



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

*November 14-16, 2005*

*A Governors 2010 Initiative*

## *Acknowledgements*



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



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



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 possible without the many hours of volunteer service from your local planning taskforce.



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!

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## Highmore Resource Team Assessment

November 14-16, 2005

	<u>Page</u>
Executive Summary.....	2
Introductions by Resource Team Members.....	3
Process for the Development of the Team Study and Report.....	4
Resource Team Members.....	5
Interview Agenda.....	6
2010 Initiative .....	7
Highmore Themes.....	9
Recommendations.....	10
Community Betterment.....	10
Active Generations.....	28
Industry & Ag Development.....	52
Business Development & Retention.....	66
Community Projects.....	80
What Was Said in the Interviews.....	96

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# Executive Summary

Highmore is an outstanding community with a promising future. You have dedicated citizens that are committed to building a sustainable local economy and a city/county that promotes the development of a sound infrastructural base from which to grow from. You also have a diverse set of local employers that have provided good job opportunities for people in your community. And while the enrollment in your school has declined over time, unlike in many other small communities, this appears to have stabilized.

While there are several challenges that you face as a rural community, there are also many opportunities that you can pursue to enhance your economic and community development efforts. The key now is to set your vision for the future of your community, mobilize local organizations and entities to pursue your defined objectives, and continue to be proactive about making Highmore an even better place to live, work, and play. There is nothing that your community cannot accomplish if you focus your efforts on a select set of shared objectives.

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

The various recommendations contained in this report cover a broad range of issues. Some are large projects that will require many years to complete. The work is not just on big jobs, however, but also on smaller efforts that you can achieve more quickly. Use the success of these achievements to help build momentum on other projects important to your community. These recommendations provide a place to start. Moving forward with any initiative will require more research to flesh out how they might work in your community.

Setting your priorities is the first step. Participation in the upcoming priority-setting meeting is critical. The efforts must reflect your entire community and that requires everyone's participation – both great and small.

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

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

Sincerely,

**Shawn Pritchett, Resource Team Leader**

## **Introductions by Resource Team Members**

**Beth Adamson (South Dakota Family Business Association):** Meeting with so many wonderful people in the community of Highmore was a great reminder of how unique and special our small rural communities are. I felt very welcomed and was impressed with the strength that lies within so many volunteers and leaders in the Highmore area.

**Bill Hansen (Centerville Development Corporation):** It was a great opportunity for me to participate in Highmore's community assessment. You have a great community with many strengths and lots of potential. Your agricultural base, good school and key businesses make Highmore a solid community. I hope the ideas presented in this report are helpful as you move forward to continue to build on and improve the resources you have. Thanks for your strong participation, your warm hospitality and making our stay so enjoyable.

**Shannon Hernandez (USDA Rural Development):** I would like to take this opportunity to thank the City of Highmore for inviting and hosting our Community Assessment Team during our three-day visit. I enjoyed the friendliness and hospitality you so graciously offered and the meals were top notch. I also enjoyed the tour of your city and was impressed with the turn out at the listening sessions. It is a pleasure to visit and work with people who obviously care about their community, its citizens and its future. You have a strong community and the drive that it will take to accomplish the projects you are looking at. I have no doubt you will complete the projects you set your mind and support to completing.

**Cheryl Jacobs (SDSU Cooperative Extension):** This was my second opportunity to serve on an assessment team, and I thoroughly enjoy coming to a community and seeing how passion and persistence are the major ingredients of life in a small town—Highmore is certainly no exception. Thank you to everyone who made our stay very enjoyable and thank you to everyone who participated in the assessment process by sharing your thoughts, concerns and hopes for the future of Highmore.

**Wanda Jundt (Eureka Community Development Company):** Thank you to all who took time out of your busy days to share your thoughts. The good turnout to the listening sessions and the willingness of people to speak showed that Highmore is looking for ways to work together. Continue that working-together attitude and you will see great things happen. I heard over and over that you want youth to return to your community after they go away for further education and see the world. You have an opportunity now to find out how that can happen. I was so impressed with the session we had with youth. They have so much to offer your community (now and in the future), but you need to listen to what they have to say. They don't necessarily want what you think they want – with some open communication you will truly hear them. (Surprisingly, many adults and teen share the same ideas and concerns.) Thank you all for your warm welcome and the great hospitality. Thank you to everyone in the community who made our stay comfortable and fun. Don't hesitate to contact me if I can help you any time in the future.

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

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

The City of Highmore, in cooperation with the Highmore Development Corporation, Hyde County, and the local Assessment Planning Committee, coordinated the Community Assessment locally with financial support provided through a grant from the South Dakota Community Foundation. Rod Domke served as the community planning leader and, with the help of many local volunteers serving on the planning taskforce, developed the agenda, coordinated logistics, and publicized the assessment within the local community.

The Resource Team toured the town and surrounding area and interviewed over 225 individuals during the three-day period from November 14-16, 2005. The team interviewed representatives from the following segments of the Highmore community: County Commissioners, City Council, Families, Young Adults, Newcomers, Agricultural Businesses and Farmers, Retail and general Businesses, Churches, Non Profits, Civic Organizations, Youth, Educators, School Administration, Emergency Services, Law Enforcement, Healthcare providers, Utilities, City and County Staff, Seniors, and more. Each participant was asked to respond to three questions designed to begin communication and discussion and to serve as a basis for developing an action plan. The three questions were:

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

Upon completion of the interviews, the team met to compare notes and share comments following three days of intense study. The team then agreed that each team member would carefully analyze the things said, synthesize what they heard with their knowledge of programs and resources, prepare their notes and suggestions, and then forward these items to be combined into SDRDC's final report to Highmore.

An oral report was presented to the residents of Highmore on November 16, 2005. Following the oral report, a formal written report was prepared and presented to the community of Highmore. A community follow-up and prioritization meeting will be held in Highmore after this report is distributed and made available to the community at large.

**Resource Team Members**  
*Highmore, South Dakota*  
*November 14-16, 2005*

**Resource Team Members**

**Shawn Pritchett, Team Leader**

Executive Director  
South Dakota Rural Development Council  
PO Box 91435  
Sioux Falls, SD 57109  
605-360-8548  
605-367-5394 (Fax)  
spritchett@sdrdc.org

**Cheryl Jacobs**

Cooperative Extension Service  
917 N. Main  
Mobridge, SD 57601  
605-230-0077  
605-845-3432 (Fax)  
jacobs.cheryl@ces.sdstate.edu

**Beth Adamson**

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

**Wanda Jundt**

Eureka Community Development  
Company  
PO Box 134  
Eureka, SD 57437-0134  
605-284-2130  
ecdc@valleytel.net

**Bill Hansen**

Centerville Development Corporation  
2201 State St.  
Centerville, SD 57014  
605-563-2019  
605-563-2484 (Fax)  
bjhansen@hcinet.net

**Community Contact:**

**Rod Domke**

877-852-2177  
hsbhigh@venturecomm

**Shannon Hernandez**

Rural Development Specialist  
USDA Rural Development  
1386 Lincoln Ave. SW  
Huron, SD 57350  
605-352-2998 Ext. 4  
shannon.hernandez@sd.usda.gov

# Highmore Community Assessment Agenda

## *November 14-16, 2005*

### Monday, 11/14/05

<b>TIME</b>	<b>TITLE</b>
4:30 pm – 6:00 pm	Resource Team Meets (working Dinner)
6:00 pm – 7:00 pm	Listening Session: County Commissioners / City Council
7:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Listening Session: Families / Young Adults / Newcomers
8:00 pm – 9:00 pm	Listening Session: Agricultural Businesses and Farmers

### Tuesday, 11/15/05

<b>TIME</b>	<b>TITLE</b>
7:00 am – 8:00 am	Listening Session: Retailers and Businesses
9:00 am – 10:00 am	Listening Session: Churches / Non Profits / Civic Organizations
10:30 am – 11:30 am	Listening Session: Youth / Students
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm	Listening Session: Retailers and Businesses
1:00 pm – 3:30 pm	Community Tour
3:30 pm – 4:30 pm	Listening Session: School Teachers / Administration / School Board
6:00 pm – 7:00 pm	Listening Session: Fire / Ambulance / Law Enforcement
7:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Listening Session: Healthcare / Nursing Home Staff

### Wednesday, 11/16/05

<b>TIME</b>	<b>TITLE</b>
8:00 am – 9:00 am	Listening Session: Agricultural Businesses / Farmers
9:00 am – 10:00 am	Listening Session: General Open Session
11:00 am – 12:00 pm	Listening Session: Utilities / City & County Staff
1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	Listening Session: Seniors
2:00 pm – 6:00 pm	Team Preparation
6:00 pm – 6:30 pm	Community Dinner
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 30<sup>th</sup> nationally for NSF funding
- 3C. Development research and technology infrastructure at our universities with the private sector  
(Emphasis on research that can be commercialized and will benefit South Dakota)

