaders to accept new, young ideas
- When we get new kids, we need to keep them
- Opportunities for youth to get involved

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Issues and Challenges*

- Get kids in community and schools
- Jobs and businesses to keep people here
- Drugs and alcohol are a bigger problem than they were in the past and we need to control that.
- We need a place for youth to go
- Need more funding to keep teachers in our school or nobody comes to our school
- The pool needs to be fixed...we are getting close to closing it down because it is old and doesn't work. It would be a huge loss to our community.
- Every year the pool opens later and later because of equipment
- Would like to see the city get behind the rec center for kids
- We're bored, we need things to do
- A movie theater would be nice on Fridays and Saturdays
- Looking for a stronger economy base, not only for jobs, but for retail exposure.
- Empty spots on main street that need to be filled.
- Sons and daughters to come back to opportunities and be able to make a living
- People don't have power or say. A lot of rumors that go on.
- People want the power but they do not want to run for council
- Not enough newer housing for younger people
- Keep and to get new business in Clark
- Keep and get our young people back
- Economic development, keep moving forward, to get people back here
- Demographic related. Older community. If things do not change, the outcome will be drastic.
- Struggling in surrounding areas, need something to promote Clark so it doesn't happen to us
- Economic development
- City as a whole needs to survive. Keep young people.
- Bringing the City together and eliminate the negative attitude.
- When I first came here there was 600 kids in the school, we are now down to around 400. We need economic development to bring up those kids.
- Community as a whole needs to work together within all of the organizations.
- Change motto of SDSU, promotes leaving not staying
- Do something to keep the kids here.
- Keeping the people here, more economic development
- More development to keep the kids here.
- Something worthwhile for the kids to come back here, but pays well.
- So many opportunities, yet younger people don't step up to volunteer for positions on the boards.
- Wages are a big part of keeping the kids or bringing them back. We need something worthwhile for them to do.
- We can't compete with Watertown on industry, but we need to use our small community resources to attract people. We need to start trying to compete with the smaller communities.

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Issues and Challenges*

- Only certain people willing to serve on the Boards. People would sometimes rather sit in the background and complain.
- Need more families with children, housing, economic development. This is not only a community problem, but a State problem. We need to work hard together on that.
- I believe that some people are scared to serve because they feel as though they are not going to be heard. Everybody has some good ideas, and try to engage everyone and make them feel heard throughout the community.
- Emphasize the agricultural portion of economic development with other communities.
- Today, both parents work out of the home and don't have time to volunteer on the board
- We have an aging and dwindling population base
- Young people don't come back because there aren't jobs
- Elderly are moving to Watertown because the services aren't here
- Good jobs for a college graduate would be great...our farm economy isn't great...there needs to be something for farmers to do in the "off season"
- Some people have good income, but there are a lot of low income people. We need services not only for elderly, but for young people. There are elderly farmers who may not even be able to afford gas to get to town on a regular basis
- People who are making money are generous almost to a fault. The community auction for the family was an assessment in itself. We are carried through the bad times by good events like that.
- People give money to people who need it...we are the only county that donates as much money to the need as we do
- Lots of elderly people are living in substandard housing....We need to get people to utilize the services available with the apartments...but some don't want to leave their homes
- The paperwork required by the government for the subsidized housing is unbelievable...we need to overcome that problem
- The apartments we built 40 years ago were the nicest out there and they were adequate. Pebble Beach has added to the quality of housing for retired farmers.
- USDA says we are over the number of apartments needed...actually we are underutilized for what we have
- Retailers have to work a 6 day week and that can wear on a person
- A dress shop in Wilmont has people come from all over for dresses...that's not government, that's someone with a dream
- The age of the Rotary Club has 12 of 37 over age 70...it's a real problem...we are burning out our volunteers.
- Our Rotary Club just received an award of \$1,000 for all of the programs offered.
- We're starting to work together as groups...Rotary and Lion's sometimes work on the same projects
- There's a lot of negative attitudes in Clark...but we've gotten more done than a lot of little towns...people just like to complain
- People were mad about the pig ear plant, but we need to get over it...it's a potential huge employer...there could easily be 150 employees...we need it
- To promote to potential businesses, we can't have the negativity

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Issues and Challenges*

- American Legion is struggling for membership...we have great facilities, but we need more members to help us along
- We have been progressive, and it's hard to see someone knock what we're trying to accomplish.
- One of our major problems is funding for projects...our city isn't helping to fund that...how is our city going to write the checks for things that need work...example the pool, how will we pay for it without the tax base to support it
- Running a small business is a struggle
- Lack of good quality jobs to keep younger people. This will improve everyone's customer base.
- Jobs
- Industry and more heads to keep everyone going.
- Money turns over 6 times. Long ways from getting fair share of FSA dollars.
- Increase the tax base.
- Increase the population, more jobs.
- How to stop all jobs going to a bigger city.
- How do we compete for good jobs?
- Getting community to work together for a common cause
- Business in Clark so people don't go to work in Watertown.
- Miss the variety store.
- New businesses in city limits to increase the tax base.
- Worried that in 10 years, there will have no business. Aging clients
- Wish we had a variety store.
- How to get more people into town.
- Ditto.
- Industry that offers a living wage.
- Main Street Clark. Lots of businesses closing.
- More businesses in Clark to bring in more families.
- Community. Need to be more open to different types of businesses. Let them try.
- Need to change the way we do business. Need to work together.
- Jobs go to the big towns.
- Need to learn patience in getting a new business up and going.
- Can't get my kids back to Clark once they graduate from college. No jobs.
- Bring new jobs in, but how do we keep the money in town?
- Keep money being earned in Clark in Clark.
- Nothing zoned for new commercial on HWY 212.
- Brain drain. Lost two of our attorneys. Housing authority.
- We became complacent when McCain's was here. Didn't have a contingency plan.
- Exodus of our young human resources.
- Young farmers leaving.
- Difficulty finding farm labor.
- Ability for interested young people to get into the ag field or ag related venture unless they have inherited a farm.

