



Resource Team Report De Smet, South Dakota

February 6-8, 2006

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.



The program is also made possible through financial contributions made by the State of South Dakota (Governors Office of Economic Development), USDA Rural Development, and the South Dakota Community Foundation.

At the local level, this process would not be possible without the many hours of volunteer service from your local planning taskforce, the De Smet Economic Development Corporation, and City of De Smet.



Special recognition to South Dakota’s Elected Officials including Governor Mike Rounds, Senator Tim Johnson, Senator John Thune, and Representative Stephanie Herseth for their continuing support for the South Dakota Rural Development Council. Also, special thanks to the Council’s Board of Directors for initiating this program in South Dakota



South Dakota
Community Foundation

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

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February 6-8, 2006

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Executive Summary

The community of De Smet has the motto of “Little Town on the Prairie.” After a short visit I want to recommend a new slogan, “Model Little Town on the Prairie.”

Being in economic development I take the opportunity to visit rural communities whenever I get a chance. The purpose of the visits is basically to beg, borrow or steal ideas I see working in other communities and see if they can be implemented into my own community. Some of the things I look at are overall appearance, business diversity, marketing and, what I rate as being the most important, attitude of citizens toward their community. De Smet certainly raised the bar for what I would consider an impressive community.

I would put you against any community in the state when it comes to cooperation among citizens. Time and time again, I heard people say one of the strengths of De Smet is that everyone gets along and they work together to improve the future of the town. With a progressive, “can do” attitude that already exists, the possibilities for your community are endless!

I’ve been involved in the assessment process for awhile and I have to say this report was the most difficult to put together. My team members and I all struggled to put ideas and suggestions together that your community wasn’t already doing. Usually a community will have some prominent problem that needs to be addressed, but De Smet does so many things well that it became a challenge.

Our team saw so many things in De Smet that other communities would love to have. The vibrant Main Street, extensive manufacturing businesses, active churches and civic organizations, local medical services, and a nice, neat appearance were a few of the physical things we saw. As the assessment process continued, we were enlightened as to what exactly makes De Smet the community it is. We met dedicated volunteers, forward thinking community leaders and open minded, progressive thinking citizens. We also heard that status quo isn’t good enough. That’s where the report comes in.

De Smet has basically all the tools needed to assure a vibrant and successful future. This report will give your community some ideas as to where to look for outside assistance as you decide to move forward. But the core responsibilities for developing the ideas and making sure things move forward resides at the local level.

The recommendations in this report cover a broad range of issues, from daycares to value added ag. Many of the projects are large and will take years to complete. However, there are many recommendations that are smaller and can be achieved relatively easily. These ideas provide a place to start and a contact person to get the wheels rolling.

Setting priorities for De Smet is the first step. Participation in the upcoming priority-setting meeting is vital. The efforts must reflect your entire community and that requires

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.

The South Dakota Rural Development Council is a great resource and Shawn Pritchett, the executive director, is willing to help in any way they can. Please feel free to call upon any of the resource team members for additional advice as you move forward with your efforts.

On behalf of the Resource Team, I want to personally thank your community for the hospitality extended to us during our stay. We simply could not have felt more welcomed nor been more impressed.

Sincerely,

Karen Burket
Resource Team Leader

Introductions by Resource Team Members

Patricia Boyd (South Dakotans for the Arts): The people of De Smet are justifiably proud of it, and I am delighted to have been a part of this community resource team. De Smet has so much to recommend it, both as a place to live and as a place to visit. The natural beauty of the area combined with all the best aspects of a quintessential prairie town are really only the setting for the stories of the wonderful people who have built this fine community. You have managed to create a modern economy, with growing industry, technology and innovative agriculture while making it very possible for tourists to imagine themselves back in the Laura days. Although De Smet faces challenges all too common across the state -- in its economy, uneven age distribution, opportunities for young families – it also enjoys many advantages others just do not have. You will find that our recommendations involve making the most of what you have, rather than having to invent something new. Thank you for inviting us and for sharing your concerns and aspirations for De Smet. I know that I speak for many of your visitors when I say I was reluctant to leave.

Ted Haeder (First District Association of Local Governments): Two geographic aspects are associated with every place: physical geography and cultural geography. They function as separate environmental influences that have equal impacts on the vitality of a community. De Smet has a history of maximizing the geographic advantages provided by the area and, more importantly, by the people.

Physical geography cannot be readily altered as it involves things like location, climate, flood plains and landforms. De Smet is where it is and those choosing to live here must adapt to their surroundings in order to flourish.

Cultural geography is generally classified as the effect of man on the environment. Anything we move, build or plant changes our surroundings in some way, shape or form. Well-planned and developed changes will have a positive impact on the community.

By building on past successes and future opportunities De Smet will continue to be a prosperous community for generations to come.

Most of my recommendations can be addressed with the assistance of First District Association of Local Governments. De Smet is a dues paying member of First District and is entitled to project development and grant writing assistance at no additional fee. We have many years of experience in the field of public development and can often provide technical and funding assistance sources that may otherwise be overlooked.

Thanks to everyone in De Smet for making the Community Assessment a success.

Susan Overgaard (Centerville Housing Commission and Centerville Area Foundation): Let me first say that the community of De Smet is an inspiration to the rest of South Dakota's small communities! You have so many strengths, in addition to your

friendly, positive attitudes. You have an enviable quality of life and tremendous community pride! It was totally enjoyable to hear each individual in each of the various sessions reiterate the same positive comments regarding your strong main street, exceptional development park and industry and a very competent area health care system. There is a cohesiveness and cooperation in De Smet that many communities, large and small would love to emulate. I am thankful for the opportunity to be a part of the De Smet assessment, and thank you for the hospitality extended to our team!

Jean Rogers (US Small Business Administration): It felt great to get back to my roots again during our time in De Smet. Being from Clark and spending a great deal of my teenage “free” time in De Smet, I found myself feeling a bit of pride as your community came together to talk, listen and share your great love for De Smet and its people. As our assessment team talked during breaks in our 2 ½ days there, we found ourselves pondering what we were going to help you all with – you are such a proactive community and have done so much to assure that De Smet continues to grow and thrive. I hope that you all found this assessment process to be as satisfying as I did. Thank you so much for all the efforts each of you put into making each session a success and making sure that we were all where we should be when we should be, and oh yes, we were well fed!!!

Linda Salmonson (East River Electric): Thank you for the opportunity to serve on the De Smet Assessment Team. You have a great community and much to be proud of. One contrast I saw in De Smet, when compared to other communities, is your proactive attention to planning for the future, not waiting until decline or catastrophe causes you to take action. This is commendable and, I believe, possibly the key reason you have such a vibrant place to live and work. Keep up the good work.

Process for the Development of This Report

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

The City of De Smet, in cooperation with the De Smet Development Corporation, coordinated the community assessment locally with financial support provided through a grant from the South Dakota Community Foundation. Eileen Wolkow served as the community planning leader and, 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 200 individuals during the three-day period from February 6-8, 2006. The team interviewed representatives for the following segments of the De Smet community: Young Families, Newcomers, Child Care Providers, Chamber members, Civic organizations, Churches, Youth, Tourism Committee, City Council, Agri-Business and Farmers, EMS Services, Firemen, Health Care, Seniors, Teachers and School Administration, 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 asked were:

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

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 the programs and resources, prepare their notes and suggestions, and then forward these items to be combined into SDRDC's final report to De Smet.

An oral report was presented to the residents of De Smet on February 8, 2006. Following the oral report, a formal written report was prepared and presented to the community of De Smet. A community follow-up and prioritization meeting will be held in De Smet after this report is distributed and made available to the community at large.

Resource Team Members
De Smet, South Dakota
February 6-8, 2006

Resource Team Members

Karen Burket, Team Leader

Executive Director
Platte Development Corporation
PO Box 283
500 S. Main Street
Platte, SD 57369-0393
Home Office: 605-337-2895
Cell: 207-0126
Fax: 605-337-3988
mkb@midstatesd.net

Patricia Boyd

Executive Director
South Dakotans for the Arts
PO Box 414
302 West Main Street, 2nd floor
Lead, SD 57754
605-722-1467
patsoda@rushmore.com

Ted Haeder

1st District Association of Local
Governments
124 1st Avenue NW
PO Box 1207
Watertown, SD 57201
605-882-5115
Fax: 605-882-5049
ted@1stdistrict.org

Susan Overgaard

Chairman, Centerville Area Foundation
Housing Redevelopment Foundation
PO Box 339
Centerville, SD 57014
605-563-2207
susano@firstmidwestbank.com

Jean Rogers

US Small Business Administration
2329 North Career Avenue, Ste. 105
Sioux Falls, SD 57107
605-330-4243 Ext. 44
Jean.Rogers@sba.gov

Linda Salmonson

Economic Development Manager
East River Electric Cooperative
PO Box 227
Madison, SD 57042
Direct: 605-256-8015
Fax: 605-256-8057
lsalmonson@eastriver.coop

Community Contact:

Eileen Wolkow

Finance Officer
City of De Smet
605-854-3731
hlmlib@iw.net

De Smet Community Assessment Agenda

February 6-8, 2006

Monday, 2/6/06

TIME	TITLE
4:30 pm – 6:00 pm	Resource Team Meets
6:00 pm – 7:00 pm	Listening Session: Young Families / Newcomers/ Child Care Providers
7:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Listening Session: Retail Business & Chamber
8:00 pm – 9:00 pm	Listening Session: Civic Organizations

Tuesday, 2/7/06

TIME	TITLE
7:00 am – 8:00 am	Listening Session: Development Corporation
9:00 am – 10:00 am	Listening Session: Churches
10:00 am – 11:00 am	Listening Session: Tourism
11:30 am – 12:30 pm	Listening Session: City/County/School Government
1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	Listening Session: Agri-Business & Industry
2:00 pm – 3:00 pm	Listening Session: Agriculture
3:00 pm – 5:00 pm	Community Tour
6:30 pm – 7:30 pm	Listening Session: Emergency Services & Healthcare

Wednesday, 2/8/06

TIME	TITLE
7:30 am – 8:30 am	Listening Session: Teachers/Administration
8:30 am – 9:30 am	Listening Session: Youth/Students
11:00 am – 12:00 pm	Listening Session: General Open Session
1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	Listening Session: Senior Citizens
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

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 30th 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 De Smet, 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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Major Theme / Sub Theme	Page Number
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CITY/COMMUNITY PROJECTS

SUB THEME: Main Street / Curb Appeal

Challenge: Designing, funding and reconstruction of downtown infrastructure

Recommendation: The downtown project will have a significant positive impact on De Smet if everything is planned and executed diligently. Downtown businesses will experience a drop in sales during construction but these impacts will be greatly offset by the long-term benefits of improved access and aesthetic values resulting from the project. Planning and development of the project should be given priority at this stage.

A planning committee should be developed immediately to further develop and define what is to be included in the downtown renovation project. The committee should include members of the downtown businesses, city officials, economic development board and concerned citizens. Keep in mind that all of De Smet will be impacted and input should be garnered from as many sources as possible.

Infrastructure (sewer, water, roads, etc...) must meet given standards and will not be altered to a significant degree by public input. Aesthetic improvements (sidewalks, lighting, street signage, awnings, facades, etc...) leading to increased visitor traffic should be the focus of the planning committee. Creating a unique and attractive downtown will lead to increased revenues for those businesses and, in turn, generate increased tax revenues for the city.

Decorative sidewalks, lighting and signs are options that can be included in the project to give the area a distinct look and feel. Stamped and/or colored concrete can provide the look of brick, tile, stone or many other materials instead of a standard sidewalk. Streetlights ranging from historic to modern designs can also be used to create a memorable downtown atmosphere. Street signs can also be specially designed to add a decorative touch to the downtown area.

Aesthetic alterations to storefronts should be decided upon by downtown business owners and be uniform in development. Design standards for aesthetic improvements should be developed that will allow for creative freedom while maintaining a consistent look and feel to the area as a whole.

During the late 1980's and the George Mickelson administration, the State of South Dakota participated in a program known as the Main Street Program. Cities such as Sioux Falls created their own Main Street organizations and the rebirth of the downtowns was launched. This state sponsored group contracted with a Sioux Falls architectural firm, then called Baldrige & Associates, to create small, but effective design solutions to recreate the historic appeal of the participating communities. This company has since changed its name, but may yet provide the sketches and theme work you are looking for with your Main Street Renovation.

CITY / COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Main Street / Curb Appeal

It would be very helpful for your group to coordinate with your Tourism/Chamber group to create theme signage and destination signage to promote your historic attractions. Small kiosks with historical updates would create interest in the theme you wish to design.

The National Main Street Center's technical services 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 and small town programs.

The State Historical Society also manages the Rehabilitation Tax credit program. This 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 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 in dealing with issues of historic preservation. Preserve South Dakota provides technical assistance services, in addition to various financial assistance programs such as Historic Preservation Revolving Loan Fund and the Façade Easement Program.

The community of Brookings also has a program that focuses on just Main Street. The contact is listed below. Ms. Roden may be of assistance in providing ideas to get your community started and has talked with other communities about her organization's activities and structure, how they got started, and how they fund their activities.

Another community that has made significant progress in Main Street development centered around tourism is Hill City. I would highly recommend that you also talk with Mike Verchio about how they were able to develop a grassroots plan involving their entire community to slowly redesign their Main Street around a central historic theme.

Resources:

Baldrige&Nelson Architects and Engineers
111 S. Main Avenue
Sioux Falls, SD 57104

Main Street Sioux Falls
122 South Phillips Avenue
Sioux Falls, SD 57104
(605) 338-4009

CITY / COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Main Street / Curb Appeal

Resources (Continued):

First District
124 1st Ave NW
PO Box 1207
Watertown, SD 57201-6207
(605)882-5115
www.1stdistrict.org

South Dakota State Historical Society
900 Governor's Drive
Pierre, SD 57501
605-773-3458

Preserve South Dakota
Assistance with preservation of structures and low interest loans
PO Box 113
105 S. Pierre St.
Pierre, SD 57501
605-945-0409

Doris Roden
Downtown Brookings, Inc.
308 Fourth Street
Brookings, SD 57006
605-692-1554

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

Mike Verchio
Executive Director
Hill City -- Heart of the Hills Economic Corporation
PO Box 253
Hill City, SD 57745-0253
605-574-2368
hcacoc@hills.net

CITY / COMMUNITY PROJECTS
Signage-Rotation and Coordination / EMS Building

SUB THEME: Signage-Rotation and Coordination

Challenge: Keeping the signage in and around De Smet up to date

Recommendation: A locally established group should make an annual review of signage in and around De Smet and present the results to the city council. Signs that are deemed to be in need of repair or replacement should be fixed, replaced or removed.

Keeping signage maintained and attractive may seem like a trivial expense but the investment goes beyond merely replacing a worn placard. Visitors are more likely to return to a community that presents itself as a clean, well-kept place. Attractive signage is an important part of the overall look and feel of De Smet.

Resources:

First District
124 1st Ave NW
PO Box 1207
Watertown, SD 57201-6207
(605)882-5115
www.1stdistrict.org

SUB THEME: EMS Building

Challenge: Construction of a new EMS Building

Recommendation: Fire halls are one of the most common community building projects across South Dakota and are regularly funded, in part, by grant funds. The existing fire hall is an aging building that no longer suits the current needs of the fire department and should be replaced.

The city currently owns property that would be suitable for the construction of a new fire hall. A couple of drawbacks are associated with the property owned by the city: It is on the north side of the railroad tracks and could also be a desirable commercial or housing development location. The site may prove more valuable to the project if it is sold and the monies received from the sale are committed to site acquisition and construction.

CITY / COMMUNITY PROJECTS

EMS Building

Keep in mind when determining a new fire hall location that De Smet is not a large community and response times will not suffer significantly from a seemingly distant site. As long as the building is situated so as to allow practical and timely access to the highway and there is an adequate amount of parking for the firefighters, most any location should be suitable.

The railroad issue must be addressed as well. There will be times when trains create barriers within the community. This situation cannot be avoided entirely and must be mitigated through emergency response planning. Accessing the fire hall and moving equipment from the fire hall to an incident location are key issues in emergency response.

USDA- Rural Development has a Direct and Guaranteed Community Facilities loan program that can be used to finance construction, enlargement, or improvement of a community facility for health care, public safety and public services. Fire halls and EMS buildings fall into this category. Eligible entities include public bodies and nonprofit corporations. Under the direct loan program, USDA can extend the terms to a maximum of 40 years with an interest presently at 4.5% (can change each quarter).

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program is administered by the State of South Dakota specifically in the Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED). Generally, this program likes to see projects over \$100,000 and will participate with approximately 50% match of construction costs. Engineering and contingencies are generally not CDBG eligible.

There are a number of financial resources for fire halls available by contacting First District. The REED Fund, available through Kingsbury Electric Cooperative, can also participate in financing community facilities, up to 50% of the cost of the project, with the first \$100,000 at 3% interest and any remaining funds at the regular rate based on risk, but not likely to exceed 6.5%.

Resources:

First District
124 1st Ave NW
PO Box 1207
Watertown, SD 57201-6207
(605)882-5115
www.1stdistrict.org

REED Fund
Dennis Kruse
Kingsbury Electric Cooperative
De Smet, SD 57231 605.854.3522

CITY / COMMUNITY PROJECTS
Walking Trail

Resources (Continued):

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
Governor's Office of Economic Development
Steve Harding
711 E. Wells Ave.
Pierre, SD 57501
605-773-5032

USDA Rural Development
810 Jenson Avenue, SE, Suite 2
Watertown, SD 57201-5256
605-886-8202
darlene.bresson@sd.usda.gov

SUB THEME: Walking Trail

Challenge: Creating a new walking trail in De Smet

Recommendation: Walking trails are considered to be an important part of the transportation system and can receive up to 80% grant funding to construct a new trail. Projects must be designed, engineered and routed with matching funds in place before an application can be submitted. A local government body such as a city or a county must sponsor applications.

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) administered by the Game, Fish and Parks Department provides 80 percent reimbursement for projects such as new trails, rehabilitation of existing trails, developing trail related facilities and educational programs. The program only has about \$200,000 available and is highly competitive and likes to fund smaller scale projects.

The South Dakota Department of Transportation also has a program for trail projects called the Transportation Enhancement Grant. This program provides 81.95% reimbursement for projects such as recreational trails, landscaping, historic preservation, and establishment of transportation museums.

One of the major issues associated with construction a walking trail is the acquisition of right-of-way either from private landowners or a government entity. Right-of-way agreements are not required to submit grant applications but must be in place before trail construction can begin.