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

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

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

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

*Following distribution of this Community Resource Team Assessment Report, the South Dakota Rural Development Council will convene a follow up priority-setting meeting in Highmore 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 Highmore, 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)

Major Theme / Sub Theme	Page Number
<b>THEME: COMMUNITY BETTERMENT</b>	
1. Capacity of the Economic Development Corporation.....	10
2. Promotion.....	16
3. City, County, and Other Inter-Organizational Communication.....	20
4. Attitude / Resistance to Change / Accepting New Ideas.....	22
5. Volunteerism & Leadership.....	23
6. Rental Housing.....	26
<b>THEME: ACTIVE GENERATIONS</b>	
1. Childcare.....	28
2. Youth Engagement / Youth Center.....	31
3. Retaining and Attracting Youth.....	34
4. Activities for Families and Youth.....	39
5. Future Education Needs.....	42
6. Seniors.....	46
▪ Transportation; Assisted Living Facility; Senior Nutrition	
<b>THEME: INDUSTRY &amp; AG DEVELOPMENT</b>	
1. Wind Tower Development.....	52
2. Value Added Agriculture.....	54
3. Industrial Attraction (Small & Large).....	57
4. Agri Tourism / Hunting / Fishing.....	62
5. Young People and Farming.....	64
<b>THEME: BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT &amp; RETENTION</b>	
1. Business Creation.....	66
2. Business Retention & Expansion.....	70
3. Supporting Local Businesses (Shopping Local).....	73
4. Main Street Revitalization.....	75
<b>THEME: COMMUNITY PROJECTS</b>	
1. Infrastructure.....	
▪ Streets & Equipment; Water & Waste; Curb & Gutter	80
2. Facilities	
▪ Pool.....	84
▪ Campground.....	89
▪ Fitness / Recreation / Community Center.....	90
▪ EMS Equipment and Fire Hall.....	92

# COMMUNITY BETTERMENT

<b>SUB THEME:</b> <b>Capacity of Economic Development Corporation</b>
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- Structure
- Coordinator
- Revolving Loan Fund
- Financing

**Challenge:** Strengthen Highmore by strengthening all aspects of the local economic development corporation.

**Recommendation:** Through the assessment process, replies from many sessions pointed to the need for a strong economic development organization to help in a variety of ways – helping existing businesses, working with entrepreneurs, finding new business opportunities, applying for grants, etc. Having an identified group of people working on these concerns will provide a focus on specific economic development projects.

## Structure

Establishing a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization would give the group the ability to apply for grants and make donations tax deductible. In applying for this status, it will be necessary to establish Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws. Membership with reasonable dues gives all community members the ability to be a part of the organization, and election of a board of directors for a specified term comes from the general membership. Regular monthly meetings on a specified date (example: first Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m.) agreed upon at the beginning of the year assures the best attendance. Annual meetings for the membership give an overview of the progress made during the year and allows a time for questions, a review of finances, and election of directors.

A good place to get started with this organizational process is by collecting example sets of Bylaws, Articles of Incorporation, and the 501(c)3 applications for Economic Development Corporations in communities similar in size to Highmore. For a list of economic development corporations, go online to <http://www.sdgreatprofits.com/DBISD/devcorp.pdf>. There is no need to reinvent the wheel if you can “borrow” the best ideas from other entities that have already gone through this process in other communities. I would recommend that you appoint a subcommittee of your current development corporation to handle these details. Set a deadline for getting this accomplished (for example, to be fully incorporated, with adopted By Laws by April 2006 and have your 501(c)3 application submitted by June 2006). This is a critical first step to making sure that your development corporation has the capacity to take on projects and apply for funding in the form of grants and loans.

COMMUNITY BETTERMENT  
*Capacity of Economic Development Corporation*

GOED Regional Representative, Mark Vaux, coordinates quarterly regional economic development meetings in Aberdeen on the second Wednesday of the month starting in March. These meetings provide a wealth of information on happenings in the region and a good place to ask questions and get answers. These quarterly regional meetings are held for anyone who wants to attend, and it would be a good idea to have individuals from Highmore's development corporation attend when possible. There is always one and sometimes two speakers. Some of the topics have been on advertising, marketing, certified beef, HAPI Homes, Vinegar Museum, Enterprise Institute, state programs, university programs, etc. The suggestions for the speakers come from those that attend. The meeting usually runs from 10:00 to noon, and besides the speakers, each person gives an update of what is happening in his or her area. Those attending are economic developers from the area, reps from GOED, NECOG and NESDEC, and occasionally people from newspapers, magazines, banks, etc. who are either speakers or listeners.

Coordinator

It is often difficult in a small community to do everything on a volunteer basis. Constraints on time and energy make it impossible to follow through on ideas when a person has a fulltime job, family and other community obligations. Having a paid person to handle the day-to-day duties and be responsible for the direction given by the board of directors ensures the time and abilities necessary to have some success stories for the town. Whether it is a part-time or full-time position will depend on money available for salary and benefits, and the duties assigned to the coordinator. Since Highmore is the only town in the county, will the person work solely within city limits or throughout the county? Much of this may depend on the source for funding for this type of position.

Having a local person dedicated to coordinating economic and community development efforts is becoming increasingly popular in areas all across the state, and the roles and responsibilities vary widely with each community. Usually funding for these positions comes from city or county funds, income off of revolving loan funds, or other means (stipends from local utilities, grants, etc). It almost always involves some public funds, which means that there is an ongoing connection between local governments and the economic development board. If the economic development corporation is receiving public funds, be sure to address issues up front as to the level of involvement of these entities in the development corporation and the type of financial and other data that needs to be shared with each of these entities on an on-going basis.

At times, communication breaks down between public entities and economic development corporations, especially when public dollars are involved. You have the opportunity, from the very beginning, to address these issues head on. Think strategically as to how the city and county might be formally connected to the EDC, whether it is through cross representation (i.e. one city council member and one county commissioner have designated positions on the EDC board), or something more informal (i.e. the EDC shares its minutes with the city council and county commissioners and attends at least four meetings of the city council and/or county commissioners annually to report on the activities of the EDC).

**COMMUNITY BETTERMENT**  
*Capacity of Economic Development Corporation*

The roles and responsibilities of a coordinator can vary from community to community. One of the most important aspects is that you have a people person that is able to work well with other organizations and entities in the community. The person must also be trust worthy as much of the information that a development coordinator works with is confidential. Some development coordinators work strictly for a single community, countywide, or on a multiple county basis. Other coordinators work strictly with promotion through chambers or visitors bureaus. Yet others focus strictly on business development, and working one-on-one with prospective startup businesses.

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

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

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

COMMUNITY BETTERMENT  
*Capacity of Economic Development Corporation*

I would suggest getting in contact with the development coordinator for Hand County as there may be opportunities to share services and avoid the cost of hiring someone local to handle these duties.

In the future, it will be up to your community to decide if you think it merits hiring a part-time or full time economic or community development director specifically for your community, or in conjunction with other surrounding communities.

### Revolving Loan Fund

Having a pot of money available to help new or existing businesses can be a benefit to the community. Loan policies should be in place so there is consistency in the loaning practices. The RBEG (Rural Business Enterprise Grant) grant through USDA Rural Development provides grants to third party lenders (such as economic development corporations) to establish revolving loan program or to provide technical assistance. USDA Rural Development also administers the Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program (REDLG) program, which can provide grants and/or loans, through a cooperating Rural Utility Service borrow, to promote economic development and job creation projects such as revolving loan funds, business incubators, technical assistance, etc. You can also borrow funds from organizations like South Dakota Rural Enterprise Inc. to help capitalize a local revolving loan fund. The key point is that, generally, to access many of these programs, you need to be an incorporated non profit entity.

### Financing

This is often the toughest part of projects, but it can be done if the desire is there. Grants are available through USDA Rural Development for revolving loan funds. For general operating expenses the following are some of the ways money is raised in a variety of communities:

- A penny or portion of a penny tax can be added to the local sales tax.
- A one-time or an annual fund raiser can be held.
- Memberships will raise money.
- A BBB (Bed, Booze and Board) or hospitality tax through the city and SD Department of Revenue will raise a modest amount of money. An increase in taxes is never popular, but most of this one is collected from those passing through Highmore, such as travelers and hunters. Even though local citizens will pay a portion of the tax, the local community derives the entire benefit.
- An amount designated annually by the city and/or county.