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Issues and Challenges*

- People don't realize how much money is generated for this community through agriculture revenue.
- Agriculture costs don't match return on investment.
- Farming methods have changed. No more farm wives, seasonal help.
- Corporations/groups buying up lands have inflated land values.
- All of these things have caused our population to decrease.
- Conflict between keeping way of life that we like vs. growth. Growth will change way of life.
- Lack of people.
- Tough on young people to get in the ag business.
- Marketing of the community. Who's going to pay for it? Who's in charge of deciding how it will be marketed?
- Have to sell to city people the values of the farm/ag. Wrongly feel that farmers are getting things for free. Need to be educated.
- Hobby farmers don't understand what farmers are doing. (smell, etc.)
- State tax structure. Property owner bears most of the burden.
- Communication. All entities need to work at communicating better.
- No young farmers.
- Rural healthcare. McCains had many ag spouses employed for benefits. How can farmers pay for self-insurance?
- Industrial Development-lack of cooperation and the negative attitude regarding it
- Community always has to know what is going on, and if they don't, they look badly on the development group. Much of the information that is required has to be confidential and the community does not understand that. There is still some heated discussion on some issues
- Everything is difficult with more ideas and it is hard to work together with that
- Situation in the community that any of the groups deal with is top secret and development group is underfunded and put under immense pressure to have it done right away without the adequate funding. Development takes time to persuade industries and business to come here.
- Funding is a major problem within the economic development issue
- Negative thoughts and ideas within the community
- Retail recruitment
- Funding is an issue. A lot of the issues that come up are driven from lower economic status throughout the community. With everyone needing more money to cover their expenses, there is more of a pressure and people are impatient.
- Kids in the community cannot come back to the area, because there are no jobs here.
- We wish our kids to do better than we have and that pushes them out of the community because the better jobs are in the bigger cities. They go after our kids here because of the work ethic and lure them to the big cities
- Our town has slowly moved toward the older population - the population that likes the small quiet time and we need to bring it back to being more progressive. Get people in the town that have the vested interest.
- The lagoon system is a problem because we have to worry about who comes into town and if the sewer system can handle it.

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Issues and Challenges*

- People don't go after the information to settle the disputes and end up making up their own stories.
- We have to use the government to the fullest extent to do many of the projects.
- People don't want to hear what they should hear. There is not enough open-mindedness.
- We don't have the workforce as much as other communities
- The increasing land values in Clark County in 2004. It amounted to 38% out of my pocket in dollars because of the decision made by the county and the director of equalization. It took quite a bite.
- The farms are getting larger all the time and we don't have a new generation of farmers coming. Who is going to be operating the land in 10 or 20 years?
- The differences in rainfall for land within the county was never taken into account when they established land values for taxation.
- Need to retain youth in the community.
- Utilizing the people resources that they have. I think that we need to capitalize on utilizing this people to the fullest.
- Commissioners and Council, we need to address having a plan.
- As soon as you get elected to something, you can't wait to get off.. It isn't a term, it's a sentence.
- When you get on a board, everytime you turn around, someone is criticizing you. That hurts a lot.
- School financing is getting much more difficult. The state pays per pupil, if you lose 100 people, you lose a lot of money. And it ends up being put on the local property owner.
- This is not a challenge just for the community, but for seniors in general, to keep the 60+ dinner program is a great asset to the community. I wish more people would take advantage of it.
- Change is inevitable.
- Really like the senior dinner. We have home bound people. I don't know if we have meals on wheels or not, but if not, it is something that we need in the community.
- Having the 60+ dinners delivered that need it, and more people should participate in it.
- I felt so bad when we lost the variety store. I wish we could get some more stores in town.
- Ditto on the store. We could also use another good restaurant.
- We do need another restaurant on the other side of town.
- We do need a variety store badly
- I think the 60+ program would be more successful if we didn't have to call in at 8:30 in the morning, and if you call in, you have to pay anyway.
- I ditto that.
- We need handicap parking places in front of some of the businesses. Some of the businesses do not have that.
- I highly advocate the 60+ meals program and wish more people would participate.
- Need a variety store in town.
- We need people. Our school enrollment has gone down. Need to attract more farmers and people.
- Need more volunteers to deliver for 60+ meals.