CITY / COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Infrastructure

Resources:

First District
124 1st Ave NW
PO Box 1207
Watertown, SD 57201-6207
(605)882-5115
www.1stdistrict.org

Department of Game, Fish and Parks
Trails Program Specialist, Scott Carbonneau
523 E. Capitol
Pierre, SD 57501
605-773-3391
Scott.Carbonneau@state.sd.us

Department of Transportation, Office of Local Government Assistance
Paula Huizenga
700 East Broadway
Pierre, SD 57501
605-773-4831
Paula.Huizenga@state.sd.us

SUB THEME: Infrastructure (Sidewalks, Curb& Gutter, Sewer & Water, Crosswalks, Roads)
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Challenge: Maintaining and expanding infrastructure

Recommendation: Infrastructure projects are a function of city government and must meet the many restrictions set forth in state law. Taxpayer dollars fund infrastructure projects and it is the duty of those taxpayers to keep informed on the goings on of city government and to provide input during the planning phase of a project.

Public input should be given directly to the city council during regularly scheduled meetings but there should be other sources of input available as many people are not comfortable addressing an audience. Input should be encouraged through email, letters and other appropriate sources.

The City should also make an effort to publicize major projects outside the confines of the legal notices section of the newspaper. Though all necessary information is published in the legal notices, most people either don't read those notices or don't receive the newspaper. Publishing articles in the paper and providing information through a city website are two methods that can be used to disseminate information.

CITY / COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Infrastructure

A list of infrastructure improvements should be developed and regularly reviewed. That list should be prioritized and implemented in the most cost-effective method available. Making those projects known to the population of De Smet should also be given a priority.

In order to complete certain projects, utility rates or property taxes may need to be increased. If this is the case, every effort should be made to inform of those impending increases and the benefits of the project to the community. Doing so should keep rumblings about the city council at a bare minimum.

Planning and construction costs associated with infrastructure projects are often grant eligible and those funds should always be considered when planning and developing a project. The following is a list of available resources that De Smet may consider using to replace water and sewer lines:

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.

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.

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.

CITY / COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Infrastructure

- 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.
- 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,

CITY / COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Infrastructure

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 Economic Development 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.

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.

CITY / COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Infrastructure

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

USDA Rural Development/Rural Utility Service

810 Jensen Ave, Suite 2

Watertown, SD 57201

(605) 886-8202

CITY / COMMUNITY PROJECTS
Railroad Track Safety

Resources (continued):

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 12th Street
Sioux Falls, SD 57106-0379

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

SUB THEME: Railroad Track Safety

Challenge: Safety at crossings and emergency response issues

Recommendation: The DM&E railroad will likely be expanding soon and this will result in increased rail traffic through De Smet. Trains currently limit access to certain parts of town when they block crossings. This cannot be avoided and must be addressed.

DM&E officials should be contacted to make plans to move trains when emergency responders must cross blocked tracks. Emergency responders should also have plans in place for alternative routes when crossings are blocked.

Communications regarding this issue should take place between emergency responders, city government and the DM&E.

CITY / COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Swimming Pool

Resources:

First District
124 1st Ave NW
PO Box 1207
Watertown, SD 57201-6207
(605)882-5115
www.1stdistrict.org

SUB THEME: Swimming Pool

Challenge: Renovating or replacing the existing bathhouse

Recommendation: The Department of Game, Fish & Parks has grant funds for projects like the new bathhouse that are available in odd numbered years. The Land and Water Conservation Fund makes grants to local governments for recreational projects in amounts up to \$50,000. A dollar for dollar match is required to receive these funds.

Other ideas for funding pool projects are to conduct fundraising campaigns, solicit volunteer labor, raise pool rates, and ask the City to budget a certain amount of finances every year specifically for the pool in a Capital Improvement Plan.

Plans and estimates should be prepared before submitting a grant application. Planning District I can be of assistance in filling out grant applications, environmental analysis and research.

The Department of Tourism and State Development may have a list of communities that have raised funds for a pool or pool restoration as a part of their Community Achievement Awards. This may be a source that would give ideas for how to accomplish pool renovations.

Resources:

First District
124 1st Ave NW
PO Box 1207
Watertown, SD 57201-6207
(605)882-5115
www.1stdistrict.org

CITY / COMMUNITY PROJECTS
Community Center

Resources (Continued):

Department of Game, Fish and Parks
John Simpson
Foss Building
523 East Capitol
Pierre, SD 57501
605-773-5490
John.Simpson@state.sd.us

Governor's Office of Economic Development
Ann Gesick-Johnson, Community Achievement Awards Contact
711 E. Wells Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501
605-367-5340

SUB THEME: Community Center
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Challenge: A number of people commented on the necessity of a community center. This can often be a controversial issue for communities. One of the most important things a center can create is a place for people to come together as a community. However, community centers often have to be subsidized by the City they are in, thus causing more of a strain on taxpayers.

Recommendation: Communities solve the community center issue in a number of creative ways. The absolute most important thing to do is to start a dialogue with community members as to what is needed and what vision they have for a community center. It may be a place that is all inclusive of the community wishes of a wellness center, youth center and/or senior citizen center. Even though this is a large project, I have no doubt De Smet can accomplish it.

Several communities have constructed or developed community centers in various forms. I will provide additional information on some of these communities later. Use these as a resource in your own planning if you decide to explore a community center in De Smet. Some of the best ways to get ideas for a facility involve getting a group of people together and driving to tour other community centers. Find out what works and what doesn't work before you move ahead.

Another option implemented in other communities is the development of community centers as part of a school facility. This allows shared use of this facility between the community and the school, allowing for greater flexibility and maximized utilization. This can cause some complications in scheduling, but it can work to the benefit of all involved.

CITY / COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Community Center

Examples of Community Centers in other communities:

Platte – Received a CDBG grant to help finance the reconstruction of their downtown community center several years back. The center is a multi-use facility consisting of a large and small meeting space, large kitchen, wellness center, and city offices.

Alexandria - Recently completed a community center by raising \$600,000 towards the center's construction. The community center was integrated with the school facility, with the local school district absorbing a portion of the construction costs through their capital outlay.

Parker – Developed a Multi-generational center by converting an existing structure in the community for this purpose. This center combines youth and senior related services to provide a full range of benefits to the community.

Financing Options:

- (1) USDA Rural Development Guaranteed & Direct Community Facility Loan program. These funds can be used to construct, enlarge, or improve community facilities for health care, public safety and public services. Examples include public schools, wellness centers, fire and rescue buildings, library, and community centers. Eligible entities include public bodies or non profit corporations. With the direct loan program, USDA can extend the terms to a maximum of 40 years with an interest rate around 5%. The guaranteed loan program uses local lenders to help build a facility with a guarantee from USDA.
- (2) Community Development Block Grants might be an option depending on the income eligibility of your community.
- (3) Technology Centers: If you are looking to integrate a technology component into the community center, there are a couple of financial resources available. The US Department of Education provides grants for the development of Community Technology Centers (CTC's). CTC's must be developed in cooperation between a community based organization and a local education institution (such as a high school). In 2004, the Department of Education awarded 30 to 40 grants nationally through this program with the average grants expected to be around \$250,000. The other financial resource I want to reference is the Beaumont Foundation of America. The Beaumont Foundation provides grant assistance for securing technology and servicing technology centers for low-income residents.

Resources:

Financial Resources

USDA Rural Development
810 Jenson Avenue, SE, Suite 2
Watertown, SD 57201-5256
605-886-8202
darlene.bresson@sd.usda.gov

CITY / COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Community Center

Resources (Continued):

Community Development Block Grant
Steve Harding
Governor's Office of Economic Development – GOED
Department of Tourism and State Development
711 E. Wells Ave.
Pierre, SD 57501
605-773-5032
goedinfo@state.sd.us
www.sdgreatprofits.com

US Department of Education
Karen Holliday
OVAE, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-7110
202-245-7708
Karen.Holliday@ed.gov
<http://www.ed.gov/programs/comtechcenters/index.html> or
<http://www.ed.gov/programs/comtechcenters/resources.html>
Community Technology Center Startup Manual available online at:
<http://www.ctcnet.org/resources/toc.htm>

Beaumont Foundation of America
PO Box 1855
Beaumont, TX 77701
866-546-2667
www.bmtfoundation.com

Examples Community Centers Recently Constructed:

(Alexandria) Hanson School Community Activity Center
Hanson High School
Po Box 490
Alexandria, SD 57311-0490
605-239-4387

Belle Fourche Area Community Center
1111 National Street
Belle Fourche, SD 57717
Michelle Deyo-Amende, Director
605-892-2467

CITY / COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Community Center

Resources (Continued):

Parker Development Corporation, Inc.

Mark Kasten

PO Box 57

Parker, SD 57053-0057

605-297-4305

605-297-4305 (fax)

info@midstatesd.net

www.parker.sd.org

Platte Development Corporation

Karen Burket

P O Box 336

Platte SD 57369

Phone: 605-337-2895

Sturgis Area Community Center

1401 Lazelle Street

Sturgis, SD 57785

605-347-6513

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SUB THEME: Highway 14 Corridor

Challenge: Maximize De Smet's location on US Hwy 14 for retail, tourism and manufacturing growth.

Recommendation: De Smet's location on US Hwy 14 is a strategic advantage. It is a main route to the State Fair, State Capital, Badlands and the Black Hills to the west and Brookings, SDSU and I29 to the East. I made a number of calls about whether there was any activity taking place about a Hwy 14 Corridor, and found that most of the collaboration has been in Tourism, via the Black & Yellow Trail and joint marketing with state and regional tourism groups, which De Smet is surely already involved in. I did find out that Watertown and Sioux Falls have pulled together a group of development corporations throughout eastern South Dakota to discuss joint economic development marketing efforts and make recommendations to the State about a marketing program for the eastern side of the State. De Smet's participation would be welcomed.

Resources:

Jeff Eckoff
Minnehaha and Lincoln County Economic Dev. Director
605-339-0103

Barry Cranston
Greater Huron Development
605-352-0363

Department of Tourism and State Development
Mary Lehecka Nelson
800-872-6190

SUB THEME: Regionalism

Challenge: De Smet is situated strategically between Watertown, Huron, Brookings and Mitchell. How can that proximity be used to De Smet's advantage?

Recommendation: Regionalism is where rural development is headed. Whether your region is a county, group of counties, a state or a group of states, collaboration is needed to strengthen

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Regionalism

economic development opportunities. SD Tourism has a strong legacy of collaboration at the state and sub-state regional level and De Smet has been a key player with the Laura Ingalls Wilder activities. There are other regional initiatives in SD as well with regard to community and economic development. As I mentioned under Hwy 14 Corridor, eastern SD is working on regional marketing, and welcomes De Smet's participation. De Smet is very familiar with the work of First District Association of Local Governments as well. In addition to these activities, there are a number of county-wide organizations in eastern SD that can serve as models of collaboration. Recognizing that your town is not an island and that much can be gained from partnering with area communities is a first step toward a regional collaboration. You already share employment with surrounding communities and serve as the county retail and tourism center, but regional collaboration must work both ways. All communities must see a benefit to in a regional approach. As potentially the strongest partner in a collaborative it is imperative that De Smet recognizes that potential partners need to feel they are receiving benefit as well. Britton was in a similar position to De Smet when it joined with the smaller communities in the region to create Glacial Lakes Area Development. Britton has a strong manufacturing base, strong local leaders and entrepreneurs similar to De Smet. It is energizing a new generation of leaders, so it might be a good place to start. The more experienced models are also excellent resources.

There are many other county-wide/regional groups that have been formed in SD in the last 10-15 years. Beginning with ten communities in Minnehaha County in 1991 that formed Minnehaha County Economic Development Corporation, then a similar organization in Lincoln County a few years later, to the Southeast Enterprise Facilitation program based in Marion. Regional organizations are popping up all over, with the most recent in McCook and Marshall Counties. A list of regional collaborations is included in the resources section below.

Resources:

Glacial Lakes Area Development (GLAD), Marshall County and surrounding towns

- Organization grew out of work by the Rural Learning Center and due to the dedication of graduates of LeadershipPlentySD Glacial Lakes in 2004.
- Communities of Eden, Veblen, Langford, Pierpont, Britton, and Lake City, Glacial Lakes area and Ft. Sisseton
- Still in start up phase, raising funds for a full time director.
- Have developed a draft strategic plan
- Mission: to be the catalyst for the preservation and enhancement of our area through the open exchange of resources and ideas.
- Jamie Rothe 698-3471 or kwbs@amfmradio.biz or Diane Frederickson 448-5129 or plumcrazydeals@aol.com

Minnehaha County Economic Development Assn. (MCEDA), 1991

Lincoln County Economic Development Assn. (LCEDA), apx. 1997

- Two organizations, each with a board of directors and a separate funding structure
- MCEDA includes Humboldt, Hartford, Colton, Garretson, Dell Rapids, Brandon, Valley Springs, Crooks, Baltic and Sherman
- LCEDA includes Canton, Tea, Harrisburg, Lennox, Worthing, Hudson, Fairview and Beresford

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Regionalism

- Funds come from a cities, development corps, county, utilities and banks
- Managed under contract with Sioux Falls Development Foundation
- Executive Director, Jeff Eckhoff, 339-0103
- Focus primarily on business attraction and development due to proximity to Sioux Falls
- www.siouxfallsdevelopment.com/regional.cfm

Southeast Enterprise Facilitation Project (SEFP), 1995

- Provides one-on-one business assistance to locally owned business and start-ups, and community projects as requested.
- Non-profit corporation governed by a board directors
- Serves Parker, Marion, Centerville, Viborg, Hurley, Freeman, Parkston, Olivet and Bridgewater (parts of three counties)
- Office space donated by Southeastern Electric Cooperative
- Funding from member cities, county, utilities, banks, donations and grants
- Managed by Executive Director, Nancy Larson, 648-2909
- www.sefp.com

Badlands/Southwest Enterprise Facilitation

- Very similar to SEFP, funds come from similar stakeholders
- Hosted by Badlands Resource, Conservation and Development District (RC&D)
- Serves eight counties in the southwestern part of SD
- Executive Director Freya Simpson, 842-3220

Chamberlain Oacoma Chamber of Commerce/Lake Francis Case Development Corporation

- Chamberlain/Oacoma collaboration, also Reliance, Pukwana and Tribal interests
- Non-profit corporation, governed by a board of directors
- Funding comes from memberships, cities, grants
- Grew out of a need to repair relationships between Chamberlain and Oacoma
- Executive Director, 734-4416
- www.dakotadevelopment.com

Beadle and Spink Enterprise Community (BASEC), 1995

- Non-profit corporation, governed by a board of directors
- Brought together around the opportunity for Federal funds, received \$3 million grant as demonstration program. The only rural Enterprise Community success story
- BASEC leveraged its funds as loan funds to support agriculture, housing, community and economic development projects. Earnings provide sustaining support.
- Communities of Yale, Iroquois, Tulare, Frankfort, Doland and Cavour
- Executive Director, Lori Hintz, 599-2991
- www.basec.org

Grow Spink, 2001

- Joint effort of Redfield and Spink County
- Non-profit corporation, governed by a board of directors
- Funded by city and county half and half (\$70,000), office provided by county

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Regionalism

- Executive Director, Craig Johnson, 772-5011
- www.growspink.com

McCook Alliance, 2004

- Non-profit corporation, governed by board of directors
- Funded by cities and county, other organizations and grants
- Communities of Salem, Montrose, Canistota, Spencer
- Executive Director, Joe Bartman, 363-3020
- www.onemccook.com (coming in August)

Miner County Community Revitalization (MCCR)

- Funded as a pilot project of Northwest Area Foundation
- Non-profit corporation, governed by board of directors
- Communities of Canova, Carthage, Fedora and Howard
- Mike Knutson, Economic Development Coordinator, 772-5185
- www.mccr.net

Day County Champion Community

- Day County designated as Champion Community based on empowerment zone application
- Communities in Day County and Ft. Sisseton
- Joined forces with Webster Development Corporation to provide staff
- John Storsteen, Executive Director, 345-3159
- johns@itctel.com

Brookings

- Outreach to small communities surrounding Brookings
- Began in cooperation with the city of Brookings and the opportunity to share specialized services
- Communities in Brookings County and Estelline, Flandreau and Arlington
- Extended to economic development in 2005
- Al Heuton, Brookings Economic Development Corporation 697-8103
- www.brookingseconomicdevelopment.org

Lincoln County Economic Development Corporation (LCEDC) (Minnesota)

- LCEDC is first Enterprise Facilitation model in USA, started in 1988
- Focus on supporting local business growth
- Funded by county, communities and grants
- Vince Robinson, 507.694.1552
- www.lincolnterprise.org

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Ag Development

SUB THEME: Ag. Development (Start-up costs, Estate Planning, Concentrated Ag., Zoning)

Sub Theme: Agriculture Development

Challenge: Start up costs for young farmers are staggering. There are limited opportunities for young people to start farming without help from family operations. Concentration of agriculture is also a concern for the environment.

Recommendation: SD Department of Agriculture has a number of programs that can assist young producers with getting started. There are also opportunities in estate planning that can help land-owners transition all or portions of farmsteads, cropland and equipment to the next generation. The time to begin planning for a transition is now. Don't wait until retirement. Check with your CPA, Attorney or Estate Planner for more information.

Concentration of livestock agriculture is a concern in many counties in SD. There are sample planning and zoning ordinances available through First Planning District that can help address the environmental issues. However, as with all potentially controversial issues, a common sense approach and open communication are essential to identify opportunities for development to occur with proper mitigation in place for environmental concerns. Become knowledgeable about county planning and zoning, ask questions, tour facilities and get the facts. Help insure that both sides of the story are available and that decision-making can be done in the best interests of all parties. SD is still primarily reliant on agriculture and livestock is an integral part of agriculture's infrastructure.

Resources:

SD Department of Agriculture
Jon Farris
605-773-5436
jon.farris@state.sd.us

First District Association of Local Governments
Dick Edenstrom
Executive Director
605-882-5115

SUB THEME: Business Development and Attraction

Challenge: Continuing to maintain a vibrant Main Street and Industrial Park and expand ownership and employment opportunities in business and industry.

Recommendation: It appears that both the Chamber of Commerce and Development Corporation are doing a good job at promoting opportunities in De Smet and the results are a healthy downtown and strong industrial base. This type of pro-active approach has served the community well in the past and is essential for a strong future.