### **Resources:**

USDA-Rural Development  
1386 Lincoln Ave. SW  
Huron, SD 57350  
605-352-2998 Ext. 4

COMMUNITY BETTERMENT  
*Capacity of Economic Development Corporation*

**Resources (Continued):**

Mark Vaux, Regional Representative  
Governor's Office of Economic Development  
416 N. Production St.  
Aberdeen, SD 57401  
mark.vaux@state.sd.us  
Phone: 605-725-2700

South Dakota Department of Revenue  
445 E. Capitol Avenue  
Pierre, SD 57501  
800-829-9188

South Dakota Community Foundation  
Bob Sutton, Executive Director  
207 East Capitol  
Pierre, SD 57501  
800-888-1842  
bsutton44@sdcommunityfoundation.org

South Dakota Rural Enterprises, Inc.  
Beth Davis, President  
PO Box 802  
Sioux Falls, SD 57101-0802  
605-978-2804  
beth@sdrei.org

Federal Registry of national grant opportunities  
[http://12.46.245.173/pls/portal30/CATALOG.FIND\\_ASSISTANCE\\_PROGRAM\\_DYN.show](http://12.46.245.173/pls/portal30/CATALOG.FIND_ASSISTANCE_PROGRAM_DYN.show)

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

COMMUNITY BETTERMENT  
*Capacity of Economic Development Corporation*

**Resources (Continued):**

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

Eureka Community Development Company  
Wanda Jundt  
PO Box 134  
Eureka, SD 57437-0134  
605-284-2130  
ecdc@valleytel.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)

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

COMMUNITY BETTERMENT  
*Promotion*

**Resources (Continued):**

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

<b>SUB THEME:      Promotion</b>
----------------------------------

- **Tourism**
- **Marketing to Attract New Residents**
- **Quality of Life / Education**

**Challenge:** While maintaining the small, rural community environment, the community still needs to grow enough to provide employees for potential new businesses and good employees for current employers.

## COMMUNITY BETTERMENT

### *Promotion*

Highmore and Hyde County have an abundance of unique and desirable qualities to attract students that have left for post education needs and attract new residents back to the community. They include:

- Quality hunting and fishing opportunities
- Clean environment
- Safe environment
- Excellent education results
- Friendly, helpful residents with a high volunteer level

**Recommendation:** Two of the strongest recommendations to further promoting the community would be better use of the web site and the annual “Old Settlers” gathering. In preparing to further market your community, it is necessary to do an assessment or inventory of your community. Here are three questions which need to be discussed prior to launching an increased marketing effort.

- What people see and experience when they are in Highmore?
- What are you currently saying about Highmore through marketing?
- What Highmore events receive press coverage from the local media?

You have many choices on how you want to market Highmore based on your many assets. The key to marketing is identification of your potential customers or market. Who do you want to market the community to?

- Families;
- Outdoorsman;
- Retirees;
- Businesses; and/or
- Other

Use your motto in every promotional piece about Highmore. What is marketed to visitors may cross over to residents but the inverse is rarely true. Potential residents are concerned with schools, housing, infrastructure, culture, and recreation, whereas visitors are simply focused on activities and events.

Once you have determined what will be the marketed assets and your target markets, you may consider incorporating the following suggestions into your marketing efforts.

- Educate the people of Highmore to sell Highmore.
- Web Sites - Development Corporation and School at a minimum.
- Video – MPEG format on the internet.
- Brochures
- Community Beautification - make the main roads as a start that travelers see attractive, even if it means an empty grassed lot. Consider providing landmark or a beautiful area along the main road that visitors will remember.
- Provide signage for all attractions, such as the museum, pool, school, park, lake, camping, etc., to alert people to their presence and to help them find them.
- Look for stories in the community that have a broad appeal and prepare a press release. Post these stories on your web site, etc.

## COMMUNITY BETTERMENT

### *Promotion*

- Highlight people who have already made the decision to move to Highmore and why.

Incorporate tourism into the “Old Settlers” celebration. There are numerous avenues to pursue in marketing specific events with varying results. Here are a few suggestions to consider in your marketing plan.

- Use the website to inform and update people of the upcoming celebration all the while marketing Highmore.
- Identify all activities, picnics, reunions, etc.
- Plan for activities each day as well as an all-school reunion.
- Utilize direct mailings to alumni and past residents.
- Invite former residents to consider bringing their business back to Highmore.

In terms of rolling out marketing or promotional strategy, this could be one of key activities that you identify for the Economic Development Corporation as you look to better formalize this entity. You might look to form a promotional or marketing taskforce as part of this organization, or make it one of the key goals for a subgroup within this entity focused on tourism and retail development.

Rolling out a marketing strategy could become a project that the development corporation involves the youth in the school/class project. Or you might look to partner with one of the state’s higher education institutions. In Arlington, for example, the development corporation is partnering with one of the state universities to use the marketing of the community as a class project. Be creative in terms of what types of outside resources you use to assist you in your efforts.

Also, online promotion for tourism is becoming increasingly popular and necessary. Put together packages for various events and tourist related attractions in the community. Develop a set of hunting packages and a marketing alliance that includes participation of local hunting lodges, ranchers (those willing to allow hunting access to their property), potential guides, local motels and restaurants, and other local businesses. Be sure to include options like hunting supplies, boxed lunches, or groceries so that hunters are more likely to buy these locally as opposed to purchasing these items before they come to your community. Again, be sure to market these packages over the internet and with the assistance of the SD Office of Tourism.

This is how an example package for hunting might work:

- A motel or motels would set a room price.
- A restaurant or restaurants would set a breakfast, box lunch and dinner price.
- Several, 3 to 6, ranchers/farmers would set a per hunter per day price.

The package would be one price inclusive, collected at the motel and dispersed to the restaurant and landowners.

## COMMUNITY BETTERMENT

### *Promotion*

*Example: 3 day package for \$600.00*

Room @ \$70.00 per a day = \$210.00

\*Meals @ \$30.00 per day = \$90.00

\* Hunt @ \$100.00 per day = \$300.00

\*Entities turn coupons into motel who reimburses them.

As you look at potential tourism related activities, look at the expanding field of agri-tourism and how you might take advantage of this area. For many folks, the agricultural experience is one that is “foreign” to them (tourists coming from large communities such as Chicago, Minneapolis, Omaha, etc) and yet they may have had a grandfather or other relative that was involved in agriculture. Many of these families want to give their children a taste of what this experience was like. You can work with interested local farmers and ranchers to develop agri-experience packages.

Also, look at developing adventure tourism related activities such as nature hikes, ATV trails, etc. These are also becoming increasingly popular for family vacations. Funds are available through the Department of Game, Fish and Parks for the development of trails through the Recreational Trails Program and the Land Water Conservation Fund. What do you have locally in Highmore that puts you in a position to take advantage of this trend? Survey the youth for the types of activities they like to do on family vacations and use this as you look to develop similar activities in Highmore.

*For additional ideas on agri tourism opportunities and hunting, see the recommendation further in this report regarding “Agri Tourism / Hunting / Fishing”.*

### **Resources:**

SD Department of Game, Fish and Parks  
Joe Foss Building  
523 East Capitol Avenue  
Pierre, SD 57501

SD Office of Tourism  
Nicole Soukup, Adventure Tourism Guide  
711 East Wells Avenue  
Pierre, SD 57501-3369

Center for Tourism Research  
Black Hills State University  
Thomas Dunn, Director  
1120 University St.  
Spearfish, SD 57799  
605-642-6435  
[www.bhsu.edu/business/technology/tourismctr/](http://www.bhsu.edu/business/technology/tourismctr/)

COMMUNITY BETTERMENT  
*Inter-Organizational Communication*

**SUB THEME: Inter-Organizational Communication**

**Challenge:** Having all organizations and elected boards in the community working cooperatively toward common goals.

**Recommendation:** It is a big challenge even in a small community to know about the projects of every entity. But, knowing what is happening in each facet of the community will eliminate duplication of efforts and the possibility to work cooperatively on projects. Sometimes communication happens because of people serving on multiple boards and they in turn provide the needed communication between the boards. Some communities set up monthly or quarterly meetings which are attended by a representative of each community organization – similar to the regular gatherings that you are hosting in Highmore. In Centerville, representatives of each community organization are invited to a quarterly meeting. Each representative reports on the projects their organization is currently engaged in, and then the group identifies projects to work on collectively. Finding time for “one more meeting” can be hard, both on the community calendar and in the people’s spare time. But, the payoffs can be great as communication is expanded. Joint meetings between elected boards can be beneficial when working on a common project. It was demonstrated many, many times during the listening sessions that people in and around Highmore are willing to share ideas and work cooperatively.

Communication starts with having a common vision for the future of your community. This assessment process is meant to help the community identify this vision, and after the follow up, priority-setting meeting is held after the distribution of this report, you should have a great template to start from.

The community, as a whole, needs to participate in the last town (priority-setting) meeting which will set up goals and objectives for the community to pursue in the short term. I have included an example of how to roll out your vision, involving multiple organizations in the community collaborating together, once this vision has been established:

1. Convene a Joint Visioning Taskforce that consists of at least one representative from each of the relevant organization in the community (i.e. school, city, Economic Development Corporation, business community, agricultural community, civic and social organizations, ministerial group, etc).
2. Review the themes and responses from the assessment report. Utilize the priorities established in the Assessment’s follow up priority setting meeting to provide the starting point for establishing your objectives or goals for your Vision or strategic action plan.
3. Establish timelines for when you want to meet your objectives.
4. Establish who or what organization is going to take the lead in moving each objective forward (this is why it is important to include multiple organizations as part of this joint taskforce).