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Issues and Challenges*

- All the people here have been dealing with this. Too many people leaving South Dakota and the small communities in the Midwest. We are doing the best to address this issue. Nowadays, you have to gross \$40,000 a year in order to make it.
- Trying to get industries to come in. That is a challenge. Need more industries to increase population, bring in families, and put kids in the school system.
- We need more control over the speeders that are going through town.
- We need to know what is going on instead of secrets.
- City council needs to be loyal to community businesses.
- The city of Clark does not have a long term plan to address the financing of projects for infrastructure or economic development.
- Little coordination of efforts between the good organizations that we have such as Lions, chamber, rotary, historical society all seem to do their own thing. This would be fine in larger community, but combined effort could accomplish a whole lot more.
- Coffee shop talk is degrading and unproductive. Outside realtors in other communities say we are our own worst enemy. The people that do it feed off each other. They criticize what others are doing, but they don't do anything themselves to help out.
- Gossip is disheartening for those trying to do something good for the town. Those that do it have the audience convinced they know all the facts when they don't.
- This town wants more people and jobs. But what you don't hear is that they want them to be white, anglosaxen, and preferably related to someone who grew up here. This community is divided on accepting newcomers when they don't fit the mold.
- You will hear complaints about the people being hired at Natures Deli, but in reality, what they are not saying is that they do not want the complexion of the community to change. People complain about the low wage people are being hired for.
- People don't recognize the benefits of mixed races here in Clark, or the fact that every business benefits from every worker out there. Ie.laundry services, liquor, groceries, etc.
- The scary thing for a community of this size is our elderly population and the changing demography. Many of the help in our local nursing facilities, however, is that many of the local workers are getting older too. And we are concerned about replacing some of these individuals.
- Sometimes it is hard to get help when you are able to attract an industry. We have to accept that, whether we like it or not, that we will be attracting individuals that are different than the current local population. We have to accept having a more diverse population.
- The sewer and water treatment plant. Eventually this is going to have to be updated. This is the only mechanical plant left in the state.
- We have 100 year old water lines in 2/3 of the community.
- The community is lacking housing starts. If it weren't for some brave individuals willing to take a risk, we would not have any new construction.
- The housing market shows over and over again that an inventory of houses is needed to attract more people. Additionally, the city council was not progressive enough to think this far ahead. They stumble over issues like land development and TIF districts which could help the community move forward. Instead, these develop into issues that divide the town.

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Issues and Challenges*

- You hear comments from people that say they want more jobs, but the community has not prepared itself with making necessary upgrades to housing and infrastructure.
- We have been unsuccessful working with neighboring schools to work together. These smaller communities need to face the economic fact that the tax payer should not have to pay for multi school systems.
- We are lacking retail stores.
- Employment for people. Frustrating thing. People available. Want them to find jobs in the community.
- Resistance to change or fear of the unknown for new ideas.
- Pulling together as a community. Get together to listen to facts instead of relying on rumors.
- Need employment for our people.
- Be more complimentary of things that we have accomplished instead of always criticizing what hasn't been done.
- Jobs.
- Employment.
- Could use a variety store.
- When new ideas are introduced, often "we've always done it this way" comes up. We have to take risks to make progress. Need to be open to new ideas.
- Grow new ideas.
- There has been 80 deaths in the county this year, not that many new births. Over last 5 years we have graduated 142 , now we have half than that.
- Need activities for young people. Need a place for them to go.
- Lagoon is a hindrance to economic development. We have an old mechanical system.
- Too easy to drive to Watertown and not patronize our businesses.
- Easy for a few to make a big difference in our local businesses. Look at Duckwall's.
- Local businesses have to set prices competitively.
- Quality, affordable housing.

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Strengths and Assets*

#### **Responses to the Question: What are the Major Strengths and Assets for the Community of Clark?**

- People. It is an older community but everybody knows everybody.
- Quality of the volunteers we do have, even though they are limited in numbers, I would consider that a strengths.
- Work ethic of people
- Good school system
- People.
- School system.
- DARE Program ongoing
- Meth coalition going on
- Officer also an EMT
- Do have a good health care system.
- Sense of community, top, if there is a need they are there
- Ditto to sense of community
- Teachers who live in the community, who know the kids and the community
- We are very fortunate to have the PA that we do and the clinic that we do.
- Healthcare system being quite progressive
- A few young people moving into town that people forget about
- Medi-van, volunteers go to other communities
- The way people care about one another in this town is outstanding.
- When I needed 12 volunteers I made 12 calls and had 12 volunteers. They were there to volunteer their time. Amazing
- County courthouse.
- Everybody knows everybody, but on the same token they don't know everybody. Older people that know everybody are leaving in one way or another.
- Outstanding law enforcement team here
- Tremendous work force that works out of town
- When they work out of town they do their business out of town.
- My wife works out of town but there is nothing comparable to the job around here.
- Clubs in town, other towns do not have the club participation like us.
- I know they work in Watertown but I am glad they go to school here.
- A major thoroughfare for the town, only 35 miles from the interstate
- It is a small town. Grew up in Southern California, small town
- Peaceful atmosphere, crime non existent. It is a very nice town, it is a "mayberryish" atmosphere. We had an auction to support a family and it is very gratifying to live in a town with that atmosphere
- If something happens to a family, everyone is willing to help out however they can.
- Everyone is more than willing to help
- I like the fact that someone drives by you and you can wave and you can know who they are. I know all about them and who they are. The teachers all know our kids. Big asset to know the people
- People are awesome. I can go to anyone to help and everyone is so willing to share and is more of a family atmosphere.

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Strengths and Assets*

- In small towns, the majority of people have history there. It is really nice when new folks come here and move in.
- It is really nice to have your kids settle here and keep the community growing.
- Clark is the county seat, it is a drawing point that helps keep things here.
- Hunting is an asset
- Friendliest farming community, exceptional school system, exceptional South Dakota kids. Friendly little town. Greatful to start a business here
- Medical facility, greatful to have a PA
- Auction for family benefit of living here, good people around.
- Friendliness, open community
- Basically have all of the basics a small town would want. Medical, Dental, Hardware Store, businesses that managed to stay in town great basics.
- Welcome. When we moved up here, everyone was so welcoming and still are. Everyone knows my name.
- School system
- Field house that has no maintainance, no fees, underutilized.
- The Welcome from the community and the school, With my children I feel comforted everyday with my kids here.
- People in community very friendly.
- Major highway that goes through town.
- Good eating places in town.
- Good school system
- Safe community
- Never any time that I didn't feel safe.
- Always someone moving around at night and they keep an eye on you with the law enforcement
- Wonderful law enforcement
- Location, hunting and fishing
- Hotels are good.
- Repeat business with the hunters
- Wonderful customers and are very supportive of your business
- Schools.
- School is wonderful. Dedicated staff. Keep up on current trends. Sunday's benefit shows strong support for families.
- Strong leaders in downtown businesses.
- Works together to help those in need.
- School facilities. Pretty town.
- Diverse talents and abilities of the people in the community. Untapped assets.
- Summer rec programs. Pool.
- Activities that school and community participate in together. Spooktacular. High school mentoring younger students.
- Pulling together when the chips are down. School, sports programs.
- Variety of churches in town.
- School facilities, baseball/softball programs for the summer.
- Support of all church denominations in their efforts.
- Well behaved students are a reflection of the community.