The focus for local economic development efforts is shifting away from attracting manufacturing firms to rural communities in hopes creating new jobs. These companies often do not grow roots in the community, and can leave as soon as the incentives run out. De Smet has been fortunate to have attracted solid industry and then made it part of the community. An additional tactic may be to help firms start locally, build, expand, and maintain their roots and commitment to the local area. Creating entrepreneurial opportunities where none currently exist and developing an entrepreneur-friendly community is crucial to this process. Of course you must not ignore the very fine industries you already have in the process.

To illustrate the change, here are a few facts:

- 55% of new jobs come from expansion of existing businesses
- 44% of new jobs come from new business startups
- Only 1-2% of new jobs are created through relocation

The Minnesota, Minnesota Rural Partners, has a guide that walks communities through the steps of becoming entrepreneurially friendly. While this was developed specifically for Minnesota, it is equally applicable to other rural communities. It is based on having a sound community infrastructure (i.e. sewer system, adequate power, streets, etc). Above this sits the four cornerstones for entrepreneurial development:

1. Financial Resources
2. Community Design
3. Creative Capital
4. Health Care Strategies

Another model is from Nebraska, called Hometown Competitiveness. It is based on four pillars that lead to sustainability.

1. Local Philanthropy
2. Youth Engagement
3. Entrepreneurial Activity
4. Leadership

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

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Business Development & Attraction

Communities” and it is available from the Heartland Center for \$23 by calling 800-927-1115 or going online to 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.

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.

This recommendation would not be complete without commenting on the “Main Street” project. Considering the Laura Ingalls Wilder heritage in the community and the vibrant downtown, undertaking a complete Main Street project makes complete sense. De Smet has been involved in historic restoration for a long time, so these resources may not be new, so consider them a refresher course.

- National Trust of Historic Preservation, National Main Street Program helps communities with commercial district revitalization. The National Main Street Center’s technical services 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.
- The Main Street Center historic tax credit fund—the Small Deal Fund—to help bring investment to smaller rehabilitation projects found on Main Street. The fund invests in 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’s Rehabilitation Tax credit program promotes the rehabilitation of historic 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 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 provides technical assistance services, in addition to various financial assistance programs such as the Historic Preservation Revolving Loan Fund and the Façade Easement Program.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
Ag Processing

Resources:

<http://www.minnesotaruralpartners.org/playbook.htm>

<http://www.ruraleship.org>

<http://www.heartlandcenter.info/publications.htm>

Main Street Center – National Trust for Historic Preservation
202-588-6219
<http://www.mainstreet.org>

South Dakota State Historical Society
Phone: 605-773-3458
sdshswebmaster@state.sd.us
www.sdhistory.org

Preserve South Dakota
Phone: 605-945-0409
info@preservesd.org
www.preservesd.org

SUB THEME: Agricultural Processing

Challenge: Serving host to an agriculture processing plant, such as an ethanol or soybean plant may be every community's dream. What are the opportunities considering the growth in ag processing in the region?

Recommendation: While every community in SD would benefit from the economic impact created by a processing plant it may not be the best or only opportunity for your community. De Smet has been successful at attracting and growing industry. A similar approach can be used with agriculture. Research at SDSU is leading to numerous new opportunities. Keeping in touch with the Agriculture College, Agriculture Research and Extension is a good way to be in the loop. Other components are your agricultural community, local entrepreneurs and community vision. When an idea or project surfaces, there are resources to assist. The SD Department of Agriculture, The Value Added Development Center, SD Enterprise Institute, SD Cooperative Extension Service, SDSU Office of Research to name a few. The various commodities groups also are excellent resources on what's happening in SD agriculture. The SD Value Added Agriculture Development Center web site lists most of them, check it out.

There are ethanol plants operating or under construction in a number of communities around De Smet, including Huron, Watertown, Redfield and Mitchell and soybean processing in Brookings. It seems that De Smet should be able to capitalize on the auxiliary business development that

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Ag Processing

comes as a result of its location on Hwy 14 and capture some of the economic impact of agriculture processing on the area. De Smet has a leading agriculture company in the community in Legend Seeds. An inventory of agriculture related businesses should be conducted and logical steps taken to identify gaps and opportunities, whether they are in farm supply, welding/repair, agronomy, grain handling, etc. While every community in SD would benefit greatly from locating a processing plant, there are many other ways to capitalize on the economic impact of agriculture by providing services to the agriculture community.

Resources:

SD Department of Agriculture
Jon Farris
605-773-5436
jon.farris@state.sd.us

South Dakota Value Added Agriculture Development Center
Cherri Rath
605-224-9402
www.sdvalueadded.coop

SD Enterprise Institute
Marcia Hendrickson
605-697-5015
www.sdenterpriseintitute.org

South Dakota Cooperative Extension Service
Kingsbury County
SDSU Office of Research
Kevin Kephart
605-688-4181

Each of the following have developed a network or niche market on products/services to serve agriculture including supplies, agronomy, processing/marketing, and grain terminals.

SD Wheat Growers
Dale Locken, CEO
Robert Porter, CFO
605-225-5500
Aberdeen
www.sdwg.com

Agland Cooperative
Gary Radel
Parkston
605-928-3381

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
High Speed Internet / Shopping Local

Resources (Continued):

North Central Farmers' Elevator
Keith Hainy
Ipswich
www.ncfe.com
605-426-6021

Harrold Grain Company
Chuck Jeppson
Harrold
605-875-3278
www.harroldgrain.com

SUB THEME: High Speed Internet

Challenge: Both adults and youth indicated a need for high speed internet access outside the city limits of De Smet.

Recommendation: Any company with a franchise for Wild Blue internet service can provide service to Kingsbury County, including the city of De Smet. I contacted Interstate Telecommunications in Clear Lake, a Wild Blue provider, and they are currently under a 30 day moratorium for new subscriptions, but have a waiting list. Wild Blue has three rate plans and offers from 512 mbps to 1.5 mbps, to virtually any home and office in America. Prices start at \$49.95 per month and all ISP services like e-mail and web space are included.

The best way to resolve this situation is to work in conjunction with your local telecommunications providers to develop solutions to providing more highspeed internet service to rural areas where feasible.

Resources: Contact ITC at 605.874.2181 or go to <http://www.itc-web.com/wildblue> for more information.

SUB THEME: Shopping Local

Challenge: To educate residents and emphasize the vital importance of shopping locally.

Recommendation: I've written on this theme for assessments before and there is very little in economic development that I feel as strongly about. It is vital that residents know the importance of shopping locally. If our own residents don't support our hometown businesses, how can we expect others to?

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Shopping Local

A couple of years ago I read an article about hometown shopping and it has stuck with me to this day. The main idea was that small town shoppers vote every single day as to whether or not they will continue to have a grocery store, a pharmacy, a lumberyard, etc... The voting is done with dollars. A vote to have present services continue is cast each time the consumer purchases something locally. If the dollar is spent outside of the community, it is a vote of indifference of continued services.

There are people who will think this scenario is a bit extreme, but really it's not. Small communities do not need to look very far to find examples that prove this theory to be true. Many of our communities have lost grocery, variety and hardware stores in the past few years. It happens before you know it, and the problem is a lot easier to solve while the service is in place rather than when it is gone. Don't wait for a business to leave before becoming proactive about shopping locally.

Shopping locally is a tough issue for communities like De Smet that have so many people traveling to and from work in nearby towns on a daily basis. We're all guilty of shopping out of town. There will always be people in communities that think saving 20 cents on a pound of nails is worth the drive to a larger city. Realistically, that shopper will always look for an excuse to go elsewhere. However a shop local campaign aimed at consumers that want to keep (or even improve!) the quality and quantity of services presently offered is worthwhile.

First of all it is vital for businesspeople to realize they lead by example. If a patron can't get a particular item in their store, by all means make a suggestion as to where else the item can be found in town. In order to make businesses aware of what each has to offer, maybe a "Business Spotlight" in the local paper would be beneficial. Don't assume everyone knows what your business has to offer...get the word out. Another idea would be to have a rotating "Chamber Business of the Month." That business owner could speak at the monthly Chamber meeting explaining their business, goals, etc...I think these two ideas put a face with a business storefront. It makes people realize these are the businesspeople that support our church groups, our 4-H clubs, fundraisers, etc...

It is also important that any City purchases that can reasonably be made in town are. Again, the City and its businesspeople lead by example. If you don't purchase items in town, how can you expect citizens to? This sounds simple and obvious, but be mindful of it.

Whenever there is a community fundraiser or benefit and local stores donate to the cause, be sure everyone knows it. Local businesses are constantly asked for goods or "in kind" donations. It's important to let everyone know the grocery store donated the pancake batter and sausage for the pancake benefit. I think small communities are guilty of asking for donations, and not giving credit where credit is due. Sometimes it's as if we expect our local businesses to "ante up," and most are happy to help. But those businesses should get the positive advertising along with their donation. Do the megastores in larger cities donate to all of the small town causes? Absolutely not. So don't take advantage of a good thing.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Shopping Local

There are a few things we do in Platte that I think are beneficial to the shopping local cause. In the local grocery store, there is a sign as shoppers walk in that states how much it costs to travel to the closest megastore (aka Walmart). Then the sign asks the shopper if they have saved that much driving rather than shopping locally. It really caused a bit of a rumble for awhile, but the reason it did is because we were guilty. We got over it and I know this particular shopper thinks twice about everything purchased out of town. The awareness this sign causes was priceless.

Our editor of the local newspaper keeps the idea of shopping locally in front of readers on an almost weekly basis. (I don't think the man has left Platte for the last ten years because he says, "If you can't buy it in Platte, you don't need it.") He has quite a sense of humor, and it is invaluable as we drive the message of shopping locally home. If our community has a fundraiser, he will put a list of everyone who donated in the paper. But then he also puts a list of people who didn't donate...usually big, out-of-town stores (aka Walmart). I admit, not everyone can get away with this type of propaganda, but it's funny and at the same time informative.

It is imperative that businesspeople recognize the importance of service to consumers. It may be not be feasible for a smaller business to offer the low prices discount stores offer, but service is the element that can even the playing field. Small business owners need to go "above and beyond" in services offered. It can be something as simple as free gift wrapping, free delivery of groceries on Tuesdays and Thursdays, free setup with the purchase of an appliance, etc... ask for these services in larger cities and the businesspeople will ask what planet you are from.

I have an example from this past Christmas season on the importance of service. I wanted an artificial tree, and bought one at the local hardware store. In price comparison, I spent \$20 more by buying it locally rather than out-of-town. Brought it home and the middle section of lights didn't work. Called the hardware store, the owner brought over another, helped set it up and took the one that didn't work back. Would that have happened if I had bought it in a discount store? Absolutely not. Even if it was an inconvenience for the store owner to deliver a replacement (his idea, not mine!), he had one hugely satisfied customer who went out and told everyone what happened. You cannot put a price tag on the PR that business owner did that day.

I am a firm believer in never underestimating the importance of looking a customer in the eye and saying thank you after a transaction. Not the mandatory, "Thanks, don't let the door hit you on your way out," you can receive at large stores where they have no idea who you are, but a genuine, make-you-feel-good thank you. This is so vital in making a lasting impression. Especially with De Smet's tourist season in the summer, it would be very easy to put things on auto pilot. But something as simple as good customer relations can be a deciding factor as to whether or not that customer refers your town to others or if they make a repeat visit.

Another part of shopping locally involves educating the public on the importance of keeping their dollars at home. The City of Howard put their youth to work in a school project that showed residents the impact shopping locally had on their tax revenues. It showed how many times a dollar turns over when it is spent at home. Even with a strong economy like De Smet has, it's imperative to keep the issue in front of people. This is a good way to do that. Maybe ask for a copy of the report from Howard and see if it would be something the school could work with the City on.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Land Acquisition

Watertown has an Uptown Watertown organization that has developed a plan to help business owners improve the outward appearance and signage on their stores. Kay Solberg, a local business owner and excellent promoter of the community, may be able to provide some information as to how they promote shopping in Watertown.

As De Smet considers addressing the shopping local issue, you may want to consider a “Business Boosters” entity of Chamber. Much as the tourism group does, this would be a group that spearheads the business spotlights, courtesy training, etc...

One last word of advice is to be sure to include the communities around De Smet that may be smaller or don't have the same services. Sometimes pride and competition in small communities gets in the way of common sense. Small towns need each other and they need to support each other if they are going to survive. I would encourage De Smet to branch out a bit with advertising sales and promotions to surrounding communities.

Resources:

Karen Burket
Platte Development Corporation
PO Box 283
Platte, SD 57369
mkb@midstatesd.net

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

Kay Solberg
Classroom Connection
Watertown, SD
605-886-3040

SUB THEME: Land Acquisition

Challenge: De Smet has a need for additional property to expand the industrial park and for housing development.

Recommendation: You certainly know your community better than those of us in the assessment team. It appears there is a land-owner issue precluding purchase of land adjacent to the industrial park. If it cannot be resolved, the only option will be to seek land elsewhere. There

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Land Acquisition

was some discussion in the sessions about needing housing development property as well. It may be possible to work with area landowners outside the city limits to acquire options on development property or encourage them to create a housing subdivision outside the city limits. County planning and zoning regulations will have to be considered.

Resources: The development corporation, landowners, Kingsbury County Commission, Kingsbury Electric Cooperative and Kingsbury Rural Water are some of the possible resources that could assist with a project outside the city limits.

LEADERSHIP TRANSITION PLANNING

SUB THEME: Development Coordinator

Challenge: Is it time for the community to hire staff to provide development assistance, organize and promote events and coordinate tourism projects?

Recommendation: De Smet has a full plate of development, chamber, retail and tourism activities going on all year around. Paid professional staff to take some of the burden off local volunteers sounds like heaven, but what will it cost and how do you pay for it? Is it one or two positions, full time or part time? Should De Smet consider partnering with surrounding communities? What qualifications/salary ranges are needed? These are some of the decisions that the development corporation, city, chamber and tourism groups will need to consider.

Communities that have taken the leap to hire a coordinator have reaped the rewards in increased business development, retail activity and/or visitor spending that translate to job opportunities, property and sales tax revenues. The list of regional organizations provided under Economic Development: Regionalism can help. They are willing to share experiences, fund raising concepts, job descriptions, etc. Other resources are the development corporations, CVBs and Chambers in the larger communities like Brookings, Huron, Watertown and Mitchell. The final decision comes down to coordination among the local groups and determining what you want from a staff person.

It will be necessary to develop an excellent job description for the coordinator position, one that is realistic and practical in its stated expectations. There must be a consensus of opinion about the parameters of this job, and the community has to be well and clearly informed about what exactly this new position is to accomplish. Once the job description is in place, the resources to make it successful have to be summoned up. Not just salary, but an adequately equipped office, administrative support, working partners in the community, and a network of technical support from outside the community. The right person doing the right job here would soon reap more benefits for De Smet than the cost of adequately funding the position, but “soon” is relative: it might take several years for some projects to come to fruition.

I also think it is important to consider training someone who is already a part of the community for this new position. It is not a job that just anyone can walk into and find success. It requires good people and business skills, but also a fundamental understanding and knowledge of the community and its people that can take much too long for an outsider, no matter how gifted, to acquire. If the position is filled by a newcomer, then it will be critical that the new coordinator is given every benefit of orientation.

LEADERSHIP TRANSITION PLANNING

Development Coordinator

Resources: See Regionalism. www.sdgreatprofits.com has a listing of local development corporations that includes names and e-mail addresses. Below is a list of local development coordinators which represent various sectors and are full or part time. They may be able to give insight as to what works for their communities/regions.

Capital resources for funding a coordinator include city sales tax revenues, city and county general fund contributions, annual contributions from banks, utilities and other community stakeholders that will see an increase in their revenues if new business is generated, the development corporation, chamber and tourism groups.

Grant funds for a limited amount of money and duration may be available from USDA Rural Development Rural Business Opportunity Grants (RBOG), 352-1100. The program is competitive and limited funding is available. <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/busp/rbog.htm>

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)

LEADERSHIP TRANSITION PLANNING

Development Coordinator

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

LEADERSHIP TRANSITION PLANNING

Volunteer Recruitment

SUB THEME: Volunteer Recruitment

Challenge: Small communities often suffer from a condition called “STP Syndrome.” It’s always the Same Ten People doing everything, or so it seems! How do small communities keep their organizations vibrant and alive without new volunteers?

Recommendation: De Smet already has a number of excellent volunteers (yes, I know there are more than 10!) that generously give their time and effort to the betterment of the community. To prevent burnout of current volunteers and to “pass the torch” to others it is necessary to get new volunteers involved.

The community assessment process is a way to get people involved in projects they are interested in. During the final town hall meeting, people will divide up into groups based on the projects they are interested in. A list will be generated of people who were involved in that discussion, so there may be some new possibilities for volunteers from that.

Speaking from experience, I know it is often difficult to get younger people with families involved. Many families have spouses that both work full time and then child care becomes an issue for evening meetings. Consider the possibility of having child care available for those people who may need it. A meeting may need to be held somewhere where there is access to a playroom of some sort. A little creative thinking may make it possible to get younger people involved.

Don’t forget to enlist the help of youth and senior citizens. In our youth and senior citizen listening sessions these groups stated they are more than willing to assist with projects for the betterment of De Smet. When youth are involved they learn the importance of volunteerism and it also helps to build pride and ownership in a community thus making it more likely that they will stay or move back to it. Seniors are an excellent resource in terms of experience, talents and perspectives. There were a number of seniors that assisted with the assessment process. Would these be people to ask to provide a couple hours of child care while parents attend a meeting? There is a program called RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program) that helps coordinate volunteers at a local level.

Sometimes I think communities are guilty of putting an ad in the paper asking for volunteers for a project, and then we are surprised when nobody shows up. In a survey conducted by the Points of Light Foundation, the number one reason that people don’t volunteer is because no one asked them. An idea to recruit new volunteers may be to have a booth of some sort at a community function in which people have a chance to sign up for different opportunities. The HELP!Line Center in Sioux Falls has an on-line database that lists how volunteers are utilized in different non-profit/governmental organizations.

LEADERSHIP TRANSITION PLANNING

Community Foundation

It's also important to celebrate volunteers in your community. Everyone wants to be recognized for their contributions. Some people only need a small thank you note, others want public recognition. A city wide volunteer recognition event would be one possibility. Different organizations could recognize those individuals that "get it done."