## COMMUNITY BETTERMENT

### *Inter-Organizational Communication*

5. Identify potential resources available for each objective using the recommendation in this report and other reference materials (such as the SD Resource Directory).
6. Share this Vision with the entire community and allow for public comment. Adjust your plans accordingly.
7. Recruit a list of interested volunteers to help execute each portion of the plan. You might establish sub committees for each objective where there is not a single organization that is willing or able to take the lead on a particular objective.
8. Begin implementation of your plan. Plan your work and work your plan.
9. Track your progress over time. Share this with the community. This will keep people interested and build momentum over time as you start to see the successes of your efforts.
10. Remember to celebrate the accomplishments, even small ones, to keep the motivation continuous.

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

Communication among organizations and with the general public is essential as you move forward. Being proactive about sharing information among organizations and with the general public will ensure that you are moving forward in a way that is most efficient and effective, and leverages the shared talents of individuals in your community. Keeping the public informed and engaged will help to continue your momentum as you capitalize on your successes and look toward your future goals and objectives. As such, it is a good idea to host semi annual meetings, inviting the entire public, to reassess where you are at in terms of goals and objectives, what has been successful and what has not, and what you plan to do over the next 12 months to several years.

#### **Resources:**

Bill Hansen  
Centerville Development Corporation  
2201 State St.  
Centerville, SD 5714  
605-201-7593  
bjhansen@hcinet.net

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

Publication: A Guide to Strategic Planning for Rural Communities  
<http://www.ezec.gov/About/strategic.pdf>

COMMUNITY BETTERMENT  
*Attitude / Resistance to Change / Accepting New Ideas*

<b>SUB THEME:      Attitude / Resistance to Change / Accepting New Ideas</b>
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**Challenge:** Understanding that progress happens when changes occur.

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

Know that change is going to happen whether you want it to or not. Change can be for the better or worse, and the way that the community handles it will determine whether it is a positive or negative force. Our communities are not going to stay the way they always were, no matter how much people hope for that to happen. Advanced technology, new ways of doing old things, new people to the community, new services – these are a few examples of growth to one person and a very real threat to the next person.

Attending the listening sessions probably informed several of you about things that are happening in your community. That communication is very vital and needs to continue. Listening to one another, teamed with an open mind and a positive attitude, will help the process.

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

Involve as many people as possible in projects. Report happenings in your local newspaper; people seem more accepting when they know what’s going on. They are less likely to see organizations as “secret societies” if there is continual openness to the whole community.

And, finally, in spite of everything positive that you do, never become discouraged. Just live with the fact that every community has C.A.V.E. people. (Citizens Against Virtually Everything)

**Resources:**

A motivational speaker - I’ve heard several great ones, but they charge a fee. Perhaps a former community member or someone with a link to the community would be willing to speak. They may be inexpensive and would probably already be accepted by the community.

## COMMUNITY BETTERMENT

### *Volunteerism & Leadership*

<b>SUB THEME:      Volunteerism &amp; Leadership</b>
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**Sub Theme:** Volunteerism and Leadership

**Challenge:** Community members are concerned about getting everyone working together in the same direction, a lack of participation in events, and there is a shortage of volunteers for projects and community organizations.

**Recommendation:** Every community can benefit from learning new skills and continuing the process of leadership development. It is healthy to have a continual transition of leadership in a community for several reasons; new ideas are constantly infused into community work, people have better attitudes, there is less burn out from volunteers, and enthusiasm for community projects can be sustained. There are several opportunities for training and education that can help a community. A comprehensive education program called LeadershipPlenty<sup>SM</sup> is offered by several entities including South Dakota Rural Enterprise, Inc. (SDREI), South Dakota State University’s Cooperative Extension Service, and the Central South Dakota Enhancement District.

The LeadershipPlenty Program is a nine week workshop, currently being conducted in communities throughout South Dakota, which provides a great basis to strengthen skills of existing leaders and grow new leaders in the community. LeadershipPlenty helps leaders assess their personal skills and how they can best contribute to community efforts as well as strengthen the community’s assets. It also guides participants as they hone their skills in managing groups for results, make meetings work better, and develop techniques to facilitate group discussion and strategic planning. It also teaches ways to manage and resolve conflict for better group decision-making. Participants have the opportunity to meet resource providers from outside the community and learn ways to build lasting strategic partnerships. Something Leadership Plenty addresses, that other leadership courses sometimes miss, is moving from talk to action—taking action to initiate projects, implement goals, evaluate success and report actions to the community at large. Best of all, LeadershipPlenty builds strong bonds among citizens of different backgrounds and deepens everyone’s understanding of the range of personal and community values that enter into community decision-making.

SDSU Cooperative Extension Service’s Community Leadership Development program also offers programs such as “Asset Based Community Development”, “Moving People to Action” and “Putting the Vitality of Youth to Work in the Community” and more. These are just some of the examples of leadership education people in the community can use to help motivate and encourage people to be civically engaged and a vibrant, energized part of the future of the community of Highmore.

## COMMUNITY BETTERMENT

### *Volunteerism & Leadership*

A couple of other suggestions or ideas for consideration include:

1. Use this community strategic planning and comprehensive planning process to help recruit volunteers in the areas in which they might have an interest in participating.
2. Utilize your youth and seniors. The youth are your future volunteer base and having them involved not only teaches them the importance of volunteerism, but it also helps them build ownership in the community that makes them more likely to want to stay or move back. Also, don't forget about your seniors. They are an excellent resource in terms of their experience, talents, and perspectives.
3. Ask for volunteers. In a survey conducted by the Points of Light Foundation, the number one reason that people do not volunteer is that no one asked them. Include a volunteer booth at events or hold a volunteer fair. The HELP!Line Center in Sioux Falls has an on-line database that lists how volunteers are utilized in different non-profit/governmental organizations. Create a list of family volunteer opportunities so the families can get involved together.
4. Celebrate volunteer efforts. Every volunteer wants to be recognized in a different way. For some, it is a phone call or written note; for others, they are comfortable in a more public setting. Consider an annual city wide volunteer recognition event or having a community volunteer of the month or year. One idea would be to offer a program where residents could log their volunteer hours at City Hall at a "Sharing Tree", where everyone could physically watch the hours "grow" over time.

The Points of Light Foundation is a national organization that promotes National Seasons of Service Days, such as Make a Difference Day. They also have an on-line resource library with information on engaging youth as volunteers, community volunteer efforts and ideas for volunteer activities. Some of the Seasons of Service Days include grant opportunities.

#### **Resources:**

South Dakota Rural Enterprise Inc. (SDREI), LeadershipPlenty<sup>SM</sup>  
Beth Davis, President  
625 S. Minnesota Ave., Suite 103  
PO Box 802  
Sioux Falls, SD 57101  
[www.sdrei.org](http://www.sdrei.org)

SDSU Cooperative Extension Service  
Community Leadership Development, LeadershipPlenty<sup>SM</sup>  
Cheryl Jacobs, Extension Educator  
917 N. Main  
Mobridge, SD 57601  
605-230-0077  
[jacobs.cheryl@ces.sdstate.edu](mailto:jacobs.cheryl@ces.sdstate.edu)  
[www.sdces.sdstate.edu/cld](http://www.sdces.sdstate.edu/cld)

COMMUNITY BETTERMENT  
*Volunteerism & Leadership*

**Resources (Continued):**

Central South Dakota Enhancement District  
PO Box 220  
1205 Harrison Ave., Ste. 202  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-773-2784  
enhancement@csded.org  
www.csded.org

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program - RSVP  
Program information: [www.seniorcorps.org/joining/rsvp/](http://www.seniorcorps.org/joining/rsvp/)

List of RSVP programs operating in SD  
[www.seniorcorps.org/joining/rsvp/state.asp?usestateabbr=sd](http://www.seniorcorps.org/joining/rsvp/state.asp?usestateabbr=sd)

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

Volunteer HELP!Line Center  
Sara Carothers  
1000 N West Ave #310  
Sioux Falls SD 57104  
605.274.1407  
[www.helplinecenter.org](http://www.helplinecenter.org)  
<http://www.volunteersolutions.org/volhelp/volunteer/>

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 & Community Groups”* – Flanagan, Joan.

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

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

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

## COMMUNITY BETTERMENT

### *Rental Housing*

<b>SUB THEME:      Rental Housing</b>
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**Challenge:** Provide adequate rental housing.

**Recommendation:** Shortage of rental housing surfaced as a problem in most of our listening sessions. At those same sessions, many participants said there are too many houses for sale in Highmore. Many of these homes have been on the market a couple of years. I heard this so often that it caused me to think about why people trying to sell their homes would rather let them sit empty than to rent them out? I presume that many home owners just don't want the hassle of dealing with a renter. They don't want the responsibility of trying to collect rent checks and make sure the property is being maintained.