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Strengths and Assets*

- Churches, school. Many services for the elderly.
- Safe community. Great place to raise children.
- One of the best places to raise kids. We take care of each other.
- Fieldhouse.
- Community for the kids. Summer park program is great. Sell the programs. People care about everybody. Real connectivity in this town.
- Community support. Churches.
- Heavy FCCLA, 4-H involvement. Youth opportunities for sports, extracurricular, academic and church programs.
- Free fieldhouse for the community.
- Assisted living and nursing home.
- Business leaders volunteer for the CHARACTER COUNTS program.
- Medical clinics well staffed. Easily accessible.
- Medical facilities. Great safe place to raise kids.
- Strong 4-H program.
- People are willing to do more to help others.
- People are more accepting and welcoming to newcomers.
- People are not afraid to work here.
- Summer programs.
- Community support.
- Community spirit. Community togetherness.
- Tremendous support of youth programs. Public support.
- Endowments for scholarships, building facilities. People that remember Clark and do positive things.
- It's great that we're talking about opening a rec center
- We're all here to help each other
- If someone is down, we watch out for them
- The benefit auction this weekend raised over \$40,000
- Community works together
- We back each other up
- Small town atmosphere
- We're there for each other
- I agree we're still kind of a small town and there's always some one there to help
- Ditto
- Don't have to worry about crime
- School system is strong academically and athletically
- We all stand behind each other
- Don't have the problems a big town has
- I agree
- Basketball and football games are packed
- It showed a lot of support from our community at the auction
- When someone is down, we help out
- When we get the new buildings in, we'll support them
- Our community helps with sports, our community really volunteers to help because we couldn't afford it otherwise.

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Strengths and Assets*

- Small community and we offer medical, dental and other services. We are a mediocre size school, we have a lot to offer being a small town.
- Good hearted people.
- We have an updated airport
- Quality of life here that a lot of other places would just give anything for. We are an agricultural community, still do not lock doors, our wage scale isn't at the level that we would like it to be but the quality of life that we have here is better than some of the larger cities.
- One of the best schools of our size.
- Wintertime you can pull up to a business, leave your car running and go inside without worrying about locking it.
- The nonprofit group that owns the apartments is a good thing
- People are hardworking and caring and I wouldn't live anywhere else.
- Good streets, fire protection, police protection, airport. Good community.
- People of this community, you just can't beat anywhere.
- Work ethic great, great schools, churches. Everything people would want.
- Proximity of Watertown is actually a strength. As Watertown grows, hopefully Clark can grow with it.
- Great community. Lifestyle is hard to beat.
- We can walk down the street after dark and not worry about crime.
- Real asset in our church.
- Community. Biggest asset is that we are not Watertown. No crime here like there is there. People are courteous of each other.
- The respect the kids show. It shows a model upbringing.
- 30 miles from Watertown. Knowing so many other people, very good experience. Especially moving into town.
- Everybody cares about everybody else.
- The Halloween activity brought the community together. Shows them the way a community can be.
- Workforce and the people.
- Businesses
- We're working to get businesses in town
- We just completed a synopsis of what we've accomplished...Planning District ! cannot believe all of programs we've utilized...they think we've done a great job
- We've done more than people think we have
- Our development board is all volunteer and we're on a shoestring budget
- Some people think we can just snap our fingers and something can happen
- The day after Janklow gave us the plant, someone asked me the next morning why we hadn't gotten anyone in the plant yet...people have no idea how much is involved in economic development
- Our mayor is great...I have no idea why he does it...he started a new program to knock over old buildings...all people have to do is pay for the gravel to fill it in
- Our community can be xenophobic...we just want whites
- People won't admit it, but they don't want minorities here.
- We need to be accepting of minorities...
- The women move out quickly, there are a lot of bachelors