Resources:

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program
www.seniorcorps.org/joining/rsvp/

A list of RSVP programs operating in SD can be found at:
www.seniorcorps.org/joining/rsvp/state.asp?usestateabbr=sd

Volunteer HELP!Line Center
Sara Carothers
1000 N West Ave. #310
Sioux Falls, SD 57104
605-274-1407
www.helplinecenter.org
<http://www.volunteersolutions.org/volhelp/volunteer/>

Points of Light Foundation
<http://www.pointsoflight.org/resources/volunteerresource/>

Resource Books

"The Successful Volunteer Organization: Getting Started & Getting Results in Nonprofit, Charitable, Grass Roots and Company 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>

SUB THEME: Community Foundation
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Challenge: In your many listening sessions, several "dreams" or community needs were vocalized. There were many excellent ideas, and although you were asked to dream big and not worry how you might fund these dreams, reality dictates that there truly must be a way to fund

LEADERSHIP TRANSITION PLANNING

Community Foundation

them in order that they may become a reality! One possible way for this to happen for De Smet is through the organization of a De Smet Community Foundation.

Recommendation: Simply put, a “community foundation” is really just a community “savings account.” Significant monies are donated to your local community foundation and the interest is used to fund numerous community projects. South Dakota was the recipient of a generous contribution from 3M Corporation and has created a tremendous “savings account” to be used to promote the people and organizations of South Dakota. Here’s how it works: The South Dakota Community Foundation was created during the term of Governor George S. Mickelson. To commemorate the life of White, S.D. native William L. McKnight, the 3M and McKnight Foundations offered a \$5 million donation to be matched by the people of South Dakota. The challenge was met, dollar for dollar, with \$2 million from the South Dakota Legislature and \$3 million from private donors. The South Dakota Community Foundation was established, and has since grown to well over \$20 million. This tax-exempt foundation draws money into a charitable pool to assist with projects too large for individual donors. Grants are then awarded to non-profit organizations, institutions and agencies for the purpose of benefiting the social and economic well-being of the people of South Dakota. The state group accepts and administers four kinds of funds, all of which are held as permanent endowment.

- **Unrestricted Funds:** These are used at the discretion of the Foundation Board of Directors to meet deserving charitable needs and opportunities.
- **Fields of Interest:** These are also used at the discretion of the Foundation Board, but are available only to the areas of special concern as specified by the donors.
- **Designated Funds:** These funds are for the benefit of specific charitable institutions that are designated by the donors.
- **Donor-Advised Funds:** Donors reserve the privilege of recommending agencies to be considered for grants.

There are now over 70 South Dakota communities that have established local foundations. These are called Community Savings Accounts. Local donors are making generous contributions to their local fund. A local board of directors is formed to administer the local project. The local fund is managed by the South Dakota Foundation and interest is credited twice a year to the individual communities. This interest is used to create local grants or loans and is distributed by your local board of directors. These earnings can help fund a number of worthwhile projects!

My recommendation is that the city council or a sponsoring organization, possibly the development corporation, contact Bob Sutton, the executive director of the South Dakota Community Foundation. Bob will come to your community and explain how the foundation originated, how it functions, and the benefits to your community by forming such an entity. He is great to work with and has a wealth of information to share.

I’m pretty passionate about the value of a community foundation! To me, it’s kind of like planting a tree. The best time to do it is today!

LEADERSHIP TRANSITION PLANNING

Community Foundation

Resources:

South Dakota Community Foundation
Bob Sutton, Executive Director
907 East Capital, Box 296
Pierre, SD 57501-0296
605-224 1025 or (800) 888 1842
sdcommunityfoundation.org

Centerville Area Community Foundation
Susan Overgaard, Chairman
PO Box 339
Centerville, SD 57014-0339
605-563-2281
susano@firstmidwestbank.com

TOURISM

SUB THEME: After 6 PM Tourism Opportunities
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Challenge: Create activities and events, inviting reasons for tourists to stay in De Smet past 6:00 PM, when attractions and shops close. Tourists now leave De Smet for their evening entertainment.

Recommendations: Expand the experience for your cultural tourists right on into your beautiful summer evenings. What did the Ingalls family do after supper? Music, dancing, storytelling, ice cream socials, ball games, races and horseshoes...the list of authentic family fun in a prairie town is as long as the memories of the people who live there. Washington Park is the perfect setting for long summer evenings...and the activities and concessions would create the summer jobs and recreation De Smet's young people are looking for. Enhancing appearances and access to your historic Main Street might include a town square project as a place to stage summer evening events and make it worthwhile for shops to stay open later. The lakes and prairies make for beautiful sunset photographs, the pride of every tourist, and a sunset-photography tour service might be a very profitable venture. Opportunities for photographers and nature lovers abound in the De Smet area, and should be highlighted on your tourist website, literature and all your marketing. One of the nice things about photography and nature tourism is that these people like to be out early in the morning and then again toward sunset, because those hours provide the best shots...which also provides De Smet with the best shots at feeding them breakfast and supper and tucking them in for a peaceful rest on the prairie. As always, tourists need to be guided to and through their experience, and De Smet can make them reluctant to leave.

There are special events that could fill in your evenings and weekends in June and August, the off-Pageant summer months. A number of touring arts and humanities performances, the Chautauqua, crafts festivals, band concerts, even tent circuses can add authentically to the summer experience for travelers.

Resources:

South Dakota Office of Tourism
Natasha Bothun, Rural Tourism
711 East Wells Ave
Pierre, SD 57501-3369
(605) 773-3301
Travelsd.com
SDVisit.com

TOURISM
Evening Tourism Opportunities

Resources (Continued):

SD Department of Game, Fish & Parks
Recreational Trails Program
Joe Foss Building
523 East Capitol Ave.
Pierre, SD 57501-3185
www.sdpfg.info

SD Glacial Lakes and Prairies
Rosie Smith
P.O. Box 244
Watertown, SD 57201-0244
1-800-244-8860
tournesd@dailypost.com

South Dakota Humanities Council
Sherry DeBoer
SDSU Box 7050
Brookings, SD 57007
(605) 688-6113
Shery-Deboer@sdstate.edu

South Dakota Arts Council
Susan Stoneback
800 Governors Drive
Pierre, SD 57501-2294
1-800-423-6665
www.sdarts.org

South Dakotans for the Arts
Pat Boyd
P.O. Box 414; 405 Glendale
Lead, SD 57754
(605) 722-1467
patsoda@rushmore.com
www.sdarts.org

South Dakota Heritage Center
Jay Vogt
900 Governors Drive
Pierre, SD 57501
(605) 773-3458
Jay.Vogt@state.sd.us
South Dakota Dept. of Agriculture

TOURISM
Hiking Trail at Silver Lake

Resources (Continued):

Bob Weyrich
523 East Capitol
Pierre, SD 57501
(605) 773-5436
Robert.Weyrich@state.sd.us

Agri-Cultural Alliance
South Dakota Art Museum
Lynn Verschoor
Medary & Harvey Dunn St.
Brookings, SD 57007
1-866-805-7590

Center for Tourism Research
Tom Dunn
1200 University #9043
Spearfish, SD 57799-9043
(605) 642-6276
Thomas.dunn@bhsu.edu

SUB THEME: Hiking Trail at Silver Lake

Challenge: Develop an improved and accessible hiking trail.

Recommendation: Develop a well-maintained multi-purpose hiking/biking/cross country ski trail with plenty of interpretive features and places to linger. Printed trail guides combined with trail markers can point out natural, historical and literary points of interest. Some unique and appropriate simple structures, a writer's shelter with a view of the lake or an accessible tree house, for examples, could provide more sedentary recreation.

South Dakota has some wonderful trails, and this could certainly be another! Enlist some professional help with design, natural and historical interpretation, construction, maintenance plan, and signage, but involve as many people from the community as possible in the planning and "blazing" of the trail. Setting up some charitable community walks or jogs is a great way to get people on the trail for the first time, and some special events all through the year will help to keep it well used.

TOURISM
Historic Town Designation

Resources:

[Check this website!](#)

Northern Trails Training Partnership
American Trails
P.O. Box 491797
Redding, CA 96049-1797
(530) 547-2060
ntp@americantrails.org
www.AmericanTrails.org

SD Department of Game, Fish & Parks
Recreational Trails Program
Joe Foss Building
523 East Capitol Ave.
Pierre, SD 57501-3185
www.sdpfg.info

SD Department of Transportation
700 E. Broadway Ave.
Pierre, SD 57501
605-773-3265

See recommendation above on “Walking Trails”, for various funding opportunities for a project like a hiking trail at Silver Lake.

SUB THEME: Historic Town Designation

Challenge: De Smet’s development and future is connected to its history as home to Laura Ingalls Wilder’s family and setting for her beloved stories of life on the prairie. De Smet is dealing with a number of challenges, including infrastructure to support a walking tour, improvements to its historic Main Street, maintenance of the cemetery which is visited by many tourists, and development of a hiking trail at Silver Lake.

Recommendation: Work with the South Dakota State Historical Society to determine if all or parts of De Smet can qualify for the National Register of Historic Places or as a Historic Landmark. If so, there may be some advantages to the designation, including signage, grants, and technical assistance.

TOURISM
Cemetery

Whether or not De Smet receives the designation, the State Historical Society can be of significant help in developing historical projects and cultural tourism.

Resources:

National Register of Historic Places

www.nationalregisterofhistoricplaces.com

Choose States, then South Dakota to view listings already there for De Smet:

These three were added in 1975-77:

Courthouse

Chicago Northwestern Depot

Ingalls House

And Esmond Bridge over Redstone Creek was added in 1999

South Dakota Historical Society

Jay Vogt

900 Governors Drive

Pierre, SD 57501-2217

(605) 773-3458

www.sdhistory.org

SUB THEME: Cemetery

Challenge: Many tourists visit the cemetery and the Ingalls family gravesite, as a part of their tour of the Little Town on the Prairie. There is no charge for admission to the cemetery, and the cost of maintenance is substantially raised by the number of vehicles and visitors.

Recommendation: If I understood correctly, your cemetery association has been in contact with the State Historical Society about the status of the cemetery, but if it has been some years since that contact, I encourage you to ask them to make the cemetery a part of their investigation of a possible historic place designation for De Smet. There are a few historic cemeteries in South Dakota, most notable is Mt. Moriah in Deadwood, a very high traffic tourist attraction which has recently had significant improvements which serve to better protect the graves and grounds while providing better access to visitors.

Whether or not assistance is available from the state, it is necessary to raise community awareness of the challenges to the people trying to take care of the cemetery. We heard many people say that volunteers are being overworked, but this seems like an ongoing service project for church groups and community service organizations. Your newspaper is an excellent vehicle for raising public awareness and support...as are church bulletins. If you already have an annual community work day for the cemetery in the spring, work on getting more help from more

TOURISM
Hunting / Fishing / Bird Watching

people and businesses. After all, not many towns can boast that their cemetery is a tourist attraction – or have to face the challenges to respect for everyone buried there and their families.

Resources:

South Dakota State Historical Society
900 Governors Drive
Pierre, SD 57501-2217
605-773-3458
www.sdhhistory.org

South Dakota Genealogy Society
www.rootsweb.com/~sdgenweb/

Mt. Moriah Cemetery
Deadwood, SD 57732
(605) 578-2600

SUB THEME: Hunting / Fishing / Bird Watching

Challenge: Develop the De Smet area’s full potential for recreation based on wildlife.

Recommendation: Continue to work with your regional tourism associations to highlight Lake Thompson, and hunting and birding through your website. Tourism packages continue to be the best marketing buy, and I encourage you to develop a package targeted toward birdwatchers, especially during spring and fall migration periods and early summer. Wildlife and recreation is an international sector of tourism now, and accounts for millions of tourism dollars each year. It is best to work with your whole region to coordinate marketing, guides, calendars and activities. You can make the case for De Smet to be the best and most hospitable place to stay, eat, and get fuel and supplies.

Another way to promote De Smet involves agri-tourism. With the connection to Laura Ingalls Wilder, you community has a unique advantage over others. Consider making an opportunity for tourists to visit a farm and have the olden days experience. People will pay money to milk a cow, gather eggs, etc.... Being from rural communities we think this is a bit farfetched, but it is a growing industry.

Creating some agri-touism opportunities may be a way to get people to stay in De Smet for a longer period of time. Consider putting together packages that have predetermined plans and activities for people to do while in the area. For example, one day they may spend on a farm. Another they may fish or hike at Lake Thompson. The third the may do the whole Laura Ingalls

TOURISM
Hunting / Fishing / Bird Watching

Wilder experience. Be creative! A little thinking outside the box and creating a “rural living” experience is a great idea for tourists that don’t have access to these types of activities.

In the listening sessions, we heard that regionalism is something De Smet is interested in exploring. When putting together packages, consider including other smaller communities located close by. You could take advantage of various activities, events, and attractions in neighboring communities when developing packages. If De Smet uses this strategy, you can leverage the attractions of surrounding communities to everyone’s benefit.

Resources:

South Dakota Office of Tourism
Natasha Bothun, Rural Tourism
711 East Wells Ave
Pierre, SD 57501-3369
(605) 773-3301
Travelsd.com
SDVisit.com

SD Department of Game, Fish & Parks
Recreational Trails Program
Joe Foss Building
523 East Capitol Ave.
Pierre, SD 57501-3185
www.sdpfg.info

Great Lakes Travel and Tourism Association
PO Box 786, 210 E. Capitol Ave.
Pierre, SD 57501
(605) 224-4617
/www.sdgreatlakes.org

SD Glacial Lakes and Prairies
Rosie Smith
P.O. Box 244
Watertown, SD 57201-0244
1-800-244-8860
tournesd@dailypost.com

Vermillion Watershed Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D)
P.O. Box 121
Salem, SD 57058
(605)352-1281
sara.thompson@sd.usda.gov
www.rcdnet.org

TOURISM
Hunting / Fishing / Bird Watching

Resources (Continued):

Center on Ecotourism
CESD in Washington DC
733 15th St. NW; Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20005
Tel: 202-347-9203
Fax: 202-387-9715
www.ecotourism.org

ACTIVE GENERATIONS / QUALITY OF LIFE

SUB THEME: Long Term Help for Those in Need

Challenge: To have assistance readily available for those in need of long term resources.

Recommendation: I need to preface this section of my report by stating that I am in no way a specialist in this area. I have, however, given several resources that are. We heard a number of concerns from people that individuals that need assistance for an extended period of time may not have access.

Foreseeing the need for long term assistance for individuals is an example of the proactive community that you have. Not having a concrete instance to work with makes it a bit difficult to give specific recommendations. Therefore, I have given resources that are available in the State to assist with social and economic needs. This may be a project the ministerial association may be able to help with. The local church youth groups would also embrace fundraising of some sort for this.

Awareness of existing resources available to help those in need is always a challenge. In Canton, they are addressing this challenge through the development of an entity called LOVE, inc. The purpose of this organization is not to provide direct services, but instead to provide a central point of contact that people can go to, confidentially, and get references to various services and programs locally and across the state that can help them meet their social needs.

Resources:

Lutheran Social Services
527 Main Avenue
Wells Fargo Bank, Suite 201
605.692.9636
www.lssd.org

Catholic Family Services
309 2nd Ave. SE
Watertown, SD 57201
Phone: 605-886-6321 or 866-700-2376

ACTIVE GENERATIONS / QUALITY OF LIFE
Alcohol and Substance Abuse Issues

Resources (Continued):

Brookings Career Learning Center
1310 S Main Ave Suite 104
57006-3841
(605) 688-4370

SHIINE – Senior Health Information and Insurance Education
Department of Social Services
Office of Adult Services & Aging
700 Governors Drive
Pierre, SD 57501

SUB THEME: Alcohol and Substance Abuse Issues
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Challenge: During the listening session with the high school youth, they indicated that there was not a drug abuse issue; however, they did voice their concerns about underage drinking among the students.

Recommendation: Generally during these listening sessions, I have found that the students are open and honest when they find that no adults, other than the assessment team, are involved, and that no names are being used when they give their opinions, so I have to assume that the general consensus of this group is a true reflection of the issues of the De Smet youth.

However, given the timing of our assessment, it was obvious that the students were not willing to open up to our team as readily as students have in other assessments I have taken part in. In my opinion, most of them seemed totally worn out and just wanted things to get “back to normal”, and this listening session was just something they needed to get through as a group and move on. Our assessment team understood the situation and sympathized with these students, and hopefully we didn’t add any more stress to their lives.

So, when the question of substance abuse was raised and the group agreed that there was no drug abuse problem, I have to believe they were honest in that assessment, and am writing my recommendations based on that.

When asked about alcohol abuse, they agreed that this isn’t as bad as it used to be, that there is an ebb and flow, depending on the classes themselves (grades 9-12). When asked what they regarded as alcohol abuse – was it one beer, two beers on a weekend – it was good to hear that they consider any underage drinking as abuse. The consensus seems to be that underage drinking is not as prevalent now as it was in the past, or could be in the future.

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Community Education

A large part of controlling the underage drinking problem is to have something for these young adults to do with their free time. As is true all across the United States, youth feel there is nothing for them to do. It's the same in urban areas as it is in the rural areas. However, it was not in JUST the youth group that we heard this – this was the most recurring theme that we heard in our 2 ½ days of listening sessions – we need something for the youth to do. Knowing that your entire community is of one voice on this issue means that there is something to it, and you will do whatever it takes to get something done!

I understand that since our assessment team was in De Smet, your community has already taken action by authoring a survey to see just exactly what the community wants/needs to see that this issue is addressed.

Another suggestion is a peer counseling program. Your school and church youth groups could begin this program to equip students with the skills necessary to help counsel other students. Knowing that school resources are already being pushed to their limits, having the support of your local churches can be a great help.

Resources:

NE Prevention Resource Center
Dodi Haug
123 19th Street NE
Watertown, SD 57201
605.884.3524
www.humanserviceagency.org/neprc.htm

SUB THEME: Community Education

Challenge: There is a concern that certain skills of the older generations will not be passed down to the younger generations (i.e. woodcarving, rosemaking, etc.).

Recommendation: One way to facilitate the bringing together of those in the community who have specific talents with those who would like to continue the heritage would be to offer classes. A nominal fee could be charged, which would help defray the cost of a senior lunch program or some other activity of your choice.

It may be possible to work with the school system to use these classes as part of the art curriculum, all grades included. Another possibility would be to offer these classes after school so that latch-key kids have something constructive to fill the time between school let-out and parents' coming home.

ACTIVE GENERATIONS / QUALITY OF LIFE

Senior Citizen Facility Repair and Membership

On the flip side, the youth in the community can work with the older generation to teach them skills such as computer/e-mail usage (this would be very beneficial for those grandparents whose children and grandchildren live a distance away to keep them informed of growth, accomplishments, etc.).