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

Benefits of a property manager include; providing income to the home owners to pay taxes and insurance, satisfying community's need to rentals, economic development and possibility of gaining new families with children to help support the school.

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

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

Many communities form a Housing Redevelopment Commission, (HRC). The cities of Mobridge and Centerville are two communities with HRC that have used Essential Function Bonds to construct town homes with garages that appeal to older residents, but are open to anyone. The local housing authority manages the units. These are not low income units and are open to any family or individual interested in renting. The units are low maintenance and very nice. Many times older residents move to the lower maintenance rentals, freeing up their larger homes for sale or rent.

COMMUNITY BETTERMENT  
*Rental Housing*

**Resources:**

USDA Rural Development  
1717 N. Lincoln Ave., Suite 102  
Pierre, SD 57501-3109  
605-224-8870  
[www.rurdev.usda.gov/sd](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/sd)

U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development  
2400 W 49<sup>th</sup> St, Suite I-2301  
Sioux Falls, SD 57105  
(605)330-4223  
[www.hud.gov/southdakota](http://www.hud.gov/southdakota)

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

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

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

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

# ACTIVE GENERATIONS

**SUB THEME:**      **Childcare**

**Challenge:** Daycare and after school care are a concern for many in Highmore. The community is looking at the current situation, as well as looking toward the future, knowing that some providers will be retiring soon.

**Recommendation:** Providing affordable, quality childcare and after school care is a common issue in many communities. It is my understanding that there is currently a group working on this who has done some research into acquiring a Governor’s house. Often one of the best ways to get a project like this done is to look for successful examples in other communities.

The community of Ipswich, which is similar in size to Highmore created an after school program called the Tiger Post approximately 7 years ago in response to a community need. The group formed a non-profit corporation with 501c3 status. Today the Tiger Post provides after school care with activities, healthy snacks, and homework help. A companion program called the Tiger Den is provided for students in 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade with activities provided by a high school student.

The community of Dell Rapids also has a very successful after school and summer youth program either called “New Haven” or “Haven”. This program is run by a woman by the name of Kim Eich and she is more than willing to provide advice to your community about how they got their program started and the resources that are available, in for the form of grants and the like, to help run this type of program.

Ipswich is also currently in the process of creating a community day care center using a Governor’s House. This group can provide a lot of information about how they have created articles of incorporation and the committee structure they have used including bylaws, budgets, finances and grants, insurance and a building committee. Carole Sweeter, Edmunds County Extension Educator would be very willing to share information with the community of Highmore about how their project has been a success in Ipswich and how it might be replicated in Highmore.

You can also contact the South Dakota Housing Development Authority. They have established a formal process for requesting Governor’s homes for use as daycare facilities. Included as part of this process is a survey of the community and a feasibility study. SDHDA also provides a “Guide to Planning, Purchasing and Licensing” a daycare facility.

Platte is another example of a community that developed a daycare center through their economic development corporation. They were able to secure a Governor’s House to use as a daycare facility. The community came together to secure the land, prepare the site, do wiring, etc. They used USDA Rural Development Community Facilities financing to do the site

## ACTIVE GENERATIONS

### *Childcare*

preparation for the facility. Local volunteer labor also helped complete the facility. They purposefully located the facility next to the school so that the center could serve dual purposes as a daycare facility, preschool (downstairs), and after school care. Locating close to the school ensured that kids could go back and forth between the school and daycare with ease.

The unique thing about Platte's Governors Home daycare is that they secured the large Governors Home, as opposed to many rural communities that have secured the smaller version of the Governors Home. This provided the ability to service a larger number of kids, and spread their fixed cost over larger number of children. They also put the home over a full basement, that allowed them to do the preschool and after school programs right in the daycare. It is these programs that help to make sure that the center is financially feasible long-term. For more information on this project in Platte, contact Karen Burket (information below).

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

Highmore and Hyde County is fortunate to have the SDSU Cooperative Extension Office in your community, Extension Educator Andrea Klein's main responsibilities are in the area of Youth Development. She can be an important part of the planning process and can provide resources to help address this issue.

The State of South Dakota has a vast amount of resources available to communities looking for solutions in daycare and after school care. Services they provide include education, technical assistance and grant opportunities. One such grant that is available is the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center grant. Information about this grant can be found at <http://doe.sd.gov/oess/21cent/appprocess.asp>. Depending on where your community is in this process you may still be able to put an application together before the current deadline of February 2006.

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

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

## ACTIVE GENERATIONS

*Childcare*

### **Resources:**

SDSU Cooperative Extension Service  
Educational Resources, Technical Assistance  
Carole Sweeter, Extension Educator  
PO Box 345, 210 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue  
Ipswich, SD 57451  
605-426-6971  
sweeter.carole@ces.sdstate.edu

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

Andrea Klein, Extension Educator  
PO Box 402, 116 West 1<sup>st</sup>  
Highmore, SD 57345  
605-852-2515  
klein.andrea@ces.sdstate.edu

Kim Eich  
After School Program  
112 E. 7<sup>th</sup> Street  
Dell Rapids, SD 57022  
605-428-6184  
kimeich@go.com

South Dakota Housing Development Authority  
Governor's House Daycare Program  
[http://www.sdhda.org/Homebuyer/gh\\_daycare.htm](http://www.sdhda.org/Homebuyer/gh_daycare.htm)

For a Governor's House in Hyde County, contact:  
David Hauschild  
Central South Dakota Enhancement District  
605-773-2782  
davidhauschild@csded.org

USDA Rural Development  
1717 N. Lincoln Ave., Suite 102  
Pierre, SD 57501-3109  
605-224-8870  
[www.rurdev.usda.gov/sd](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/sd)

ACTIVE GENERATIONS  
*Youth Engagement / Youth Center*

**Resources (Continued):**

South Dakota Department of Social Services-Child Care Services  
Technical Assistance, Funding, Licensing and Education  
Out of School Time Programs  
Rosemary Hayward, Program Specialist  
700 Governors Drive  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-773-4766  
<http://www.state.sd.us/social/CCS/CCShome.htm>

South Dakota Department of Education-Child and Adult Nutrition  
Child Care Food Programs, Funding  
Melissa Halling, Education Program Specialist  
700 Governors Drive  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-773-3566  
<http://doe.sd.gov/oess/cans/index.asp>

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

<b>SUB THEME:      Youth Engagement / Youth Center</b>
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**Sub Theme:** Youth Engagement/Youth Center

**Challenge:** “There’s nothing to do.” Youth and adults in Highmore told us that they wanted something positive and constructive for youth to do in the community.

**Recommendation:** Pursuing a project such as a youth center always seems like such a good idea of solving the problem that youth have “nothing to do.” Too often groups of adults can have the youth’s best interests at heart when they plan to create a youth center only to have the project die for lack of use by the intended audience. The key to success is involving youth in every aspect of the planning, implementation and operation of the project.

ACTIVE GENERATIONS  
*Youth Engagement / Youth Center*

This is a wonderful opportunity to work on youth engagement in the community. The school has a particularly strong, well-led FCCLA group, there are also existing groups in the community such as 4-H clubs, church youth groups, etc. that may be able to help in the planning and implementation of such a project.

Starting a youth center is very much like starting a business, and it needs the same attention and effort in creating a business plan. There are many decisions to be made including getting the right partners on board, choosing to use an existing building or building a new one, funding for start up and operation of the center, goals/mission statement, staffing, educational activities and much more. A successful youth center in your community starts with a good plan. There are some funding resources for these types of projects available and it will take some research by your community to find which ones can benefit you.

Some resources that might be available to assist with this type of project include:

- USDA Rural Development's Community Facilities Program – *for building or renovating a structure.*
- Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) – *multiple potential uses.*
- USDA Rural Development's Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBE) – *for developing a youth business project concept.*
- South Dakota Community Foundation – *could provide general grants for multiple purposes such as buying equipment or supplies.*
- Youth Venture – *for starting a youth project serving the greater community.*
- Beaumont Foundation of America – *Community Technology Center grants.*
- US Department of Education – *Community Technology Center grants.*

**Resources:**

SDSU Cooperative Extension Service  
Youth Development, After School Educational Programming  
Andrea Klein, Extension Educator  
PO Box 402, 116 West 1<sup>st</sup>  
Highmore, SD 57345  
605-852-2515  
klein.andrea@ces.sdstate.edu

South Dakota Community Foundation  
Funding, Technical Assistance  
Bob Sutton, Executive Director  
207 East Capitol  
Box 296  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-224-1025  
www.sdcommunityfoundation.org

ACTIVE GENERATIONS  
*Youth Engagement / Youth Center*

**Resources (Continued):**

South Dakota Small Business Development Center (SBDC)  
Technical Assistance, Business Plans  
1205 N. Harrison Ave., Suite 202  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-773-2783

USDA Rural Development  
1717 N. Lincoln Ave., Suite 102  
Pierre, SD 57501-3109  
605-224-8870  
[www.rurdev.usda.gov/sd](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/sd)

US Department of Education  
Karen Holliday  
OVAE, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-7110  
202-245-7708  
[Karen.Holliday@ed.gov](mailto:Karen.Holliday@ed.gov)  
[www.ed.gov/news/fedregister](http://www.ed.gov/news/fedregister)

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

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)  
Steve Harding  
Governors Office of Economic Development – GOED  
711 E. Wells Ave.  
Pierre, SD 57501

Beaumont Foundation of America  
PO Box 1855  
Beaumont, TX 77701  
866-546-2667  
[www.bmtfoundation.com](http://www.bmtfoundation.com)

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

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

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

ACTIVE GENERATIONS  
*Retaining and Attracting Youth*

<b>SUB THEME:      Retaining and Attracting Youth</b>
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**Sub Theme:** Keeping the youth in the community and giving them reasons to return to Highmore after post secondary education.