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Strengths and Assets*

- We've become something more than vanilla
- I built my life in this county, and I think it would be hard for economic dev. When there is a biased feeling
- Our people are hardworking, they are basically good people, we may just be misled at times
- The churches in town all have excellent facilities for the numbers they have. We have an active ministerial association. We support each others' churches...we work together well
- We work well with law enforcement and integrate well with different parts of the community
- The services we have to offer is broad...some towns don't even have a grocery store
- We need to appreciate all of the services we have, not take them for granted. We've found opportunities to care for elderly people and to offer them services
- Good library
- I want to find someone to buy a hardware store
- Amount of churches in town
- Little town has a lot to offer. Golf course, Swimming pool, fieldhouse.
- Good roads to Clark.
- Good people.
- People. When faced with problems, buckle down and do something about it.
- Great place to live.
- Small businesses. Honesty.
- Grandparents and parents here trying to make this happen.
- Ditto.
- Schools. Churches. Courthouse.
- A lot for growth, expansion.
- Clean town.
- Not like many dying towns.
- Pharmacy. New medical facility.
- Bowling Alley. Trying to keep hold of what we have.
- Ditto.
- Ditto.
- Safe.
- Great place to live. Lots to offer.
- School facilities. Nice.
- Excellent Economic Development group. Great transportation system.
- Really nice community to raise children and for the old. Something for all age groups. No matter what age you are.
- Hunting is a huge draw.
- Great place to raise a family. Lots of facilities for the elderly.
- Hunting is a big factor. Lots of young people who grew up here want to get back here. They see it as a great life.
- Can do a lot of things if we focus (wood floor at the gym)
- Flower shop girls
- People who support us financially through philanthropy. Those who grew up here.
- Affordable housing. People living in bigger towns want to raise kids in a smaller town.
- Very convenient. Well set up. Great infrastructure.
- School staff willing to work with families.
- Kids and leaders in 4H are very proud of their program.

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Strengths and Assets*

- Aggressive Chamber. Lots of volunteer hours.
- Potato Days.
- Service organizations. Active and support many things.
- Churches.
- People. Assets of the city that are taken for granted.
- People. Work ethic. Everybody works together.
- Assets.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generation farmers.
- Tree City USA. Emerald Ash boar could pose a significant problem to the trees in town. Projected: 3-5 years in Mpls. 40% of boulevard trees are ash trees.
- Great student/teacher ratio. Kids always have a place to go. Place for older adults to go.
- Very supportive of each other in times of need, sadness and happiness.
- Resourcefulness of the community.
- Parks.
- Quality of life.
- Clark has huge potential. Unfortunately, some people are resistant to change.
- Close to a couple of large cities.
- We should market our school more strongly.
- People are willing to invest in something tangible
- We are only 30 miles from the interstate. If we could have tapped into when the rail came through that would have been good.
- Expansion isn't a problem and pretty rich in natural resources.
- Good power source
- Cost of living is low.
- Great people working for the betterment of the community. People here do want to progress, people that want to work, good school system
- We have good people around
- City council and economic groups have been very aggressive. New curb and gutter and sewer and water.
- Readily available number of unemployed or underemployed people with good work ethic and service organizations. We do have industrial areas now that are readily available for new businesses.
- Individuals within the community who will rally up to help with the idea that will better the community as a whole.
- The town is aware that they have to be doing things. Loyalties have come to the business owners and developers and is a good boost of confidence for the business owners
- Volunteers throughout the community. No one gets paid in the economic development group and things still have been getting accomplished
- We have 8000 under or unemployed in the radius of a study done of surrounding communities and Clark
- Good relationship with GOED, Rural Development
- We are a small community. We have a lot of advantages that people in big cities don't. The fieldhouse, churches, schools, etc.
- The quality of life here is much better here than other towns (bigger and smaller towns). Great education system. Great place to raise a family.
- Good rural life. I have lived in the city and I don't want to be back there.

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Strengths and Assets*

- The quality of life here is something you should be able to sell. But there has to be an occupation here that people can support themselves in this quality of life.
- In the last few years, we have seen a lot of people that grew up here and left, and now they are coming back here to spend their last few days in life. Must be the air or something. Getting new air here everyday, especially last night.
- We try to do too much here in Clark, which is why our taxes are too high.
- As you drive around Clark, and you look around, there is much to be proud of here.
- The people are the greatest asset. People bind together in time of need.
- A good example of the quality of life is the recent benefit held here in town and the amount of money that was able to raise.
- Beautiful town and parks. Good restaurants.
- A lot of good people here. Good senior citizens.
- I can't see, and if I am at the corner downtown, someone will come along and help me across the street. Great to live in a small town.
- Got a medivan, ambulance, etc.
- Good churches here in Clark.
- We are lucky to have 2 assisted living facilities, which is very nice for people that don't have to go to the nursing homes.
- County seat.
- The people are friendly and healthy.
- Wonderful nursing program.
- We have a great airport here.
- Wonderful ambulance service. Medivan can't be beat. We have so many good things in Clark. Our 60+ program, which has been running since 1996. Been a great program, and being able to have meals brought to them.
- Getting a new clinic, which will be a wonderful thing. We are in good shape.
- Great golf course.
- Feel safe here. Don't feel like I am going to be robbed.
- Good grocery store, nursing home, and ambulance service.
- The ambulance service is very good and we have used it.
- Everything is good as far as I am concerned.
- Good fire department too. They are great.
- Good court house here. Wonderful grocery store. The whole town is full service. Gas stations, etc.
- We moved from a high density population area, and trust me, it doesn't get any better than Clark. Every week we have been here, it just keeps getting better and better.
- We have a wonderful school system. Had two daughters graduate from here. They left South Dakota, but never have they been denied a job because they have been ill equip for the jobs they have applied for. Wish they could apply those skills here.
- Churches
- New clinic. A lot of old buildings have been torn down to put it there. It already looks better there.
- Have nice apartment buildings here in Clark.
- They have been upgrading the sewer and the streets. The streets look nice.
- Ditto on the wonderful apartment buildings.
- Like the streets, sewers, and watermains (improvements).