Resources: The resources needed for this project are right down the street from you, or next door to you. Use and share the talent that you have in your community. You may not think of your craft/hobby as a talent, but I can bet that a lot of others think it is.

SUB THEME: Senior Citizen Facility Repair and Membership

Challenge: Given the declining Senior Citizen membership and the disrepair of the Center, resources might better be used to bring a community or multi-generational center into De Smet. You will need to make sure that every age group in the De Smet community has an equal and active voice in the decision-making of what the community center will contain and who it will serve.

In our listening session with the 60+ age group, it was mentioned that it would be nice to have the Meals on Wheels program deliver meals not only to the shut-ins in town, but also have a community lunch program where 60+ age group could meet and socialize while having a meal. Maybe this could be arranged with the Prairie Park facility. If not there, possibly a church would allow the use of their facility. If/when a community center is established, this would be the ideal location for this meal program.

Another concern of the senior community is the lack of membership in their senior organization. Perhaps this membership would flourish, or at least grow, with the creation of a noon meal program, along with a modern, convenient location in which to meet. Again, maybe it is a possibility to use the meeting room at Prairie Park or a church to hold Senior Citizen meetings.

Sometimes it is difficult to think outside the box when it comes to gaining membership for Senior Citizens. Time and time again the senior center in Custer comes up as being a model for other communities to follow. This group is an integral part of the community. It has activities that involve not only seniors, but others in the community as well. Just a few of the examples the center in Custer hosts include regular card games, movie nights, exercise groups, bingo, internet classes presented by school youth, sewing groups and more.

The important thing to remember is the group needs to be inclusive...everyone needs to be made to feel welcome. The activities can vary, but there needs to be a niche for everyone to feel included.

ACTIVE GENERATIONS / QUALITY OF LIFE

Senior Citizen Facility Repair and Membership

Recommendation: After speaking with our local Senior Citizens/ Dakota Diner director, she concurs that there is a general membership loss throughout the state in senior citizen programs. The only facility that is not showing a decline is apparently the Center for Active Generations in Sioux Falls. It may be worth the trip to visit the Sioux Falls facility, to see how their organization is structured, and the type of building that works so well for them.

The Center for Active Generations
Sioux Falls, SD
(605) 336-6722

This center also serves surrounding communities, including Centerville, with support for the Dakota Diner, through its Senior Nutrition Program. Centerville has a nutrition program that not only serves Meals on Wheels, but provides a noon meal for area seniors in their local facility. Rose Marie Austin is the local director, and would be willing to visit with your group to share experiences. Rose Marie and her staff cook the meals for the Centerville Center and also send meals to Beresford for their Meals on Wheels Program, in addition to preparing the meals for the Centerville Meals on Wheels program. Rose Marie may be reached Monday through Friday at the Centerville Dakota Diner between the hours of 7:00 am to 1:00 pm at (605) 563-2451. The Centerville Senior Citizens building is located on Main Street. Although it is located in an old hardware store, the downtown location is convenient for the regular noon meals served Monday through Friday. The city owns the building, but the maintenance is provided by the Senior Citizens group. They hold numerous fundraisers, usually through selling pie, coffee, and light meals at local functions. This keeps the group active, and they tend to raise enough to stay in operation, although, they have fairly regular fundraisers!

Something that may be helpful for the De Smet Senior Citizens would be to conduct a “mini-assessment.” This would give them the opportunity to discuss their strengths and weaknesses under the direction of a moderator. Priorities could then be identified and a working plan laid out. Committees may then be established to:

- 1) Organize a membership drive, local calling group, or car pool to meet at the Center for various projects or socials
- 2) Work on solutions for existing building problems
- 3) Look into further development of the Senior Nutrition Program.

Resources:

Custer Senior Center
Susan McDonald, Director
538 Mount Rushmore Road
Custer, SD 57730
605-673-2708
cussnc@gwtc.net

Resources (Continued):

USDA Rural Information Library
Senior Resources online directory
www.nal.usda.gov/ric/ruralres/seniors.htm

SUB THEME: Daycare

Challenge: Maintaining high quality child care is a challenge for many communities. Without affordable, reliable providers many people would not be able to work. Continuing education and training for child care providers is necessary to maintain licensure.

Recommendation: Many communities don't think of daycare as being economic development, but it is. Without providers, it is difficult to recruit people for your workforce. I think daycare providers are an often overlooked link in economic development.

One possibility to research would be the viability of a daycare center. This is a project that is often taken on by various groups such as development corporations in rural communities.

It is vital to enlist the participation of the local in-home providers from square one. Communication with the current providers is necessary because the last thing a community wants to happen is to lose one. They should be the center of the project, because they are the experts. Perhaps one or more of them may be interested in a joint venture of forming a daycare center, with assistance from the City, development corporation, school, and/or chamber.

Some communities have pursued utilizing a Governor's House as a converted daycare facility. This effort is usually led by the local development corporation as the project requires a non-profit group to be the recipient of a Governor's Daycare. A good start would be contacting the South Dakota Housing Development Authority. They have a formal process for requesting a Governor's home. Included in the planning process is a community survey and feasibility study. SDHDA also provides a "Guide to Planning, Purchasing, and Licensing" a daycare facility.

The community of Platte put in a Governor's Daycare in 2003. The Platte Development Corporation was approached by a local provider that was having difficulty staying in compliance with numbers of children. There was a pronounced need for a facility that could provide for a number of children. The PDC worked with the provider to put together the required paperwork for a Governor's house. That house was donated to the PDC for the use of a daycare center.

The community came together on the project to keep the budget in line. Much of the construction materials, land, labor, electrical and excavating were done at a reduced fee or donated. They used a USDA Rural Development Community Facilities financing to do the project.

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Daycare

The daycare is located close to the public school to make it more convenient for families dropping off and picking up children. The facility also houses a preschool program on the upper floor for children ages 3-5 four days a week. The location close to the school also makes it possible for kids to go back and forth between the school and center with ease and safety.

One of the things Platte did when they secured the Daycare Center was opt for the larger of two Governor's Houses. It is necessary to "do your homework" when filling out the paperwork for the grant. We worked with our local planning district to fill out a feasibility form required for the house. Because of the numbers needed to make the facility operate in the black, we put a basement under the house. This addition allowed us to double the number of children the facility could service at a given time, and it also gave them the room to do a preschool and after school program right in the daycare.

Another financial resource, not just for daycare center, but in-home providers as well, is SDREI's First Children's Finance Program. FCF offers low-interest loans to childcare businesses to help 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 or less (Mini Loans) offer a simplified application process and reduced fee.

A final resource would be the 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 guidelines, 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:

Platte Development Corporation
Karen Burket
PO Box 283
Platte, SD 57369
Home Office:605-337-2895

Daycare Financial Services

South Dakota Housing Development Authority
PO Box 1237
Pierre, SD 57501
www.sdhda.org

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Daycare

Resources (Continued):

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

SDREI – First Children’s Finance
Beth Davis, President
625 S. Minnesota Avenue, Ste. 103
PO Box 802
Sioux Falls, SD 57101-0802
605-978-2804
info@sdrei.org

Reference Information of Starting and Licensing a Daycare Facility

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

South Dakota Department of Education
Child and Adult Nutrition Program
Melissa Halling
700 Governor’s Drive
Pierre, SD 57501
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>

SUB THEME: Recreation Opportunities

Challenge: As with many rural communities, De Smet is in need of more recreational opportunities. Ideas of a bowling alley, ice and roller skating, a movie theater, wellness center, rec center and a performing arts group.

Recommendation: It is so important for communities to have recreational opportunities for people. Not only does it keep youth occupied, it also keeps families in town. When families stay in town, their entertainment dollars do, too. Obviously, cost becomes a factor when it comes to creating new venues, but it can be a huge benefit in terms of economic development.

In the listening sessions we heard a number of people comment on the lack of opportunities for tourists after 6:00 PM. A movie theater and/or bowling alley may be a way to retain tourists even longer.

Several communities, including Platte and Philip, have made movie theater renovations or built one. We renovated ours in Platte and it did run into a lot of money and labor, but the results are worth it. The community really pulled together and a lot of the project was completed with donated labor and materials.

To keep overhead low the theater is operated entirely by local volunteers. The theater is open on Thursday-Monday evenings and there is a Sunday afternoon matinee. A person lines up people to run the concession stand and take tickets. A few others are trained to run the projector. The volunteers are “paid” with a free ticket and popcorn/pop at the movie. Afterwards these people clean up, also. Everyone is aware volunteers are “running the show” (clever, huh?) so they all pitch in and make short work of clean up.

The theater was a huge, huge project for our little community, but it is also the source of a lot of pride. Families and youth are staying in town to eat and go to a movie instead of leaving. People from smaller, surrounding communities patronize the theater and we get quite a few tourists that are camping at the river during the summer.

Another idea youth had was the possibility of a rec. center of some sort. These are tough to finance, but overhead can be kept fairly low through fundraisers and volunteer labor. One option may be to have a place where kids can meet with video games, televisions, ping pong, pool, foosball, etc...It may be a venue the kids, with some adult guidance, manage. Maybe surveillance cameras would be helpful to ensure everyone stays in line. It is necessary for the kids to have ownership in the project. Let’s face it, they are way more creative and have more energy than adults. Let them channel it into something they can be proud of.

Financing youth programs is always a challenge, but it may be something a class could address in school. It may be possible to put together a group that could generate a business plan for a

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Recreation Opportunities

youth center. Work with them to get them engaged in developing the type of activities that they would like to participate in. The funding could be addressed through grants that an adult helps them write. There are a variety of directories that provide information on various youth related grant opportunities, which are included in the resource section below. Rutland did a similar project with a community convenience store being operated by local youth. It has been a very successful operation and a source of pride for the community.

Ice skating was an opportunity some miss. I understand there is a designated area that used to have ice skating. It may just take a group of interested citizens to ask the City to flood the rink area so residents can skate.

Rollerskating rinks don't have to be anything fancy. Platte uses their community building to skate in. Granted, it has a cement floor and it is very basic, but we have busloads of students come in the spring and church youth groups use it all the time. All that is really needed is an ambitious teenager who can play some CDs and organize some games. There isn't a set schedule for the skating, but during the winter months, the kids try to organize it at least once a month for open skating. I'm surprised at how well it goes over, but it proves recreation does not have to be elaborate or expensive.

A wellness center open to everyone was another need we heard from the community. Again, this is something that doesn't have to be state of the art, but it's nice to have available. The hospital seems a likely partner for a wellness center as they may be able to tap into grant resources for community health issues. Many smaller facilities run a system where members get a key card to be used for entrance. This method helps keep the cost of the facility at a minimum because it eliminates the necessity of having staff open and close.

Resources:

Federal Grants Directory: www.grants.gov and www.cfda.gov

South Dakota State Library Grants Director: 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

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Recreation Opportunities

Resources (Continued):

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

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

SUB THEME: Recreation Center
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Challenge: Create a variety of healthy recreational activities, and center(s) for recreation; for all ages, but particularly for young people in the community.

Recommendation: The desire and need for more recreational activities was expressed in almost every listening group. The “wish list” of things to do in De Smet is long and varied, including: a bowling alley, a movie theater, ice and roller skating rinks, a performing arts center, a pool hall, a wellness center, and a community recreation center. There seems to be as much interest in the social “hanging out together” aspects of recreation as in any of the particular activities. In other words, nobody cried about the great need to play pool, but many miss the pool hall as a gathering place. Although many spoke particularly of having “something good for the kids to do”, no one, including the high school group, seemed interested in a youth-only center, but preferred the concept of spanning generations.

Although there are successful community recreation centers in towns and cities across South Dakota, the obvious should be stated here. They are expensive public propositions, and everything from the planning to the eventual repairs and maintenance is complicated. Because this is such a recurrent theme in De Smet’s community discussions, it is an idea worthy of further investigation and discussion. We have seen clearly in De Smet that when people want something for the community, it tends to get done. This would be a long-term project, and the first and most important steps are time-consuming but not costly.

A diverse leadership working group, including the young people everyone is concerned about, can begin to investigate community recreation centers and begin to understand the economies of the wish list. Make it even longer and more inclusive, then determine which activities can be

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Recreation Opportunities

supported in a public center and which might be opportunities for entrepreneurship in the community. The investigations should include neighboring communities, but also a great deal of Internet searching.

Other investigations will have to be very close to home. What do people want to do when they are together? Build it and they will come is not a good recipe for success in this instance. In a community the size of De Smet, the quality of recreational opportunities, whether they are public or private enterprises, will depend on just about everyone participating. The first order of business is not fund raising, it is interest building.

Resources: *See resources under "City/Community Projects-Sub Theme Community Center"*

HOUSING

SUB THEME: **Single Family Housing**

Challenge: We heard several comments that you would like to see your existing businesses continue to thrive, you would like to pull in even more industry and create more jobs, and you would like the younger generations to move back to De Smet to work and raise their families. These requirements also require quality homes and neighborhoods to attract this sector to the community. Although the current homes are generally very well maintained, there is a need for quality, affordable, updated single family homes to attract young families. Although there may be some housing available, many young families are looking for the same quality of housing (or better) that they grew up with. The homes should have a minimum of three bedrooms and be more up-scale than some of the existing homes. Some homes that are currently available to newcomers may not have large enough rooms, enough bedrooms and may not actually be affordable to maintain. Older homes, while often exhibiting much vintage character, often have “old house issues,” such as poor or settled insulation, old plumbing, old wiring, and drafty windows. It would be nice to eliminate some of these poorer quality homes and perhaps rebuild new single family homes on these existing lots. While it may be practical to raze older homes, some offer aesthetic and historic appeal. In some situations, these homes may be conducive to restoration and rehabilitation. Your community may have several such significant structures.

Recommendation: It may be helpful for your community leaders to form a “housing team” that investigates housing options and the means to accomplish your goals that is separate from your city government or development corporation. It could be comprised of three or four individuals that can do the legwork and then report back to the city leaders. There are a number of successful developments and plans that other communities have constructed, and you may find the blueprints will work well in De Smet, also. You should strongly consider sending this team to the 2006 Housing Conference in Pierre, scheduled for November 14-15. This conference enables you to make valuable contacts of individuals and resources, as well as identifying several programs to assist in funding. It would even be wise to reserve motel rooms now for this event, as accommodations in Pierre can be somewhat tight! You can get more information for this event from the South Dakota Housing Development Authority. I would recommend that you contact the SDHDA as soon as you get organized. This office can help you to identify programs that will work in De Smet.

Your new Housing Team would need to begin a “fact-finding” mission. Has De Smet done any sort of housing survey? Locate any existing information, or begin to compile relevant data regarding the specific needs in your city. Perhaps the team could organize a Housing Fair. This could be used to:

- A) Develop a list of available rental properties and contacts
- B) Develop a list of available or potential lots for new construction
- C) Develop a list of properties where the neighborhood might benefit from demolition

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- D) Create a list of individuals that might wish to “step-up” to a better home, either to an existing home or to new construction
- E) Create a list of individuals that may be interested in “downsizing.” Some may be interested in moving to a retirement property where they could
 - 1) rent
 - 2) have ownership, such as a condominium
 - a) Would these be single-family needs?
 - b) or Multi-family dwellings?

Once this information is available, you will be able to prioritize and move forward much more quickly. The First District Association of Local Governments may be able to assist in the organization of the Housing Fair and the housing-needs assessment. Contact them at:

First District Association of Local Governments
PO Box 1207
Watertown, SD 57201-6207
Phone: (605) 882 5115
Fax: (605) 882 5049
www.1stdistrict.org

Some development projects that were very successful and featured at the South Dakota Housing Conference in November, 2005 are:

HAPI (Homes Are Possible, Inc.)
Lea Amdahl, Executive Director
PO Box 1972
Aberdeen, SD 57402-1972

Ph. (605) 225 4274
Fax (605) 226-3217
hapi@nvc.net
www.homesarepossible.org

Praireland Housing Development
Planning and Development Dist. III
PO Box 687
Eric Ambrosian, Governors House Rep.
1808 Summit Street
Yankton, SD 57078
Ph. (605) 665 4408 or (800) 952 3562
fax (605) 665 0303
districtiii@districtiii.org
www.districtiii.org

The Governor’s Home project, a SDHDA feature, offers new housing at affordable pricing and now also a variety of home styles, in addition to the original traditional ranch style. Placed on a full basement with an attached two-car garage, these new styles become very difficult to distinguish between some “stick-built” homes. The HAPI development in Aberdeen has added several affordable, attractive home styles in a new development, using the varying Governor’s Home plans, stick-built homes and some “pre-built” models. Mixed together on this street, it is difficult to distinguish between the Governor’s Homes and other stick built homes. The houses retail for about \$95,000-111,000 and have affordable monthly payments for homebuyers. This is especially true if the buyer can utilize any of the programs available.

HOUSING
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Individuals that you may wish to contact if you wish to design a similar project are:

Robert Hull, NESDCAP
414 Third Avenue East
Sisseton, SD 57262
Ph (605) 698 7654

www.nesdcap-nesdec.org
Email: nesdcap@nesdcap-nesdec.org

Dennis Pelkoffer, NESDCAP
916 S. 12th Street
PO Box 1972
Aberdeen, SD 57401
Ph (605) 226 0326

Email: nesdcap@nvc.net

The Prairieland Housing Development has used governor's homes to create some duplex projects in Alexandria, Emery, White Lake, and Plankinton. Contact them at the above address for more information.

Resources:

The South Dakota Housing Development Authority (SDHDA) was created by the South Dakota Legislature in 1973 with a mission to provide decent, safe, and affordable housing to low and moderate income South Dakotans. SDHDA is a self supporting, nonprofit entity which uses no State tax dollars. Their website will point you to the numerous programs they offer.

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

Programs under SDHDA:

- The Governor's House Program
Paul Kotsboth, Director
Ph. (605) 773 2466
(888) 540 4241
paul@sdhda.org

 - Home Ownership Programs
Brent Adney, Director
Ph. (605) 773 5157
brent@sdhda.org
- * First Time Homebuyer Program
 - * Mortgage Assistant Program-MAP
 - * Employer Mortgage Assistance Program -EMAP
 - * Loan Assistance Program -LAP
 - * Community Home Improvement Program -CHIP

HOUSING
Rental Units

Additional sources: Rural Learning Center
123 South Main Street
PO Box 702
Howard, SD 57349
Phone: (605) 772 5139
Fax: (605) 772 5185
www.ruralllearningcenter.org
beddowj@alliancecom.net

Housing Assistance Council,
Midwest Office
10920 Ambassador Dr., Ste 220
Kansas City, Mo 64153
Phone: (816) 880 0400
Fax: (816) 880 0500
midwest@ruralhome.org
www.ruralhome.org

SUB THEME: Rental Units

Challenge: There is also a need for quality rental property, both single family homes and multi-family dwellings. Many young people wish to rent for a time before they invest in buying a home, and risk not being able to sell the home if they must relocate. It would be nice to have some affordable rentals for seniors, also. Some are reaching the point in their lives where they would like to down-size, and are no longer interested in maintenance and yard work. This may free up some existing homes to be sold, rented, or razed and thereby create the opportunity for new construction within the city.