**Challenge:** A concern that resonates in rural communities across South Dakota is the loss of its young people. It can be expected that the majority of local graduates will want to experience live outside of Highmore before deciding to “settle down”. What can be done to encourage them to return to Highmore and Hyde County for careers and to raise a family?

**Recommendations:** To begin with, making sure that the students now feel “ownership” in the community gives them a reason to want to return after they have had some time to be on their own. Make sure that they are involved in community development, get them involved in committees that they can provide resources and insight for such as community clean-up, and fundraising for the swimming pool.

It sounds like some businesses in the community already offer scholarships for students. You might consider tying the scholarships into returning to Highmore after college or trade school, or offering larger scholarships to those committed to returning for an agreed upon length of time.

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

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

Another way to retain youth is by helping youth development the entrepreneurial skills necessary to start a business in Highmore. You can do this by building a business or entrepreneurially based curriculum into your schools. In addition, this could provide an opportunity for the youth to own or manage a business- obtaining hands-on experience and, at the same time, providing a valuable service to the community (i.e. a café, community center, fitness center, coffee shop, etc).

You have an excellent school with outstanding educators. There are various organizations that, through your school, could support the development of this initiative. One such organization is DECA or the Distributive Education Clubs of America. Another is Junior Achievement, which

## ACTIVE GENERATIONS

### *Retaining and Attracting Youth*

is basically a set of curriculum that teaches students how to start and run businesses through student led enterprises and voluntary assistances from mentors in the community. REAL is another school-based program that provides assistance to schools looking to implement a youth enterprise curriculum. Finally, there is an organization called Youth Ventures that helps support the development of “youth teams” interested in starting a business or providing a social service in a community. Youth Venture may also provide a small amount of financial assistance to help get things started.

Curt Shaw, with Black Hills Special Services Coops, has assisted with similar projects in small communities in the black hills region. Curt would be an excellent resource person to visit with and get direction.

A recent study by the North Central Rural Development Center at Iowa State University came up with six areas in which communities were successfully addressing youth attraction and retention. These include investments in:

1. Financial capital: Having opportunities for jobs and economic support.
2. Political capital: Having the youth voices heard and involved in community affairs.
3. Social Capital: Integrating youth into community organizations (i.e. chamber, economic development, etc)
4. Education and Health Capital: Having a strong education source and access to quality healthcare.
5. Cultural Capital: Maintaining roots to your heritage and cultural affairs.
6. Natural Capital: Having amenities for recreation.

The last three are already strong within your community. You have a solid school, access to healthcare, recreational opportunities such as swimming, golf, fishing, hunting, etc.

The first three are the ones that are the most critical to address. First and foremost is Financial Capital – or having job opportunities for youth.

Certainly, this is the greatest challenge in some communities. Building an entrepreneurially-based curriculum into the local schools is a good long term strategy. We need to change the attitude that opportunities can't be created in rural communities.

Another idea that you might look at is something that the State of Nebraska and Iowa (among others) are pursuing. While this has been done at the state level, this might be something that could work at a community level as well. First, inventory what employment opportunities currently exist including potential “needs”. Do you need teachers, nurses, accountants, financial advisors, plumbers, contractors, builders, electricians, bankers, insurance, etc? Then find out where most of your high school graduates have gone to (Rapid City, Pierre, Sioux Falls, etc). Invite them to a forum in those cities where you present these opportunities and talk with them about whether they have an interest in moving back to Highmore. Do they currently own a business that could be relocated to Highmore? Prepare some financial incentives if they would consider moving the business to Highmore, etc.

## ACTIVE GENERATIONS

### *Retaining and Attracting Youth*

**Political Capital:** This means letting the youth have a voice in the community. Consider starting a youth council or having a youth representative on the city council, chamber, etc. For this to work, however, there has to be legitimate recognition of youth ideas and concerns. When youth have ownership in the community, they build stronger ties and are more likely to want to stay in the community. A good example of a community implementing the Youth Council concept is Lovell, Wyoming (contact information below).

**Social Capital:** This means having the youth involved in community affairs. Howard SD has done a great job of this by having the youth conduct a study of the impact of spending locally. This was done in cooperation with the high school. Another idea is the community of Leola where the youth are getting involved in developing a digital promotional video for the community. Again, youth are more likely to build stronger ties to a community when they are actively engaged in various social activities.

### **Resources:**

Black Hills Special Services Cooperative  
Curt Shaw  
PO Box 218  
Sturgis SD 57783  
605-347-4467

DECA – South Dakota  
Distributed Education Clubs of America  
Steven Rounds  
700 Governor's Place  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-773-4673  
605-773-4236 (Fax)  
Steven.rounds@state.sd.us

Junior Achievement  
1000 N West Ave, Ste. 110  
Sioux Falls, SD 57104-1314  
605-336-7318  
jasd@jasd.org  
www.soudakota.ja.org

Kauffman Foundation  
4801 Rockhill Road  
Kansas City, MO 64110-2046  
816-932-1000  
www.kauffman.org

ACTIVE GENERATIONS  
*Retaining and Attracting Youth*

**Resources (Continued):**

National Council of Economic Education  
1140 Avenue of the Americas  
New York, NY 10036  
212-730-7007  
202-730-1792 (Fax)

REAL Enterprises  
Corporation for Enterprise Development  
115 Market Street, Ste. 221  
Durham, NC 27701  
919-688-7328  
919-682-7621  
info@realenterprises.org  
www.realenterprises.org

South Dakota Community Foundation  
Bob Sutton, Executive Director  
PO Box 296  
207 E. Capitol Ave.  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-224-1025 or 800-888-1842  
www.sdcommunityfoundation.org

South Dakota Council on Economic Education  
University of South Dakota  
School of Business  
414 E. Clark St.  
Vermillion, SD 57069  
lroach@usd.edu  
www.usd.edu/~econed/1.htm

Miner County Initiative  
PO Box 307  
Howard, SD 57349  
605-772-5153

Leola High School  
PO Box 350  
820 Leola Avenue  
Leola, SD 57456  
605-439-3143

ACTIVE GENERATIONS  
*Retaining and Attracting Youth*

**Resources (Continued):**

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

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

USDA Rural Development  
1717 N. Lincoln Ave., Suite 102  
Pierre, SD 57501-3109  
605-224-8870  
[www.rurdev.usda.gov/sd](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/sd)

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

Hill City Boys and Girls Club Center  
Jessica Haeder  
PO Box 677  
Hill City, SD 57745  
605-574-2010  
[bgcbh@hills.net](mailto:bgcbh@hills.net)

The Hitachi Foundation  
1509 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20037-1073  
202-457-0588

**SUB THEME:      Activities for Families and Youth (Role of Churches)**

**Sub Theme:** Activities for Family and Youth (Role of Churches)

**Challenge:** During several of the listening sessions, we heard concerns about the role of churches in the community and the need honor time devoted to church and family activities.

**Recommendation:** Our lives are becoming busier every day, and as such, it is harder and harder to find time to spend with family. In the past, Sunday and Wednesday evenings were exclusively set aside for religious activities. But as activities and events have increased, we have squeezed our schedules to the maximum, and unfortunately, more and more activities are being scheduled during this time.

Highmore is blessed to have six very active and engaged churches. During the listening sessions, we heard many times about how the churches are a major strength of the community – particularly the way that the churches are actively working together for the betterment of the community.

The loss of time devoted to religious activities and education is by no means an issue specific to Highmore. It is a phenomenon occurring everywhere as people’s lives become busier and more over-scheduled. It is interesting, however, how often this came up as an issue for Highmore, suggesting that this is something that you would like to see resolved at the local level. One of my recommendations for starting to address this issue is to form an alliance of the local churches and then convene a session with the local school district and other local organizations to begin a dialogue about how you can work more closely together to ensure that certain times are set aside strictly for religious types of activities.