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Strengths and Assets*

- We have a huge new fire hall. It is on the block where I live.
- Really good hunting here.
- We need more younger people involved in the committees. We need a young community, not a retirement town.
- Good and strong community organizations. However, age is factor and continue to be a challenge to keep people involved.
- A lot of people work hard on community projects.
- Great ambulance crew and physicians assistant. Great healthcare. Sioux Valley treats us very, very well. We make a big plus out of what we have. A hospital would be nice, but probably not practical for our town.
- We have established a good working relationship with the county. Governor Janklow started the SpruceUp program in South Dakota. We have cleaned up many sites through that program and in conjunction with the county. We have demolished substandard housing.
- We have a good variety of recreational activities and other amenities.
- We are a county seat, and that brings people to the community.
- We are friendly and accommodating. Numerous times I hear of people who travel through or visit here and they are amazed at the friendliness of the people.
- We show good. Pave streets and gutters. Cleaned up lots and buildings. We tore down unoccupied shacks with no remaining use value.
- We have activities organized and going on through the great work of volunteers. Though only handled by a few leaders in the community.
- We have a 80 acre fully developed industrial park. People do not recognize the value of this asset. Along with that, we have an economic development group that donate they time and energy to the effort at the risk of criticism.
- Dedicated teachers and administrators will to provide an excellent education.
- Accomplishments that we have made in last few years. Street curb & gutter, economic development parks, new concession stand in football field, new horse arena at fairgrounds, new housing, 2 new developments in progress.
- Summer activities program for youth. Healthcare. Assisted living center and nursing home. School. State Highway 212. Good people.
- People. Willing to help you with things.
- Ditto.
- School is a very good asset.
- Good existing businesses.
- Clark has about everything you need in a town. Pool. Municipal Golf course.
- Airport. A lot of people in this area are of Norwegian descent. That certainly is a strength.
- Like a small community.
- Rockwell values. Good people. That's why we moved back.
- Philanthropy. Gentlemen built the City Hall. College scholarships. Donation for new medical clinic. People that have once lived or still live in Clark care enough about their hometown to make a difference in our community. Many are anonymous donors. Do things that we don't even know about it.
- Loyalty and values. Fieldhouse is free. Not many have this.
- People.
- One of the best grocery stores. People are not patronizing it enough.
- The churches do an excellent job.

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Strengths and Assets*

- School facilities are in real good shape.

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Projects*

#### **Responses to the Question: What are Projects would you like to see Accomplished in Clark in the next 2, 5, 10, 15 or 20 years?**

- In the next two to five years, I would like to see a major competitive employer to the community, to attract jobs. With that I think that we would see expansion of all of these services, including health care, public safety
- Short term, we need to update our facilities, to better handle, once we do grow.
- We need more people here, there is no job that compares to the pay.
- Pay people a wage to get young working class people
- Property zoned a certain way
- No one in town knows what is going on.
- Two years, we have our school facilities full
- Five ten and twenty years, continue to grow. Continued growth with kids in the school
- Young youth in the community to have a place to go and be able to enjoy the evening and not get into so much trouble
- New clinic before two years with modern facilities
- Long term, keep the community growing
- We are so fortunate to have a very good health care delivery system
- We need a better integration with the ag economy, we sometimes overlook that
- I would like to see more jobs, good salary base. My husband has to retire in
- Proactive when it comes to drugs in town, get a K9 to help with the community
- See some decent industry that could employ some people, would be nice if the farmers could sell their products at it.
- Short term, all farm land that goes on sale gets bought out by the out of state farmers, do something to get something going, we need to do some cleaning house and do something now to get some of these people out of there that are stopping these things. We something going immediately to get good paying jobs in the community
- Small retail business, nothing fancy
- Agree with everything
- It would be nice to have a 911 center, to have another deputy, it all revolves around people.
- If this is a retirement community, maybe we should build on that, we have a nursing home, two facilities who take care of elderly people. They have many jobs, maybe we could expand on that to bring in more jobs.
- Clark is a small town, it is a larger small town than neighbors. We are able to slow down the spiral and maybe stop it. Economic base as an attraction in the short term. If we fail at that, the long term is not important
- Decent businesses in town to have benefits for people. Even based pay for the parents.
- Something that will pay good to keep the people here. More housing available.
- Agree with jobs and affordable housing
- New business and affordable housing, without it there is certainly not a tiem for the town to twenty year plan.
- Industry of some sort would be really wonderful, the support of what is already here is also an issue. The support is not there to sustain a business.

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Projects*

- “If you destroy the city it will pop up in the next couple of years. If you destroy the farm, you will have grass growing.”
- Change laws to make certain things happen. Maybe the rules and regulations need to be altered a little bit to help a daycare.
- We need businesses in town. People want houses, but need jobs to support the people that live in that house.
- We need something for younger kids to do here. There is nothing here to do right now for our kids to do. Nothing positive. We need something outside of school for our kids
- More businesses. Variety store. Something to keep people in town and not running to Watertown.
- Something to bring people back in to purchase
- Golf course addition. Nine holes, small really need to capitalize on is to keep people around more than an hour and a half for golfing
- We need to strengthen the relationship between the farming community and city community. We rely on each other so much we need to include everyone in the community.
- Business that will employ 300 people, fill our schools and get our average age out of the 70’s
- Change mentality to support local businesses.
- Decent places to live
- More single females in town.
- Engage young people to get involved in leadership roles.
- 18 hole golf course.
- A new business.
- Community support of businesses.
- Industry.
- More jobs, more housing.
- Consolidation with surrounding schools.
- New businesses.
- Business and Industry.
- Sell our community like Tea does on television.
- Agreed with everyone.
- Get the community to get involved to put together a theme to advertise us. Get people here.
- Industry so we can keep children, young families here.
- More jobs.
- Agreed with everyone.
- Need good, quality industry. Not just any industry.
- Keep our good infrastructure maintained. Road upkeep.
- Industry that will bring good wages, benefits to town. Main street businesses.
- Do a better job marketing our town. Put a brochure together.
- More businesses to build the tax base.
- A new track.
- Younger people involved in the leadership process.