Recommendation: An apartment complex with one, two, and three bedroom units are ideal for new families that have an opportunity to move into your town. They are highly sought after by younger individuals who are not yet interested in yard work or making the commitment of a home purchase. Today's units include a fitness room, a theater/entertainment room, and a party room. They could certainly be marketed to your local industry and school personnel, but also to surrounding communities as a home base for commuters. In addition, rental apartments are an attractive alternative to senior retirees, as well. There are options through SDHDA or HUD for constructing and subsidizing homes for the elderly, or even just lower incomes.

Resources:

US Department of Housing & Urban Development
2400 West 49th Street, Ste. I-201
Sioux Falls, SD 57105
Phone: (605) 330 4223
www.hud.gov/southdakota

HOUSING
Multi-family Units / Annexation Issues

Resources (Continued):

US Department of Agriculture
Rural Development
Federal Building Room 210
200 Fourth Street SW
Huron, SD 57350
Phone: (605) 352 1100
www.rurdev.usda.gov/sd/

SUB THEME: Multi-family Units

Challenge: There were several references in the sessions mentioning the lack of affordable housing, assisted living units, well-planned elderly housing and middle-income housing.

Recommendation: Multi-Family Units can serve this sector very well. For example, a four-plex unit adapts well to these needs. In addition to the other resources already mentioned, F & L Management & Development, Inc. provides attractive, affordable units of this type.

F & L Management & Development, Inc.
Diane M. Weick, Project Coordinator
907 East Fairview Street
Marshall, MN 56258
Phone: (507) 532 1051
dweick@chartermi.net

Home Office
113 North Cedar Street
Luverne, MN 56156

SUB THEME: Annexation Issues
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Challenge: You currently have a single family home development to the southwest of De Smet. The community could benefit from the annexation of this property and the homeowners could benefit from the additional services offered by being within the city limits. There was some additional discussion of another potential development to the South of SD Highway 14, and the possibility of annexing that land into the city.

Recommendation: Annexation of land or developments can require a number of considerations. Issues such as equitable sharing of the tax burden, providing efficient use of municipal services, and orderly growth and development become priorities. De Smet has limited areas that can be considered for annexation, but there is an existing development to the south

HOUSING
Annexation Issues

west of the city that would benefit by being part of the municipality, and it would benefit the city to annex these properties.

There are two ways that annexation can be accomplished. The preferred way is that the current land owner petitions to be annexed into the city. The second option would be “forced annexation.” Your city would need to do a comprehensive study on the cost of providing infrastructure to this new area.

The First District Association of Local Governments would be an excellent resource to develop an annexation plan.

Resources:

First District
124 1st Ave NW
PO Box 1207
Watertown, SD 57201-6207
(605)882-5115
www.1stdistrict.org

HEALTHCARE

SUB THEME: EMT Recruitment

Challenge: Recruiting EMS volunteers for the ambulance service in De Smet is an issue that needs to be addressed.

Recommendation: One of my very favorite listening sessions in communities is always the EMS/Fire Department session. These groups have individuals that possess a sense of commitment, compassion and camaraderie that other groups envy. Being in EMS, I understand what a commitment the job is, but I also wouldn't trade the friends I've made and the people I've helped for anything. De Smet is not any different. They have a group of ambulance personnel that is small in numbers, but the service and dedication they give their community is invaluable.

How do we recruit members for EMS so volunteering for service is not a burden? First and foremost I need to point out that I think we shoot ourselves in the foot when it comes to recruiting volunteers. One of the things we talk about is what a horrible experience the test to become certified is. We talk about all the hours of training we put in, how we get called in the middle of the night to take someone on a transfer (usually in a snowstorm!) and how we are on call every other week or so. Would a "normal" person want to sign up for that? Save the complaining for Pierre and focus on the positive in De Smet.

I think we need to focus more on promoting the friends we make and the feeling we get from helping others. There is no other group of people I would want in charge of my family if they needed EMS than the people on my ambulance service. There may be services out there that have fancier equipment or paramedics, but no one will go above and beyond like small town EMTs. I now it's the same in De Smet.

When recruiting, it's important to acknowledge the test is tough and the hours stink, but that shouldn't be our focus. Tell a recruit you will help them through the training and that once they are through it, you'll help them with calls until they are comfortable. I'm afraid we look at new volunteers as being "fresh meat" and we are so anxious to lift the burden, that we overwhelm them.

In Platte, we've taken a couple of hints from our fire department. They never have problems recruiting people. Take the liquid refreshment factor out, and the reason they have a full force is because they do things that promote camaraderie. For example, they always order pizza or grill out before or after a meeting. This gives people time to visit with each other and talk about different calls they may have been on. We've started doing this at about every other meeting and attendance has increased at those meetings.

HEALTHCARE

EMT Recruitment

We spend so much time training, sometimes we need to just let off steam and get to know each other. It's also important to talk about some of the calls and stress they cause to others, or else we wind up feeling like we're in this alone.

When we recruited this last time in Platte, we really did an all out publicity blitz in the newspaper and had EMTs seek out others they thought would be good candidates. We did funny things like "The Top Ten Reasons to be an EMT." With that we put funny things like "you get to see what everyone really looks like at 4 AM," "you get a warm, fuzzy feeling in your heart when you help someone" and "you don't have to worry about the pay putting you in a different tax bracket" (because there isn't any!).

We also had EMTs write letters to the editor about what they like about being an EMT. I'll admit it, I had to write most of them and everyone just signed off on it, but it worked. People seemed to respond to that.

During the training we enlisted the help of community volunteers to feed the class. Everyone appreciated that as it made it easier for them to get to class on time and it was one less thing to worry about. We also had a veteran EMT assigned to each class night so they could help with any questions, training, etc...It is nice for new recruits to hear that the National standards are by no means the way things are done on rural, volunteer services. Let's face it, the training is overwhelming and it is great to have someone say, "You just need to get through this training, and then things are more realistic on the ambulance service." (Does the term 'load and go' sound familiar?)

When recruiting, it is also vital to educate the community as to how much money is saved on taxes by having a volunteer service. We compared what surrounding towns with paid services are paying in taxes compared to Platte. We also made a plea to business owners to make it possible for EMTs to leave work during the day to go on a call. Platte struggled with filling day shifts because employers weren't allowing employees to leave work or they had to clock out if they did. We really worked the fact that those businesses would be paying so much more in taxes if it weren't a volunteer service. I firmly believe people should not have to lose money if they volunteer to be an EMT. Make businesses aware of the alternatives.

I wish I had a number of resources to give you, but the only thing I can think of is to contact the State Department of Public Safety for ideas on what other communities have done. Give me a call and we can brainstorm some ideas.

Resources:

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

HEALTHCARE
Nursing Shortage

Resources (Continued):

Karen Burket
Platte Ambulance Service EMT
PO Box 336
Platte, SD 57369
605-337-2895

SUB THEME: Nursing Shortage

Challenge: De Smet’s location makes it difficult to recruit health care workers that live in the community. It is important to have a pool of workers that live close by in case of an emergency and additional staff is needed. It is a hardship to on those that do live in the community to be contacted whenever additional assistance is needed. This can lead to burn out or low morale.

Recommendation: I wish there was a magic trick to fix this problem, but realistically there isn’t. One of the best suggestions I can come up with is to contact other hospitals to see what they are doing to address the nursing shortage.

The Health Professional Recruitment Incentive Program is intended to assist with the recruitment of health professionals. The program provides a \$5,000 bonus to each health professional that enters into a contract and completes a two-year service obligation. The individual must be a full-time employee of a state certified health facility.

I also think De Smet has a lot to offer in terms of quality of life. Recruitment should include the fact that small town living can’t be beaten. If there are any students that work as aides at the nursing home or hospital, they definitely should be the target of recruitment efforts. It’s important to feel needed at a workplace. Letting a student know they are valued and you would like them to be a part of your team is important. Don’t assume they are going to leave De Smet in search of higher pay. Tell them the benefits of living in a small community and caring for people you know.

It may also be a good idea to get creative with scholarship programs. A hospital foundation of some sort would be a great source for funds for prospective nursing students. If De Smet offered to pay part of a student’s tuition with the stipulation that the student come back to the community to work for four years, it may be possible to compete more readily with larger salaries offered elsewhere.

HEALTHCARE
Nursing Shortage

Resources:

Applications and answers to questions can be obtained from:

SD Department of Health website:
www.state.sd.us/doh/rural/incentive.htm

SD Office of Rural Health
207 East Missouri Ave #1-A
Pierre, SD 57501
1-800-738-2301

LISTENING SESSION REPOSES

Issues & Challenges

Responses to the Question: What are the major issues and challenges facing the community of De Smet?

- Need community day care – after school care
- Ditto to community day care
- Nothing for young kids to do
- Nothing for young kids – need bowling or something – 7th & 8th grade
- Need something for younger generation to stay in the community – reason to stay – need to feel like you belong. Need a reason other than why you work here to stay around and get involved. Most of the activities that are available are not necessarily for new people in town.
- Need to find things to make young people to come back after post-high school.
- Volunteer a lot of time and effort to community projects – taking more time away from our business than we should – need community coordinator
- Person gets burned out from volunteering – need more volunteers
- To get our name out there – to get people to want to come here – marketing De Smet – signage – warm and inviting look
- Rely on labor force for nights, weekends and holidays – limited workforce for those hours.
- Keep main street full – done a good job
- Get younger people involved – always have to plan around school events, etc. get younger people involved in Chamber
- Getting people to live in town the size of De Smet – to realize the good things about De Smet.
- Good paying jobs with good benefits
- Employment issue – don't have a pool of candidates to pick from
- Maintaining what direction we are already going
- Existing businesses need to be able to compete with surrounding area businesses – price and convenience are the two things people look at when shopping in a particular area.
- Need to keep people shopping in town, not go out of the area to shop. Need people to support local business.
- Keeping business dollars here and attracting new businesses.
- Have workshops for existing stores to network together
- Getting funds to promote tourism, hunting and fishing, etc.
- Attract and retain young families
- Get younger people to step into roles of those who have done much for community
- Water quality is huge issue – rust
- No dentist
- American Legion needs more support; they do a number of projects for the community
- Youth put on a Veteran's Day Program and no one came...it was such a disappointment to a vet to see the lack of support.
- Membership in our organization is aging, we need our younger Veterans to step up.
- None of the boys in our school wanted to go to Boys' State and that is the first time ever...it's disappointing no one wants to participate.

LISTENING SESSION REPOSES

Issues & Challenges

- VFW and Legion would like to get some younger people involved.
- The Legion used to sponsor Boy Scouts and we need some younger parents to step up.
- We don't have a Legion team...you can't make kids participate
- We had a \$900 scholarship for a Boys' State participant and we still didn't get anyone to participate.
- Eastern Star and the Masonic Lodge has an aging group, we need young people to step up to volunteer
- People in town don't want to come to our meetings that are informative/helpful
- We need to get the word out that we have scholarships available.
- A lot of the people we need to help our membership don't live in town; many of the people don't want to be actively involved, so they won't join
- We need to be able to keep what we have economic development wise
- We need to shore up the businesses we have and help them expand if they want to
- Recruitment of young people
- Declining population base
- Downtown business merchants are young
- Need to replenish the businesses that have left the past few months
- Declining school enrollments and consolidation need to be addressed; we need to work together
- We let up when we don't have a building that is empty and needs to be filled
- Dev. Corp. has a lot to be proud of...we need to focus on the declining population in the age of 25-35
- The population decline is a serious problem when looking for people to take over the businesses we currently have
- We need to have a second job opportunity for younger couples...not just one good job, but a right second job
- It's coming down the chute...on the outside we look good, but underneath we need to address the younger population decline
- Loyalty to the community is a problem at times
- We need to improve technology
- Ag. And feedlot issues are going to see a lot of growth and we need to be able to move ahead
- New technologies are needed
- Diversity of jobs...we do well with industry, but need to expand with technology
- Need to expand the hospital opportunities
- Get younger people involved in the development corporation
- Ditto...the 30 something people aren't in the dev. Corp.
- Need to improve Main Street
- 20-40 year old age group is small; we need the amenities to attract them
- Higher dollar jobs in technology would be helpful; employers need to pay good wages
- Need to stay proactive rather than sitting back and waiting for something to fall apart
- Sidewalks and curbs need to be addressed
- Lack of adequate housing for young couples

LISTENING SESSION REPOSES

Issues & Challenges

- Dev. Corp. members are all volunteers; We play good defense, but very little offense
- Full-time or part-time economic dev. person would be great...it would help us moving forward
- Something to keep kids active so they aren't getting into trouble
- Long-term care/help for families in need long term....we have a lot of short term aid available, but nothing long term, but there is a need
- There is a need for something to attract young people and keep them out of trouble
- Need a youth center to keep kids occupied
- Kids think drinking is the thing to do...it's disturbing
- Keep De Smet growing/keep people coming
- Need qualified younger people to take over businesses for those businessmen that will be retiring
- Ditto
- Need for a support system for parents of young children...I'm concerned about some parents not being able to pass on good values to kids
- Need an attention paid to early childhood and parenting
- Families are dual income now and it's challenging to get volunteers b/c time is so limited for young people
- We need more daycare options
- We need jobs for younger people
- People don't really know how the food bank works...what if we want to donate to it or how do you utilize it? An explanation needs to be put in the paper or something
- Need education to keep people shopping in town...Main St. business men get it, but a lot of younger people and ag. People don't get it
- Nothing for tourists to do after 6:00 in the evening in the summer. Need to go elsewhere for something to do in the evening.
- Lack of awareness and appreciation for the distinction of Little Town on the Prairie
- To have someone to coordinate all tourism activities. To get young people to appreciate and support what we have
- More aware of what we have to offer our community.
- Keeping our youth active and in the community. The pool of people who volunteer gets smaller
- A lot of people don't know that Laura Ingalls Wilder activities are free to residents
- Always a challenge to get people involved – same people come to meetings. Get more people involved
- Get people involved.
- Town isn't aware of what the pageant and society has to offer
- De Smet is still unaware of the importance of tourism.
- Need to get a lot more involvement in the events.
- Tourism affects all in the town, but don't think everyone realizes it - need public relations to get point across.
- A lot of the small towns along the highway are envious of De Smet for what we have to offer.

LISTENING SESSION REPOSES

Issues & Challenges

- We want the people who are just sitting in their homes to get involved in the town.
- Need someone full time to focus
- Lack of communication from one organization to another, to downtown, to schools.
- All organizations getting along
- Many middle age people in our community do not shop in town. We need more support from them.
- Have to teach kids the importance of shopping locally
- Making and keeping Laura the #1 tourist attraction
- Training and educating local people on dealing with tourists
- Providing attractions that build on the Laura theme
- Lack of awareness and appreciation of the distinction our town has
- We need to excite everyone we can about being the little town on the prairie
- Lack of land for development
- Loss of retail businesses
- No bowling alleys, theaters for the kids
- Declining population
- More jobs for kids
- No place for the kids to go
- Keeping youth in the area after they graduate from high school
- Opportunities after college
- Rising cost of healthcare
- Tough to staff the hospital and nursing home
- Not a lot of 20-40 year olds
- Housing for younger people is an issue
- Something to attract people to town to live here...need something for the women
- Electrical power needs to be more reliable
- Attracting qualified workers
- Job betterment
- Funding of schools; don't want to cut programs because that has the possibility of attracting people
- Worker's comp costs need to be kept down
- A more diversified opportunity for kids in extracurricular activities...gymnastics, football, etc
- Need gateway signage and signs in general
- Re-do all new building and historical buildings
- Getting young people to take part in projects
- We need to get dogs tied up...I'm scared to walk in town...the dogs may not hurt you...please keep dogs tied up
- Keep youth in the community
- Start young farmers...give them a chance to farm
- Dwindling ag base...it's a dying field...capital intensive so it's a real setback
- If someone grew up on a farm, they are alright, but someone trying to get into it, its almost impossible

LISTENING SESSION REPOSSES

Issues & Challenges

- South Dakota has a perception in the larger US as not being advanced...we're in the sticks.
- Less and less farmers statewide is a problem
- Little family farmer is gone...one small elevator...used to have 3...no salebarn
- Core problems are getting services in town for ag....some farmers can't get what they need, so they don't shop in town
- We used to be self-contained...we're exporting our natural resources
- Need to redistribute the wealth
- Need value added ag...might as well be here rather than anywhere else
- Maintain the older farmers, but provide assistance for the change of generation...make it feasible for kids to get into farming
- Many of the clientele in Main St. businesses is at least 40 and up
- Concentrated animal feeding operations will be an issue for zoning
- Sometimes its urban vs. rural for the feedlots or against them
- Make sure the county rules are fair for everyone...have to have the zoning in place before there is a problem
- We can't fight over who gets what
- No one wants the smell by them
- Number of farmers is declining
- Many of the older generation of farmers don't want feedlots...that's not how it was when they grew up
- We need info. On feedlots...people can make good decisions if they are informed, but we don't get great info early on
- Hire a tourism director
- Strengthen the tourism Development and Marketing plan
- Be recognized as an important part of the economic development strategy by De Smet citizens
- Develop a strong marketing message, materials and marketing theme that are consistent
- Develop stronger partners in the region...Terry Redlin Center, Corn Palace...
- Unite Main Street retail stores, city with same branding efforts
- Historic main street with historic curb appeal-historic lamp posts
- Cemetery committee needs funding...lots of people come through the cemetery and we are responsible for it looking nice, but we're not supposed to spend money
- De Smet residents fail to recognize the value and importance of the economic aspect that tourism brings to the community
- A few hands do the work-need more community support
- Some local people and residents don't realize what an important brand that LIW is to this town
- We lack an accurate way to measure the impact of LIW
- Customer service is everyone's job
- We need to teach people in the area about customer service
- As business owners, we lack the time and energy to do all of the tourism promotion
- Information needs to be conveyed by everyone in the community to potential customers