Another thing that the churches can do is combine their efforts as it relates to youth groups and youth activities. By leveraging each others’ resources, you can hopefully provide a broader set of activities for youth in the community that are planned and coordinated from a religious perspective. These activities might not include any direct religious education, but instead just provide an outlet for positive-oriented youth activities. Such activities might include the churches playing a leading role the development of a youth center (addressed as a separate recommendation).

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

ACTIVE GENERATIONS  
*Activities for Families and Youth*

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

**Resources**

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

South Dakota State Library Grants Director: <http://www.sdstatelibrary.com/grants/index.cfm>

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

<b>SUB THEME:      Activities for Families and Youth (Recreation/Skateboard Park)</b>
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**Challenge:** One of the specific projects brought up by the youth was the development of a skateboard park.

**Recommendation** More rural communities are considering the construction of skateboard parks as a recreational activity for youth. Several communities have been concerned about the potential liability of these kinds of facilities, but there are communities that have incorporated such facilities into their parks in order to alleviate skateboarding in other parts of the community where they create issues for retail establishments and property owners. Two such communities include the City of Parker and the City of Lennox.

There are a couple of funding opportunities for these types of projects. The first is the general recreation funds available through the Land and Water Conservation Fund administered by the SD Department of Game, Fish and Parks. This program provides 50/50 matching grants for outdoor recreation improvements. Requests can be for no less than \$3,000 and no more than \$50,000. Projects may range from swimming pools to playground equipment to ball field development, etc. A critical obligation that must be considered is that park or recreation areas acquired, developed, or improved with L&WCF must be dedicated to outdoor recreation use in perpetuity. Skateboard parks are considered high priority recreational use facilities for Class 1 and 2 municipalities according to the 2002 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). (Highmore is a class 2 municipality). The fact that the minimum cost of the project must be at least \$6,000 (based on a 50/50 match) and the fact that the recreation facility must be in use into perpetuity does provide some barriers to development of skateboard parks through this program.

**ACTIVE GENERATIONS**  
*Activities for Families and Youth*

There have been three groups/communities in South Dakota that have secured grants through the Tony Hawk Foundation for the creation of skateboard parks (grants ranging from \$1,000 up to \$15,000) including Pine Ridge (Visions of Suanne Big Crow, Inc.), Gregory (Midwest Extreme), and Lennox (Lion's Club). Additional information on this grant program can be found by visiting [www.tonyhawkfoundation.org](http://www.tonyhawkfoundation.org)

In some communities, the local FFA program provided assistance in the construction of ramps for a skateboard park that are eventually placed in a converted basketball or tennis court.

**Resources:**

Department of Game, Fish and Parks  
523 E. Capitol  
Pierre, SD 57501  
(605)773-3391

Publication: Land & Water Conservation Fund Manual  
<http://www.sdgfp.info/Publications/Parks/LWCFmanual.pdf>

Central South Dakota Enhancement District  
PO Box 220  
1205 Harrison Ave., Ste. 202  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-773-2784  
[enhancement@csded.org](mailto:enhancement@csded.org)  
[www.csded.org](http://www.csded.org)

North Central RC&D  
Joby Timm, Coordinator  
PO Box 1258  
314 S. Henry St., Suite 300  
Pierre, SD 57501-1258  
605-224-1818  
[joby.timm@sd.usda.gov](mailto:joby.timm@sd.usda.gov)

Tony Hawk Foundation  
1611-A S. Melrose Drive #360  
Vista, Ca 92081  
(760) 477-2479  
[www.tonyhawkfoundation.org](http://www.tonyhawkfoundation.org)

City of Lennox  
200 S. Main  
647-2286

ACTIVE GENERATIONS  
*Future Education Needs (School Funding)*

**Resources (Continued):**

Parker Economic Development Corporation  
Mark Kasten  
PO Box 57  
Parker, SD 57053-0057  
(605) 297-4305  
info@parkersd.org

<b>SUB THEME:     Future Education Needs (School Funding)</b>
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**Challenge:** Secure adequate long term funding for education needs.

**Recommendation:** The Highmore School was recognized in every listening session as one of your communities' greatest strengths. Stable enrollment has put you in a much better position than many other schools of similar size in South Dakota. Your Opt Out has given you breathing room, to be able to continue to offer the well rounded curriculum that people in the community expect.

Things are going well for the Highmore School today, but there remains concern and uncertainty over the long term outlook of funding for education. School districts across the state hope for the best, but try to plan for the worst. With the opt out expiring in the not too distant future, it forces the school district to rely on the state legislature to provide adequate funding for education, or the school district may have to consider another opt out vote to maintain existing programs. Since South Dakota's current funding formula was established, 134 opt out votes have been attempted. Originally the opt out was intended to allow schools to provide additional services to students. Now it is being used to supplement state aid.

Another major concern is the potential loss of the small school factor. The state legislature has expressed an interest in eliminating the small school factor and redistributing that money over all school districts. This would be devastating to all small schools and would leave a huge hole in Highmore's budget, estimated between \$125,000 and \$150,000 per year.

We do have options in dealing with these potential threats. The community can continue to recruit young families through economic development, providing adequate housing, providing after school programs, preschool and day care services. We also need to remind our legislature of the importance of quality education and the importance of the school in our small communities. We can also challenge the state on the adequacy of funding education. If those methods aren't totally successful, your school could consider another opt out.

At Centerville, we participated in two opt out votes in 2005. Our first failed 42/58% in March. Our second was successful in September with a 60/40% vote. We learned some valuable lessons from our loss in March:

**ACTIVE GENERATIONS**  
*Future Education Needs (Facilities)*

- Make sure to make all the cuts the community expects without sacrificing the quality of your education before you go to a vote.
- Don't have informational meetings at the school and invite the public, instead go to their meetings; Rotary, Garden Club, American Legion, Quilting Club, and Senior Citizens. You will have much better attendance with a captive audience.
- Flood the local newspaper with positive letters to the editor from community organizations and respected individuals from all aspects of the community
- Have a community driven "Save our School" campaign with signs, stickers and flyers.
- Make sure you get the correct information out on how the opt out will effect the taxpayers. Prepare a simple tax table in the local paper that people can easily understand.
- Provide benefits of the school to all segments of the community, to broaden your base of support beyond parents and grandparents with children in the system.

Win the support of the senior citizens and you will be OK.

**Resources:**

Associated School Boards of South Dakota  
PO Box 1059  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-773-2500  
info@asbsd.org

South Dakota Department of Education  
Dr. Rick Melmer, Secretary  
Deb Barnett, Deputy Secretary  
700 Governors Drive  
Pierre, SD 57501-2291  
605-773-3553

Centerville Public School  
Doug Voss, Superintendent  
610 Lincoln Street  
Centerville, SD 57014  
605-563-2291  
Doug.Voss@k12.sd.us

<b>SUB THEME:      Future Education Needs (Facilities)</b>
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**Challenge:** Continue to improve upon school facilities, with improvements to fitness center, all-weather track and provide preschool facility.

**ACTIVE GENERATIONS**  
*Future Education Needs (Facilities)*

**Recommendation:** I think at least one person in every listening session said that one of Highmore's greatest strengths is your school. Your new school building is a beautiful facility and something your entire community can be very proud of. It shows the level of commitment that the Highmore city and rural residents have to education and to the community.

**Fitness Center:** One of the projects that people mentioned in several of the listening sessions was to develop a fitness center. Several of the adults, of all ages, saw this as a need, as well as many of the students in the school listening session.

Since people of all ages are interested in this project, it could be developed as a community/school fitness center. It could be located in or near Highmore's down town auditorium. That way it will be convenient for the students, since that is where their gym is already located. Adults from the community may also feel more comfortable, since the community room is located there and it is apart from the main school campus.

Wellness centers might qualify under USDA's Rural Economic Development Grant Program (REDG) of Rural Economic Development Loan Program (REDL). These programs provide funds to a cooperating local utility to set up a revolving loan fund to finance a community facility, or provide grant assistance in conjunction with a REDL loan. REDL loans provide 0% loans to cooperating local utilities who then loan to a local entity at 0% over a ten year term.

Community Development Block Grants, (CDBG), may also be an option depending on income eligibility of the area.

The city of Alexandria completed their community activity center by raising \$600,000 from local residents. This center is integrated with the school facility, with the school district absorbing a portion of the costs through their capital outlay fund.

The Clark School built a community fitness center within an addition to their school (an auxiliary gym) when they passed the bonding for this facility. This fitness center is generally open to the public during various hours (morning and evening) of the day and is staffed by seniors in the community through the Experience Works Program (formerly Green Thumb). This program allows the community to hire retired seniors to supervise they gym and weight room facility during public hours. The program provides a way to involve seniors, solicit funding for this task, and ensure proper supervision of these facilities in addition to providing a job for seniors in the community.

*For more information on Fitness Center, see the Fitness /Recreation / Community Center recommendation further along in this report.*

**All-Weather Track:** The condition of the all weather track was also mentioned as a concern at a few of the listening session, but by several of the students at their listening session.