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Projects*

- Grant writer who can find some dollars.
- Infrastructure. Curb and gutter. Roads.
- Market our school as important. Why would a student pick Clark over a neighboring school.
- Encourage more of the younger parents to get involved in community (4H), church youth activities.
- Quality industry.. Competitive wages.
- Don't wait for the big industry to come to town.
- I'd like to see a lot more businesses come in
- Tear down the old buildings and put up new
- Place for youth to go
- Clean up town
- Population increase
- Pool, businesses
- Look at elementary, classes are getting too small for two sections
- Movie theater is a good idea
- More businesses
- Movie theater
- More opportunities so people don't have to drive to Watertown
- Need more businesses, so we get more families
- Need more businesses
- Update park equipment, so it's safe
- Spooktacular is huge, we need more of it throughout the year
- We need descent jobs with good wages and benefits
- I agree with the theater and parks ideas
- Parks and movie theater
- Industrial park need work
- I'd like the industrial park to improve so I can have a job to move back to
- Too many people traveling to work in other towns
- The softball park need to be updated
- We need quality jobs so we can bring quality people here
- Tennis courts are cracked and have grass growing in them
- It would be nice to have a bakery again, even if it's not fulltime
- More stores so we don't have to go to Watertown to shop
- Fire and ambulance could be more involved
- Pushing feed lots and dairy farms
- Empty businesses occupied
- Filling the downtown businesses that we have, expanding the businesses that we have and making affordable housing.
- Something for the young people to do.
- Movie theater if the community could support it.
- Old pool, needs to be updated.
- Something to keep the kids busy.

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Projects*

- Attractions to keep people here and bring people in. Come up with some idea to make Clark a destination point. A reason to come here.
- Eye doctor to come to town a couple of days a week.
- Something for the youth to do at night.
- Improving our infrastructure, sewer, water, curb and gutter. Expensive but really looks good.
- Comprehensive city wide beautification process. We can control that
- It takes people to do all of these things, industrial or agricultural businesses. Bring good paying jobs.
- Everyone pull together to make the businesses work.
- Five or ten year program on the City level. Industry development. We have no lagoon system here. We need one to hold the growth.
- More cattle fed to take advantage of our ethanol plants.
- Make people more aware of how to start a small business and the financial steps toward that.
- Getting people to want to come to Clark. People are exiting the community because all of the stores in town are closed when they get off of work. We need to give families time to shop when they are not working.
- Wind power and transmission lines right here in Clark county.
- Economic Growth
- Possibility of new vinyl plant and it looks very good. Over \$800,000 committed by the community to get this here. We need everyone on the same page and we need help with this one.
- Support from our own community.
- Movie Theater
- Things which enhance the quality of life of the people here
- We have an excellent clinic, PA and have visiting doctors
- It would be nice to have an optometrist come a couple of days
- We need services to enhance the life of individuals here, to they keep their money here in town
- Attract families to our good schools, it would help our programs
- Street project done, so there is more curb and gutter in town. More housing
- We've had a problem with the elusive basketball championship
- I want Clark to be the surviving school...some just assume it will be us, but if you combine Henry and Florence, they are bigger than us.
- We need to be known for more in our schools than just sports, we need to be strong in academics, music
- I'd like to see Clark do some long-term planning...we'll need some sewage lagoons in the future, we can't just wait, we need to plan
- The county has done a lot of clean up in the country also
- The Rotary Club does a good job of keeping things cleaned up through their program
- We need to keep our town cleaned up
- No doubt about it our industrial park needs to be utilized...we have always needed land and buildings for it
- We need a place for people to live for housing if we are going to have jobs coming in

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Projects*

- We need to keep working to improve
- Attraction developed in Clark to make it a destination for travelers.
- Ditto.
- Marketing campaign for Clark similar to Tea.
- Develop a promotional plan for the community.
- Increase school attendance.
- Variety store that can make money.
- Harold Adams wrote Karl Wilcox mysteries are based in Clark.
- Attraction of some sort.
- New sewer system
- Variety store that would make a profit.
- Something that would define Clark. Like a Storybook Land, Corn Mitchell.
- More activities for kids. Keep them busy.
- Create more community activities like Spooktacular.
- More people means more businesses.
- Make the town more prosperous.
- City more involved in planning the housing. A 2, 5, 10 year plan.
- More job ops.
- Need more housing. A variety of prices, plans.
- Educating community on importance of spending dollars in the community. Educate the retailers, too. They have to earn the business.
- 2 years--Clinic finished.
- 5 year—address pool issues. Upkeep currently costs the city \$75K year.
- 10 year—sewer system.
- 20 year—new dump facility.
- Hunting is a big opportunity.
- Community coming together more. Going to City Council meetings instead of just talking amongst the circle of friends. Get comfortable voicing your opinion without fear of fallout.. Fear. Jealousy.
- Get the bank building on the highway decked out.
- Have community input on community ed programs. Ongoing community education. Leverage distance learning.
- Come up with more value added projects.
- More affordable housing. Right now, not many in the middle price wise.
- Value-added ag projects as a community or small group.
- No strategic housing plan.
- Need a strategic plan. City and county.
- Have a plan to maintain Tree City USA status.
- Need a plan.
- Bring entryways into Clark up-to-date.
- Spruce up Main Street. Give it a more cohesive look.
- Need something to bring into Clark. Young people & their families.
- Increase population to a point that we can sustain Main Street businesses.
- Counter resistance to change.