LISTENING SESSION REPOSES

Issues & Challenges

- Seek funding for tourism director
- Position of the director needs to be professional and knowledgeable
- Need a place to provide information at all hours of the day
- Need area marketing for all cities around
- Need better signage and need to learn ways available for funding such project
- People – trouble getting enough people to man ambulances – the commitment is tremendous, and it's hard to get qualified people.
- Ditto. It's going to be major pretty quick.
- Drawing, training and retaining volunteers is hard to get (Good Samaritan)
- Not enough room at the fire hall – need a new one
- People and new fire hall pretty important
- Fire hall – we have 7 trucks and 6 bays, so we're borrowing one bay from the City. Also looking to replace a tanker
- Number of people.
- Need more EMTs – a new fire hall and ambulance barn. Also looking at C-Scan machine for the hospital.
- EMT recruitment. Need to keep voicing our needs.
- Don't have anyone to put on an EMT course if we have someone that needs to be trained.
- C-scan
- Getting people to work at small town hospitals and nursing homes – what can we do to get people to come here to work – the pay isn't as good elsewhere.
- EMT situation
- Staffing at the hospital – it's not a problem right now, but it will be in the future. A lot of the nursing staff live 30 miles away and can't get here at the spur of the moment.
- Ditto on the staffing (nursing home)
- Staffing a problem (nursing home). There are shifts that need to be filled.
- Need a new fire hall – we've outgrown ours.
- Fire department and ambulance work together more – training, etc.
- Amount of time it takes for training (ambulance). National certification is hard on people to get the time.
- Growing pains at the fire hall
- If we got a larger fire truck, it wouldn't fit in the fire hall
- Lack of younger people willing to dedicate themselves is a problem.
- Fire department has more training hours required now than it used to
- Manpower is the main problem.
- CNA's are tapping into the school for people to train
- C-scan machine is needed in the hospital for better patient care and also to be able to keep patients in the hospital rather than ship them out.
- Ambulance crew is doing a wonderful job – we have EMTs, but don't have paramedics. EMTs can't run IVs, so we have to call over to Brookings to have someone come over to transport someone with an IV running.
- Ambulance crew support and staffing

LISTENING SESSION REPOSES

Issues & Challenges

- Nursing shortage is definitely hitting De Smet, along with Certified Nursing Assistants. When they come out of school, they want to be in larger communities with larger pay.
- Things for kids to do in town
- To get technological jobs in town
- Try to grow the community
- Get kids to get higher education, but want to come back to De Smet to live and raise families
- Have incentive for kids to come back here
- Get technology into the town to bring people here
- Change isn't easy, but as rural towns we need to keep up with everything to keep people coming back
- Maybe you just have to go out into the world and see the ugly to realize what you have back in your hometown.
- Need different jobs (high-tech) to get good, dedicated people to town, who would be willing to volunteer as an EMT or fireperson
- Need to offer the right kind of jobs (diversity).
- Need to utilize the facilities we do have.
- You're just treading water if you are talking bad about the town, the people in it or the businesses.
- Not a lot of high paying jobs in the community for women.
- Having a place for kids to go to do something productive
- A youth center – grades 6-12
- After school program for the younger kids
- Nothing for kids to do at night
- Ditto
- Losing our enrollment in the schools
- Keeping young people in the community
- Funding for the school system
- Numbers are falling and we are relying on people in De Smet to keep things going
- Ditto
- Funding
- A lot of underage drinking
- Something for the kids to do so they make better decisions
- Keeping a stable population in town
- Funding for education and keeping people around
- Education funding
- Something for young people to do
- Hard to get parents involved in finding alternatives for kids to do
- So many kids involved in so many things
- Affordable housing for young people
- We have the industrial park, but the people don't move here because there's no housing
- School staff has been cut to the bare bones. We continue to add curriculum with less staff

LISTENING SESSION REPOSES

Issues & Challenges

- We've tried youth centers, etc. several times and it's failed. Needs to be a natural place where the kids feel comfortable going – maybe too much church or adult participation
- More opportunities for our young people to stay in town – the best and brightest seem to leave for other places
- Nothing to do in town – always have to go to other towns
- Nothing for kids to do
- Rec center for kids to go to
- Rec center
- Rec center
- There aren't many jobs for kids in the summer
- Rec center
- Alternatives for kids to do
- Too many cops
- Ditto
- Keeping industry and our 20 to 40 year olds in De Smet
- Maintain an adequate amount of services
- Keep younger people in town
- More opportunities in other towns for 20 to 40 year old people
- 20 to 40 year olds have kids and they need to have things to do for those kids
- There have to be other social opportunities for 20 somethings
- Getting younger people to work on projects is a challenge
- We can't do all of the volunteer work
- We need a base of ideas from the younger people, they have fresh ideas and we need to get them involved
- Keep people here, but we can't hold kids back...they need to go, but come back to the community
- How can we be sure to save the high school for the community...we have to do it for our young people
- Main Street needs renovating
- More things to do
- Maintain the industrial park...need to get the population here to support
- Housing is a problem in De Smet
- Business and workers go out of town
- Built a big industry by my house, but it has gravel by it and I want it paid
- The school is a concern with declining enrollment
- Transportation in the community is a problem
- The senior citizens center is underutilized...it should be used for more than playing cards...it would be nice to do crafts, dinners and things like that
- Aberdeen has a nice senior center, why can't we
- We don't have anything for our young people
- Our town could do more to help senior citizen, we made De Smet what it is
- Keep young people the importance of shopping in town
- Get something for our young people to do

LISTENING SESSION REPOSSES

Issues & Challenges

- I am in a dead end street, and there is no sign letting people know it is a dead end street
- Beresford has great housing, but why can't we
- Transportation for senior citizens
- Good clothing store in town, I would shop for clothes here if they were here
- Transportation for those who don't drive anymore
- Meals on Wheels program...people don't meet together anymore, they just eat at home the meals that are delivered
- Meals on Wheels could be delivered to the Senior Citizens Center and then we could visit
- Youth need to be entertained
- Pool improved
- Tourism
- Take care of the elderly...we need to communicate to the City what we need to do
- Transportation

LISTENING SESSION REPOSESES

Strengths and Assets

Responses to the Question: What are the Major Strengths and Assets for the Community of De Smet?

- Good school system
- Close-knit community
- Can leave doors unlocked – safe place to live
- School system is good
- Excellent medical – 4 or 5 doctors in town – excellent hospital
- School system is good
- Very good community involvement – can get people involved in activities
- Sports programs in school seem to be pretty solid
- Fact that people are willing to step up and work together to get something done
- Provide a wide variety of jobs – industrial especially
- Business men and women in town willing to try to bring more businesses to town that offer more opportunity for people to work
- Small town is the strength – kids are a lot safer here than in larger community
- Good area for outdoor activities – hunt, fish, etc.
- Small community
- Have a lot of forward-thinking things going on
- Hunting and fishing resources bring dollars
- Diversified economy – tourism, health care, strong education system, industry and agriculture
- Safe for children – good education – reasonable housing – employment
- When there is a need, the community pulls together – crisis or positive
- Friendly people
- Aggressiveness of business community and town leaders to get new businesses and get the gaps filled on main street
- Neat, clean town
- People are extremely friendly
- Forward looking leadership
- City council willing to take stand on sensitive issues (junk, clutter)
- Low crime rate
- Affordable real estate to start a business
- Exceptionally supportive of our kids
- Tourism, quality of life, quality of businesses in town, medical clinics and hospital
- Clean community
- Pride in being a member of De Smet community, because they want what's best for everybody
- Medical services are excellent
- Whenever we have fundraisers people come to them
- If someone needs assistance, we're there especially for kids
- VFW members work with Legion members...a lot of people are in both groups
- Many Legions don't support baseball teams anymore, we do
- We are a neat, clean community
- We keep our Legion hall neat and clean; we rent it out

LISTENING SESSION REPOSSES

Strengths and Assets

- Our National Guard is something we're proud of; we could recognize that more than what we do
- Old Settlers Day we get a lot of support; Masonic Lodge opens up for an art display
- We have an original Harvey Dunn picture done for the Legion on display
- It would be great to bring in an art display again
- We are so fortunate to have the number of doctors we have
- We have friendly people and merchants
- Great fire dept. and ambulance service
- We have 5 doctors and 2 PA's; our relationship with Huron has worked out great
- We have great medical facilities
- We have a clean community
- Our development corporation is a strength b/c we are active
- Need a full-time person to coordinate activities and economic dev.
- Community leaders are aggressive to get empty buildings filled
- Our work ethic is phenomenal
- Location for hunting
- Industrial development park is full...we need to expand it
- People aren't afraid to take risks for businesses...ex. Dairy Queen and Subway
- We are well-known across the state
- Quiet, peaceful place to raise kids
- Crime-free
- Youth are one of our biggest assets
- We have to work together; we need to get younger people involved
- Recreational facilities, hospital, industry
- Long-term employers are in De Smet
- Our location of being in the middle of a bunch of bigger towns is an asset
- We're pretty much so a full-service community; most anything you need can be bought here
- Shopping at home needs to be addressed
- We don't spend a lot of time squabbling among ourselves
- We have disagreements, but we get over it
- Need to take care of the industry we have; Lyle signs couldn't be replaced
- Many aren't afraid to change
- If there is a project that needs to be done, we get it done within...people will step up to take the risk
- The vitality of the community can't be beaten
- Attitude is great in town
- Laura Ingalls Wilder tourism is being tapped into
- Our geographic area is great, we're far enough away from larger communities, but close enough to get the things we need
- Good sense of cohesion in the community
- De Smet keeps up the town really well...there is a lot of pride in how homes look
- Fortunate to have a number of healthcare professionals...they all live here and put kids in the schools
- We're the county seat and that helps

LISTENING SESSION REPOSES

Strengths and Assets

- Our industrial park does wonders for this town...if we didn't have that, we wouldn't be where we are today
- I appreciate the school working with the religious sector in support
- De Smet Women's Group assists a lot of projects
- The library is impressive...people like how it is run...get compliments on it from visitors
- I feel safe and peaceful in this community
- Brought 3 boys here and it's nice to have the values here to help raise them
- People are impressed with how clean our town is
- Community supports each other in times of grief and sorrow
- Friendly community; drive down the street and people wave at you
- The church leaders and pastors all work together regardless of denomination
- Ministerial society meets monthly
- We have 4 resident pastors which is a benefit
- Main Street in De Smet is impressive, neat and well-maintained
- Lots of variety to choose from for things you need
- Great FFA club and 4-H group
- Incredibly talented pool of people
- Good leaders and promoters
- Town well taken care of. People care
- Small town feeling.
- Nice main street
- Nice shops
- Fortunate with all industry
- Medical community
- Work well together and public supports ideas
- People – small town atmosphere – safety – caring of people who live here
- Home of Laura Ingalls Wilder!!!!
- If you enjoy the quality of life here, you make it work to live here
- No crime
- Quality of life
- People – small town atmosphere
- Laura Ingalls Wilder pull
- Neatness and tidiness of the town
- Ditto to all
- Eileen works full strength to operate this community and comes up with ideas and works really hard on infrastructure of this community
- People – cooperative spirit, pride in community and willingness to step up
- De Smet has always been alive.
- Aubrey Sherwood – came on the scene when no one cared about Laura or Harvey Dunn and he brought it all to the forefront
- All people involved with Laura Ingalls Wilder should be commended
- Friendliness
- Twice in the past two years USA Today named De Smet was one of top tourist destinations.
- Going to be in Appleseed, a children's magazine.
- Young people for the most part on Main Street.

LISTENING SESSION REPOSES

Strengths and Assets

- Hospital, Good Samaritan, industry, eye doctor, dentist.
- Older people really support our town
- Homestead
- Hunting and fishing/bird watching
- Good meeting place
- We're trying to do something positive, which is better than just rolling over and dying
- We are ahead of a number of other communities
- Lots of very dedicated people that support the community
- Innovative thinkers
- Cleanliness of town
- City workers keep the City looking great...they work hard and should be commended
- We have a tourism community that works hard to improve itself
- People...council steps up and does what isn't necessarily popular, but gets positive things done
- Highway 14 should have a group of towns get together to accomplish more regionally
- Good water supply
- Industry is our backbone
- Electricity and coal trains...need to capitalize on that to power industry
- We do well even with a community being this small...we just had a Subway and Dairy Queen open recently
- Hunting season brings in a number of people for tourism
- Progressive development board that works together with the council
- Great schools
- Water and sewer are OK, but we need to plan ahead before there is trouble
- Good water supply
- Good coordination between elected bodies
- Very dedicated school officials and staff
- We score high on testing
- De Smet has always been able to get together and work things out...we cooperate and a lot of towns don't ...we iron things out quickly
- Our tourism group has just taken off and they do a fantastic job at promoting tourism
- Coordinated signs
- Beautification of Main Street with little town on the prairie
- Small community for the kids is a big advantage
- Great community compared to larger communities
- Gotta keep moving...it's hard work, but we have to keep doing it
- Great tourism group
- Lack of crime
- More opportunities for people
- Healthcare facilities are a plus
- Active development corporation
- Great schools
- Everyone works together
- Small Midwest values...great place to raise kids
- Location

LISTENING SESSION REPOSES

Strengths and Assets

- Quality of people who live here is outstanding
- We're far enough away from big cities to keep our work force
- We feel safe here
- Active development corporation
- 3 really nice parks
- Airport
- Great eating establishments...lots of choices
- Cost of living is a lot more reasonable
- More attention needs to be paid to rural America
- Small town feeling
- Quality of people brings a lot of people here
- Amenities around De Smet are an asset
- We're forward thinking
- Lifestyle is great
- Positive people
- Lots of assets on Hwy. 14 recreation, oil line, rail line
- Have some ag based businesses to bring people to town
- Financial institutions to help farmers and FSA
- We need to think outside the box
- It'd be great to have an ethanol plant
- I moved here just because everyone was so friendly
- County seat is a big advantage
- 2 major highways is an asset
- Hospital is a plus
- Lots of doctors and nurses
- Opportunity for careers in town
- Financial institutions are a benefit...they support us
- Fortunate to have an implement dealer
- De Smet is the home of famous author, Laura Ingalls Wilder. We have a worldwide visitors market. People come from all over the world to visit the little town on the prairie
- De Smet has a diversified economy-industry, tourism, ag, healthcare, and education
- Multiplier effect-industry, tourism, healthcare, and education, pay the workers and the workers in turn spend that wage in the grocery store, gas station
- A tourism and marketing committee has been developed to promote De Smet and are pooling resources to do so
- Joint marketing has begun, we are uniting advertising dollars in a more effective manner
- Ambulance is a private, non-profit corporation, not relying on city and keeping our heads above water.
- The people are our strength
- Progressive
- Improved our ambulances in the past 10 to 20 years
- Fire department - we've got a full 30 man crew and a waiting list
- The contractors in De Smet all get along well enough that we work well together.
- Everybody seems to step up when they need to.
- The people

LISTENING SESSION REPOSES

Strengths and Assets

- The doctors, the hospital and clinic
- Got on the ambulance crew when “we didn’t have a pot to piss in or a window to throw it out of “ but we started running it like a business and we are strong now.
- Best ambulance crew and medical facility
- I’d put our Doctors up against Sioux Falls Doctors any day. The ambulance crew and firemen are the most dedicated anywhere
- Big sense of pride that runs strong when people talk about being from De Smet. A great sense of belonging.
- Always a strive to do better and be better – and that’s a good thing. The only challenge is, how do we keep it going and who is going to carry it on when we retire
- Resources are wonderful in town. When home health care came it was great – it was so needed!
- Empowering the people in town to use the resources we have so we can keep them in town.
- I appreciate all the services we have and all the people who are working to keep the resources here.
- Ditto
- One of the greatest strengths of our community is the strength of our community.
- The amount of caring in this community shows by the amount of turnout you’ve had for these meetings
- The people in this room are one of the greatest strengths. The De Smet community needs to thank those out there who are 40, 50, 60 and 70 years old – they paved the way for where we are now.
- The continuous support to the hospital
- Support for the troops in the De Smet area
- The camaraderie in the town. All the medical practices work together.
- Everyone chips in and helps each other. When you have competition it makes you be your best and you strive more, but yet, in the end, you work together.
- I think we’ll just stay here until we’re old
- It’s fun to have a scanner and track the response time of all the rescue teams. I’ve lived here all my life and seen it, heard about it, and now lived it first hand, and am in awe of the rescue squads.
- De Smet has one of the best and nicest nursing homes in the area.
- Far and above superior care, cleanliness, staff, friendly people in our nursing home.
- A lot of people that move here call this there home and want to make it their home and are proud to be here in De Smet.
- Religious affiliations in town
- Pastors are young and “with it”
- It’s great that we have a community that wants to stay alive
- Working together is the key to keeping us afloat
- We always have to remember to support our nursing home also, as long term care is always important.
- Beautiful park – people always comment on how nice it is. People can camp up there and there are showers, etc.
- Newspaper – a lot of small towns don’t have one
- You can get what you need here – groceries, hardware, etc.

LISTENING SESSION REPOSES

Strengths and Assets

- Small community where everyone knows everyone
- Tourism
- Tourism – what we have here
- Good school system
- Caliber of kids is why up there – we hold them to high standards
- School facility – technology we are ahead of a lot of other schools
- No child left behind – we are in the “distinguished” category
- Small town
- Tourism is a major draw for a lot of people. You could spend a whole day here and not see everything
- We are the county seat
- Main street businesses – they do a lot for caring for people in the town
- Number of opportunities that students have for classes for extra curricular
- People are willing to help out – whether school or church activities
- Support in the arts – plays and music
- Industrial park
- Even though the population is falling, what needs to get done gets done – no matter what the situation
- People
- Strong school – a lot of kids that come out of here that are extremely successful
- Diverse business community
- Ditto to all that has been said
- High standard to live up to in the community as a whole
- Health care facilities are great
- Ministerial association is outstanding
- Enormous community pride
- Strong development corporation
- Strong rescue services
- Volunteerism in schools
- Good organizations
- Ability to have businesses come in to town
- Lots of doctors
- It’s good to have lots of doctors
- No crime....it’s safe
- Lots of community pride
- Tight-knit community
- Industrial park
- Safe school ...It’s a great place to be
- Multiple gas stations
- Golf course
- Good businesses have been around for awhile...
- School system
- Industrial park has a number of great businesses...one’s that won’t pick up and leave for China
- Child rearing couples

LISTENING SESSION REPOSSES

Strengths and Assets

- The young people we do have...we don't have a huge number of them, but the ones we do have, are quality
- Acknowledge our weaknesses and we try to fix them
- Schools and churches are huge assets
- People from surrounding communities come here to work, which is a huge asset
- I have relatives from surrounding communities who question how we do what we do...other communities are jealous
- Gung-ho people on projects
- When there is a need, the community comes together...people are helping and care for others
- Location being close to the lake is a plus, but then the job opportunities were there, too
- Hunting and fishing opportunities
- Good, progressive people
- No stoplights
- Intersection of 2 major highways
- Growth and development of the community
- I'm thankful for the industrial park, it has made out town
- We support one another
- Our leaders have done well in setting us up for the future
- Great parks
- I've always lived here, I love it, I won't leave it
- When we retired, we never thought of leaving, I love it here
- People are amazed at the number of things we have to offer
- I'm 90 years old and I tell my kids not to move me anywhere else when I get old
- It doesn't cost as much to live here as it does in other communities
- We have a church home for most everyone
- We're the biggest little town in the state
- We have a lot of professional services, chiropractors, dentist, doctors, eye doctor
- We are a clean and neat little town
- We're the county seat

LISTENING SESSION REPOSES

Projects

Responses to the Question: What are Projects would you like to see accomplished in De Smet in the next 2, 5, 10, 15 or 20 years?