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Projects*

- The whole county is beneficial to Clark.
- Need to get more people involved in community groups.
- Where do we want the other two Clark County school systems in 10 years? Need to make a plan.
- Encourage talented people to sign up for leadership positions. Maybe not volunteering because of fear of retaliation for unpopular decisions.
- People. The one resource that we don't use enough.
- Rebuilding of our infrastructure, revamping and updating it to be able to hold a large industry.
- Expand residential housing, if we get that increased we can handle more development.
- Variety store to come to our community. Something for our youth to do.
- Continued economic development. Infrastructure updates.
- How we can go about bringing in or back those businesses that we need including a bakery, a variety store.
- Getting money available to invest in the businesses. Once we get those projects done, the number of dollars available to the community will come with that.
- Breaking ground for the vinyl plant in December
- We need industry before many of the things can happen. The growth will happen and it will take time. Kids don't happen overnight and it may be quite difficult to get the families with children here, they may already be established.
- We need to put blacktop in the industrial park. Estimated cost is around \$350,000.
- Educational project. The community needs to know that they have stabilized over the last couple of months. Everything takes time and we will not realize the effects of everything we are doing until five, ten years down the road. People need to realize that things have been done around here.
- The plant is filled, industrial park is in and we have done it in the last five years.
- Plan for the future.
- Would like to see more industry here in Clark. It would help the rural areas as well. Many farmers work part time in town, and part time on the farm. Or full time in town, and also on the farm.
- It now requires a mom and dad to work outside the home. It would be nice if that would change. Need more industrial jobs to bring some of the youth back.
- We need a plan for the City Council and County Commissioners. It is difficult to plan 5 or 10 years out. We haven't had a plan, but we haven't put it into motion. We need to start somewhere and continue with it.
- A plan for the city and county as a whole is necessary. Maybe we are behind the boat because no one really has a plan over the next 10 years. We should learn how we do this. We need something to start with. This process is the start of it. In the end, we will have those plans.
- We do need some long term planning.
- We have land going to places where it will never be on the market again. We need to address this tax thing. If the land is going for three times what it should normally go for, then they should be taxed that way.
- We need a dollar store.
- Need a variety store.

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Projects*

- Ditto on the variety store.
- Need more younger volunteers to help deliver the meals.
- Something to keep more of the younger people here.
- Need someone to do economic development locally.
- Just need more employment.
- I don't have any wants.
- A dollar store or a variety store.
- Nothing to add. Good community. Great town.
- Need a variety store. Can't even buy yarn here in town.
- Need more industry. Need to get something to come in and employ more people locally. Attract people to come.
- Need more business and industry, not that I am looking for a job.
- Dollar store.
- Ditto to everything.
- Need more young people coming in.
- We need some handicap parking places.
- Need a variety store here in Clark. We can't get out of town like we used to.
- Need a clothing and variety store.
- Definitely need the variety store.
- All these new buildings in the planning phase. Would like to see that finished.
- Need to get the pebble beach road improved. It's too narrow.
- Would like to see the city have a 5 to 10 year plan to address capital needs, finances, infrastructure that will alleviate the present financial delimita.
- Would like to see the city take risks in developing the community and stricter enforcement of zoning regulations.
- Would like to the non profit economic develop group separate from the city whose efforts could be funded locally.
- Expansion of our retail district. Encourage small business ownership and shopping at home.
- Develop a tourist attract because of the low population. Something that will make clark a destination that can be enjoyed for several months. This in itself would support local businesses. We need to find s niche to bring young people in.
- Would like to see some housing development competitive with Watertown, that would make it affordable for people to live here and commute to Watertown.
- An area for modular homes. Clark has zoning laws that prohibit such structures in housing areas but fails to provide a place for such dwellings elsewhere.
- One of the problems in small towns is recruiting good teachers, especially in the hard sciences. What if the school rehabbed one of the empty houses and offered free housing to new recruiting and look for them in retired military and other professions. The retiree could have free housing and the chance for choice hunting, fishing, and golf. Also the opportunity to savor life in a small town in the Midwest.
- Need to implement a reading program as part of the summer rec program. Good reading skills are the key to academic performance.
- Industrial park become a showplace.
- Get the housing projects done.

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Projects*

- Strategic planning by the city and county.
- Industrial park. In 5 years, 5 new businesses with 20 employees each.
- School and community look at nutrition and wellness be a priority. Address childhood obesity.
- Plan in place to go forward for the community.
- Plan for main street to grow in next few years.
- Plan for the pool.
- Variety store.
- Bakery.
- Would like to see the curb and gutter extended to the entire community. And the water system upgrades (including streets at the same time).
- Industry to support people. Keep young people in town.
- No vacant building on main street.
- Businesses would be good.
- No vacant buildings. New families. Swimming pool. Keep spending more money rather than addressing the problem.
- Curb and gutter completed. High school—open enroll into Clark instead of open enroll out of Clark. Make the school become a magnet. Two dentists in Clark are one of our town's biggest draws.
- Grow 4 more inches taller and grow some hair on the top of my head.
- Industrial park employ people from town and pay good wages plus benefits.
- Keep working as group to grow.
- Pool. Put a water park there. Create more activities for kids to do.
- Create something that will bring people to Clark, even from Watertown.
- Skateboarding park.
- Kids not prepared for college in math and science areas. Is anybody keeping track of students once they graduate from high school—are they being successful or dropping out?
- Something other than a bar for activities. Family activities. Get young people involved at the bowling alley.
- Increase the patronage of local businesses here in Clark.
- Federal jobs. Be nice if these employees who work in Clark would live in Clark.
- Need a new restaurant or supper club.