- Community day care
- Wellness center – fitness center just opened and is filling a need, but they are talking about a wellness center (racquetball court, indoor walking track)
- Community center / wellness center
- Multi-activities – multi-purpose gym
- Offer access to high-speed internet all through the community – offer to every home – internet café
- Amateur baseball team – different outdoor activities
- Bowling alley or family entertainment – something to keep young people in town in the evening instead of Brookings or Watertown.
- Bike/walking trail
- Outdoor ice skating pond – roller skating rink
- Something for the young kids
- For pre-school to be free and to eat with the rest of the school kids – some people may not be able to pay for it, so the kids don't go to pre-school
- Rifle range – hunting club, trap shoot, etc.
- Gun safety class
- Free gun locks – make it known that these are available.
- Need some streets redone – infrastructure – Main Street Project
- New fire hall
- New sidewalks and curbs, etc. – there is some curb & gutter, but in bad shape
- “Our main product is friendly people” should be on a sign
- Youth center – need some place in town for kids to go
- Work with Dev. Corp. to get more businesses in
- Get more people to shop in town
- Water – infrastructure
- Sent out of town for medical tests – would be nice to be able to do that here
- Encompassing events center – large room that people could rent for receptions, etc. could also have activities for kids there...
- How big do we want De Smet to be?
- Partnership between De Smet and a university (Madison, Brookings, etc.)
- Elementary school needs new building or something that reflects the town
- Year-round historical museum – depot only open during the summer months
- Build even more on the Laura Ingalls Wilder base that is already here.
- Build on lakes, etc. for a draw to our community
- In the next ten to twenty years we need to focus on infrastructure, curb and gutter, etc.
- Annual events – antique fairs, street fairs, craft fairs to bring people into the community
- Spruce up main street a little bit – light posts, etc.
- Signage on businesses
- Keep working on main street

LISTENING SESSION REPOSES

Projects

- Full time Project Coordinator for De Smet – need help to market De Smet
- Curb appeal for main street – quaint signage and lights, etc. “Laura’s Main Street”
- Directional signage
- Youth center
- Community awareness project – awareness of shopping local
- Main street
- New curb and gutter – signage
- Handicap accessibility
- Get new people to help with 10th of June celebration
- We are already branded – have community be more self-contained – have more products here instead of go out of town
- Need banners on light posts
- Walking trail from town out by Silver Lake – Laura Ingalls Walking Trail
- Consolidation of schools – everyone needs to keep a clear mind and work together to make the process easier
- Theater for plays; a lot of talent for community theater
- Main Street project; total facelift-street lights, sidewalks, handicap accessibility
- In the next 10 years do the curb and gutter throughout the town
- We need to get more industry into our town so people come back
- Improvements to Laura Ingalls Wilder museum...tap into it even more
- We need growth be it in industry or retail...we’re holding our own, but we need to grow, not just stay the same.
- We need our younger people to volunteer
- We need to let people to know what a great school system we have
- I’d like to see us double in size; it wouldn’t hurt our crime rate, we could still offer our services
- Sidewalks and curbs
- Signage could be better outside of town
- Signage could give thanks to people as they are leaving town
- Wireless technology needs to happen
- Total renovation of Main Street...dress it up
- Put together packages that would attract technology jobs
- Within 2 years expand the dev. Corp. land...new business in it in 5
- New housing development
- Sidewalks and curbs...keep it neat and clean
- Renovate downtown
- Push us as being the #1 tourist attraction on SD
- Project coordinator for economic dev.
- Think more on regionalism...bring in Lake Preston and Arlington to work together
- Bring in higher paying jobs
- Feedlots are going to happen...public needs to know the smell can be controlled with new technology
- Rather than just holding our own, maybe we could actually grow

LISTENING SESSION REPOSES

Projects

- Maybe grow to 2,000 in 20 years
- Need the infrastructure before increasing population
- In 2 years, I hope all the buildings in the industrial park are full
- Pave the gravel streets in town
- Industrial park area needs room to expand
- New street and gutter soon
- New and expanded daycare facility
- Assisted living
- Program or dev. Corp. coordinator
- More white collar jobs
- Bring the college graduates back to De Smet
- Total re-do of Main Street
- Full-time positions for economic dev./tourism director
- Promotion of our largest lake needs to improve
- Project coordinator
- Consistent contact or resource for people in need...be it ICAP or whatever...people need a viable resource to help people in need
- Youth center...a place for kids to relax and hang out
- Ditto
- Spend money on a youth center would show kids we care
- More activities for kids in the 3 to 12 age group...summer t-ball doesn't start until age 7
- There isn't a lot of recreation opportunities for young people in off time...skating, gymnastics, soccer...need more youth centered activities
- Many people drive their kids for rec. opportunities of dance, skating, gym...why can't that be here on a smaller basis
- Community theater would be a nice enhancement
- Maybe a rec center for the kids would be nice so the kids don't have to drive somewhere...a place to work out and hang out
- A place for city rec. programs inside would be nice
- Keep it at least as good as it is
- Many people are very creative...maybe an arts place where people could sell some of their artwork/projects
- Community project coordinator and development coordinator– have some diligent people in the community who would be great for this.
- More activities after 6:00
- Program coordinator. We are pooling our marketing/tourism and would like to see someone get that done. Need a consistent marketing theme.
- Build partnerships within the region – Corn Palace, etc.
- Beautification of main street to make it inviting
- We've accomplished a lot in the past several years and we just need to keep focusing ahead for our town
- People need to be aware of all there is to do
- Be good advocates of our community

LISTENING SESSION REPOSES

Projects

- Need to bring in all kinds and levels of business to bring in a cross-section of professionals, etc.
- Something for tourists to do in the evenings.
- Some place for kids to go all through the year
- Beautify main street – making it more historic
- Main street project – curb/gutter/handicap accessible
- Need nice sidewalk going from Laura Ingalls Wilder shop to downtown
- Need sidewalk repair
- More unity in town
- Main street project and infrastructure
- Tourism and economic development staff
- Need signage about historic main street or downtown
- Need to develop historic downtown
- Town has to get more young people and keep our young here. It's an aging population and what do we old people know?
- Lake Thompson, home of Laura Ingalls Wilder – have the potential to grow
- Signage – lighted at each edge of town
- Need a quaint downtown
- Don't limit vision – we have quite a few hunting lodges, we have Lake Thompson. It's not just Laura they are going to like here.
- The more people that are here, the better we all are.
- Offer something to entice people/businesses to come here. Need tax breaks, etc.
- Kiosk out by Silver Lake could be used as a drop off for literature on what's available for anyone to do. Needs to be upgraded and made into a nice site.
- Signs to welcome outside of town
- Laura Ingalls Wilderness Trail
- Landscape around corner 14 and 25
- Keep the banners nice and new looking
- Do not blow the noon whistle during the summer it frightens the tourists
- More Living the Life with Laura projects
- Along the shores of Silver Lake Nature Walk; could include bird watching posts
- The Big Slough-the part sloughs play in water purification posts
- Lake Thompson Watershed get project report on that
- Get funding for the annexation of the houses at the golf course
- Keep up with all of the projects
- Water, sewer and sidewalks all need to be replaced, they are dangerous
- Three electric boards that need to work together
- School has funding issues, we need more kids to help keep the programs we have
- Streets and sidewalks need help
- Keep the good, young people in town...more upscale housing and opportunities
- Sidewalks
- School system needs to figure out a plan how all the schools of Kingsbury County can work together

LISTENING SESSION REPOSES

Projects

- We need to keep up on resurfacing the streets and start doing curb and gutter
- Need more community involvement from community to communicate what they want...we try to please people, but if they don't let us know what they want, it's hard to help them
- Curb and gutter
- Project coordinator for economic dev. and tourism
- We need to keep the people we have here happy
- Working with Lake Community Action in Brookings to work together
- We need to hang on to what we have, others want it and they'll take it if we let them
- Sidewalks, curb, gutter
- All schools in area would be helped if we had things for young people; esp. a problem in the summer
- Ethanol plant would e good because of our ag background
- Biodiesel plan would help
- Main Street and 3rd street done
- Need a new fire hall
- Biodiesel plant...we have enough water to make it work
- City council needs to prioritize what to do
- We could withstand some more industry
- Land that is platted for houses...we should put water there, so it is appealing for those building
- Hard to find housing all the time
- Sewer, water and sidewalks
- Surrounded by sloughs, makes building developments difficult to expand with
- We have to spend the money to make housing development: work with rural dev. and Interglacial
- Young people want new homes, we need to address that in housing
- Landlocked
- Housing project needs paving, sewer, gutter...it's expensive, but we have to do it
- Infrastructure, esp. on Main Street needs help
- Fire hall expansion
- Replace signs on a rotating basis...maybe do a 10th of replacement every year...maintain what we have
- Closer communication with the county and the school...maybe annual meetings would help report in
- Infrastructure needs to be kept up
- Need good housing dev. that is attractive to young couples
- Work with county and city on needs for youth recreation
- Laundromat
- Bowling alley
- Need something to keep the kids busy during the summer
- We have good roads coming into town
- Consolidation/cooperation between the schools in the county

LISTENING SESSION REPOSSES

Projects

- Teenagers need something to do
- Non-athletes need something to do, kids can't be bored or they get in trouble
- More retail
- Bowling alley, teen center
- Expand industrial park
- Teen center
- Need to keep kids off streets
- Can't import everything and export our youth
- Biodiesel
- Wellness center
- Industry that is ag related
- More industry to keep the kids coming back to us
- Additional industry both white and blue collar
- Something that brings farmers to town...ag industry
- Need to make sure everyone shops in town...we need those tax dollars
- Main Street project
- Maintain emergency room...get care started here at home
- Hire a development coordinator/tourism person
- Be proactive, not reactive in business recruitment
- Get the trains to stop parking in intersections...it's dangerous for the emergency vehicles
- We need to continue to capitalize on our tourism
- Historical recognition may help open up grants/focus
- Signage needs to be improved
- We need to look at expansion for Kingsbury County, not just De Smet...what's good for the county is good for us
- Beautification of Main Street
- 24/7 information access
- Tourism director
- Need something to keep people in town for more than one day...need something for people to do for 2-3 days
- A facelift for main street with lights and signs
- New trails for hiking
- More recreation
- More tourism targeting bus tours
- Project manager
- Sidewalks
- Need another veterinarian...need a guy to help with tire changes
- Like to see the mayor re-elected so he can carry through with all of his project ideas
- Ag related industry
- Before Main Street, we have to have industry to get people here to spend money
- Wind power
- Power outages need to be discussed

LISTENING SESSION REPOSES

Projects

- More ag industry...maybe a welder manufacturing for gates or something; they could start small and grow
- We need to work with Arlington and Lake Preston because we are all fighting for the same thing
- Ag industries
- Govt. or state to step in for incentive of value added ag...improvement of prices for our farmers...need to reduce the subsidies to farmers
- Need more old people for our elderly housing
- Short term...meat market, vet, tire repair, ag processing, corn ethanol plant
- Competitive elevator bidding on grain along with a feed store
- SD certified beef could be here to process; Kingsbury county could provide those cattle
- Become an overnight destination for visitors
- Build an information Kiosk open 365-24-7 trying with historic theme
- Develop a signage plan that includes gateway and directional signs tying into the historic theme
- Develop a professional photo library for advertising
- Develop a public relations program
- Rescue vehicle
- High school “shadowing” with EMTs to see if they want to become EMTs or go into the health care field
- Cat scan machine
- Fire hall
- Get my replacement EMT to take the course so I can retire
- Statewide EMT community get together to put some pressure on to get some minimum requirements for the State of South Dakota and gear a program to that. Right now we have on average a 5 minute response time, but when we don’t have enough personnel, that’s going to increase and we are going to lose some people.
- New fire hall
- Try to get youth involved...shadowing, youth center...to let them know a small town is not a bad place to be.
- Ensure that we keep our good hospital and clinic.
- Need to bring eye doctor, dentist.
- Make all health care businesses handicap accessible.
- Main street project
- New fire hall and new fire equipment
- Fire hall – also get some kind of teen center.
- Get businesses to come back (hardware store)
- Fire hall
- More and better equipment (fire). Need to upgrade when new technology comes along
- Offer EMT classes – have a state exam rather than a national exam
- New main street
- I would like us to be the Wal Mart of the Prairie: “If we don’t have it, you don’t need it!”

LISTENING SESSION REPOSES

Projects

- Be sure that equipment and staff are up-to-date and that we can provide the care we are capable of.
- Update equipment at the hospital. Health care is such a vast changing resource, we need to keep up with the current standards.
- Bike/running trail
- Main street
- “If Lake Preston can do it, we certainly can”
- We need to change with the times, we can’t be complacent. There’s always better!
- For society in general to change its opinion on nursing home and long term care. This is not where you go to die, it’s where you go to live safer
- Ditto to all
- Need to update
- We have to remember what we are all doing – helping people
- Kids community entertainment. Use old fire hall as a place for kids to hang out – pool tables, etc. Can’t call it a teen center, cuz they wouldn’t go if it’s called that.
- Young adults don’t have a lot of entertainment in town. Fire department had the greatest street dance – would like to see more of that happen. We have a lot of thinkers and talkers, but not a lot of “do-ers”.
- Would like to bring back a really nice celebration.
- Make sure that there are people coming in behind the Doctors, etc. when they leave.
- Offer incentives for nurses to come here.
- New fire hall
- Buy more equipment
- Loading bay at hospital for the ambulance.
- Canopy out front of nursing home for transferring patients.
- Get “No-Name” back up and going. Get groups to put on dances, etc.
- Sidewalks on highway by pool and schools, etc. Don’t know how we haven’t had any kids hurt. The kids walk up and down the highway because there are no sidewalks.
- It would be good to use #2 to solve #1, and if we could do that, it would be great!
- A good manpower resource is the high school kids. We need to make it more favorable and fun for them to want to be an EMT or fireperson, etc.
- If two or three from a company will volunteer to be an EMT, these are the advantages you have in this town – give some incentives (free memberships, etc.).
- Smooth school consolidation – needs to be done right
- Community development continue to create jobs for people
- Some jobs that might drive the salaries even more in the community (professional)
- Have a smooth consolidation process
- Fill the “holes” on main street
- Maintain or improve what we have instead of going the other way.
- Fence of the pool extended into the grass so kids could lay towels on the grass and lay there
- Community development
- A rec center

LISTENING SESSION REPOSSES

Projects

- Clothing store for someone who's not a teenager and not 90 – something affordable
- A drama theater
- Ditto on the theater
- Community education program for adult education
- Men's clothing store
- Get people in the surrounding communities to buy into the consolidation process
- Tourism expanded – everyone working together more to promote our town
- Main street project – unique to De Smet
- Paintball course
- Movie theater
- Bowling alley
- Movie theater
- Something small for kids to hang out...nothing fancy, just a place to go
- Bowling alley and movie theater
- Rodeo arena
- Daycare center
- Community theater besides karaoke at the bar
- Places for teens to work
- Enrollment at school increase
- Avoid consolidation
- We need to keep our school open because we don't want to go anywhere else
- We need to do something with the water tower...lots of communities paint pictures or something...maybe we could do something like our motto on it
- Need help developing a renewable energy project, have a US Senator backing it, but I need the assistance with finding grants
- Re-do Main Street big time...dress it up, have to do it soon
- Ethanol plant, but if we have more jobs, we need to have the housing for the people
- Movie theater
- We don't have crime and I want to stay that way
- Keep what we have and add on to it
- Not everyone is in sports, the kids that aren't absolutely have to have a place to go
- Lyle Signs and CMI are huge assets
- We have some share businessmen in our community
- Future in biodiesel and ethanol plant...is there something with methane gas development?
- We need to get technology jobs, we might as well have it, or someone else will
- We need to stay on top of our game
- Can't get complacent
- Don't want absentee ownership in businesses, I don't want them to use our people to make a project and then not have any ownership in the community
- Young people could travel here to work, but we need decent housing here for them...they won't live here if we don't have the housing...they'll go somewhere else
- Nice housing development with apartments

LISTENING SESSION REPOSES

Projects

- A study of what it would cost to annex west of Hwy 14
- Not everyone can buy single family, large houses...we need some transitional housing for young workers
- We need some rental places for workers
- Internet access needs to improve
- High speed, wireless internet soon that goes 20-30 miles out
- 3rd street and Main street needs to get done
- Rural acreages...I'd like to see a farmer sell off some of his land to put into acreages
- We need something for young people...I don't know what
- Rollerskating, bowling, movie theater, ice skating
- Maybe we could still have an ice skating rink, the dirt piles are still there, we could do that...I would still ice skate
- More recreation
- If people could still have the quality of life I have right now in 30 years, I would be happy.
- We need an assisted living not attached to the nursing home
- Development so people can afford to live here
- Close the generation gaps...
- Accept growth because it makes us better
- Tourism could be improved to get even bigger
- We ran a theater for 30 years, people want it, but everyone needs to use it in a small town
- If we have ice skating, we have to make sure we use it
- We want all these things for recreation, but if we don't use them, we lose them...we can't just want, we have to support
- Our carving club could use more members
- It's hard to keep the senior citizens center open if people don't use it
- Adult daycare may be an option...could the assisted living do it
- We need lights alerting on the railroad crossing...it's been in the works for 7 years...it's not safe