My home town of Centerville just completed our track and athletic field project a couple years ago. Some of the surrounding schools in our area spent between \$500,000 and \$1,000,000 on their athletic stadiums. We knew that we couldn't afford to spend that kind of money.

**ACTIVE GENERATIONS**  
*Future Education Needs (Facilities)*

We began our project by taking a straw poll of the community to measure support. When we found that the community overwhelmingly supported it, we worked on ways to save money. Through community participation and volunteer work, we were able to complete the project for \$354,543, including land acquisition costs of \$45,000. We completed our project in June of 2002. With your facilities already there, re-doing the track may not be a prohibitive expense.

Our new track has been tremendous for our community. We went from holding one track meet per year, to hosting 8 out of our 15 track meets the past couple years, including conference and region meets. We held the state & regional AAU track meets in Centerville for two years. The meets bring many people in from surrounding towns who do some shopping in our stores or visit our restaurants. People of all ages use the track for running or walking.

**Preschool Facility:** Several people expressed their desire for providing a preschool in Highmore. Some are now driving to Miller and paying for preschool there. With your enrollment being fairly stable, if existing facilities could be used and current staff utilized, a preschool may be affordable to the school district and to parents. As mentioned above, this could also be something that could be integrated into the development of a community daycare center (see recommendation and resources “Childcare” above).

Some schools have used unoccupied areas of their local nursing home as a location for preschool classes. It is good for both the students and the elderly to have the interaction. With your nursing home’s present occupancy of 34 out of 48, there may be some type of arrangement that can be made with them that will be mutually beneficial.

*For more information on Preschool Facility, see the recommendation above for Childcare.*

**Resources:**

USDA Rural Development  
1717 N. Lincoln Ave., Suite 102  
Pierre, SD 57501-3109  
605-224-8870  
[www.rurdev.usda.gov/sd](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/sd)

Community Development Block Grant  
Steve Harding  
Department of Tourism & State Development  
711 E Wells Ave  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-773-5032  
[goedinfo@state.sd.us](mailto:goedinfo@state.sd.us)  
[www.sdgreatprofits.com](http://www.sdgreatprofits.com)

## ACTIVE GENERATIONS

### *Seniors (Transportation)*

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

(Alexandria) Hanson School Community Activity Center  
Curt Hart  
Security State Bank  
PO Box 430  
Alexandria, SD 57311  
605-239-4306

Centerville Public School  
Doug Voss, Superintendent  
610 Lincoln St  
Centerville, SD 57014  
605-563-2291  
Doug.Voss@k12.sd.us

Fisher Tracks, Inc  
1192 235<sup>th</sup> St.  
Boone, IA 50036  
515-432-3191

Experience Works, Inc.  
120 S. Indiana Avenue  
Sioux Falls, SD 57103-1630  
1-800-450-5627 (toll free)  
605-332-7991

Clark School District  
www.clark.k12.sd.us  
605-532-3605

<b>SUB THEME: Seniors (Transportation)</b>
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**Sub Theme:** Seniors – Transportation / Assisted and Congregate Living Facilities / Senior Nutrition

**Challenge:** A number of concerns were noted on the availability of transportation for the senior citizens in the community as well as the senior nutrition program and the interest in an assisted living facility or congregate living facility.

## ACTIVE GENERATIONS

### *Seniors (Transportation)*

#### **Recommendation:**

##### Senior Transportation

The recommendation would be communication with the organizations that provide health care services to determine if there are other methods or models that can be explored for the transportation concern. I would suggest that the Senior Center, City and/or County contact and meet with both the South Dakota Department of Social Services and the South Dakota Department of Transportation (Public Rural Transit Division) to discuss possible alternatives for starting some kind of public transit service for seniors in the Highmore community. The Department of Transportation administers Section 5310 and Section 5311 programs, which provide financial and technical assistance to rural transit providers in conjunction with local governmental entities. General information on these programs is available online at <http://www.sddot.com/fpa/transit/>.

You can view which cities in South Dakota are served by public transit services by going online and downloading a map from <http://www.sddot.com/fpa/transit/Docs/Transit.pdf>. The map shows that there is an area lacking service for communities centered around Highmore. This is a potential opportunity to see if other counties and communities near Highmore (such as Gettysburg and Faulkton) would be willing to work together to help operate a regional transit service. Another alternative is to see whether other transit providers might be able to provide regular weekly or monthly service to Highmore such as Peoples Transit in Huron (353-0100), Meals on Wheels in Miller (853-2869) or River Cities Transit in Pierre (945-2360).

Also, be aware that the Title XIX Medical Transportation covers Medicaid eligible recipients for non-emergency transportation services to and from a recipient's home to the closest medical provider capable of providing medically necessary examinations or treatments. Contact the Department of Social Services for more information on this program as well.

Finally, I also suggest reading a recent report issued by the U.S. General Account Office (GAO) which you can find online at <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d04971.pdf>. This report identifies 15 federal programs that provide some funding for transportation services for seniors. Most federal programs provide funding to the states, who then redistribute the funds to local transit agencies. Some programs do provide funds directly to local providers, bypassing the state. An example of this is the US Department of Health and Human Service's Rural Health Care Services Outreach Program, which has provided for transit passes and the purchase of vehicles such as vans. These programs, however, are very difficult to access and grant awards are generally part of a broader project.

#### **Resources:**

South Dakota Department of Social Services  
Adult Services & Aging  
700 Governors Drive  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-773-3656  
<http://www.state.sd.us/social/ASA/index.htm>

ACTIVE GENERATIONS  
*Seniors (Assisted and Congregate Living)*

**Resources (Continued):**

South Dakota Department of Transportation  
Office of Public Transit  
Bruce Lindholm, Program Manager  
Becker-Hansen Building  
700 E. Broadway Ave.  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-773-7045  
Bruce.Linhom@state.sd.us  
www.sddot.com

<b>SUB THEME: Seniors (Assisted and Congregate Living)</b>
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**Challenge:** Many listening session respondents discussed the need for assisted living or congregate living services in Highmore.

**Recommendation:** It is my understanding that the operators of the local nursing home might be willing to explore expanding its services in the local community to offer an assisted or congregate living option, but the family that owns the nursing facility (nonresident owners) have apparently not had an interest in pursuing this.

This leaves you with a couple of options:

- Look to develop a facility at a location close to but not connected with the current nursing facility but continue to share services such as staff.
- Continue to work with the family that owns the nursing home to see if it is possible to add on to the current facility with an assisted living or congregate living option.
- If there is capacity in the current nursing facility, offer a lower cost and lower service assisted living option within the current nursing home. This is something that is done in other nursing homes in South Dakota (Arlington for example).

The first thing you need to do, if you haven't done so already, is do a feasibility analysis to see if there is sufficient demand for a separate facility and if such a facility would be financially feasible. The Central South Dakota Enhancement District could potentially aid in completing this service. The benefits of implementing an assisted living or congregate living facility is that it might free up other housing in Highmore.

There are programs available to assist with the development of an assisted living or congregate living facility through HUD, USDA Rural Development, and the South Dakota Housing Development Authority.

**ACTIVE GENERATIONS**  
*Seniors (Assisted and Congregate Living)*

USDA Rural Development's Community Facilities Program, could provide a loan for up to 40 years at below market interest rates. For a major project such as this, the community would likely have to agree to stand behind the facility in the form of being a guarantor on the loan. There would need to be a needs test or survey completed to insure the need is actually there for a certain size bed unit. There could be grant funds available through the State. The State Health Department would also be a good contact for this type of project since it is a heavily regulated business.

HUD also offers financial assistance programs to convert an existing housing facility. One of the programs is called the Assisted Living Conversion Program (ALCP). The entity would have to be a non-profit organization where they could maybe receive a grant to do a conversion of the dwelling units into an assisted facility. These types of programs are heavily regulated and you need to be aware of the rules, etc. for this type of project.

A congregate living facility might qualify to take advantage of USDA's Community Facility loan program. Another option through USDA Rural Development is the 515 Multi-Family Housing Program. This can offer subsidized rent to potential tenants.

There is also a program through HUD, called the Supportive Housing for the Elderly Program, which helps to expand the supply of affordable housing with supportive services for the elderly. It provides capital advances to finance the construction or acquisition and rehabilitation of structures that serve as supportive housing for the very low-income elderly persons and provides rent subsidies for the projects to help make them affordable. HUD also offers a Mortgage Insurance option for nursing homes, intermediate care facilities, board and care homes, and assisted living facilities through their Section 232 program. HUD will insure lenders against losses thus helping developers obtain financing to build assisted and/or congregate living projects.

The South Dakota Housing Development Authority can offer tax credits to also help with the development of this type of project.

Assisted Living and Congregate Living centers can be difficult to operate from a financial perspective if they are not property structured and/or have sufficient demand to be near capacity a majority of the time. Having a strong feasibility analysis showing the need for this facility will go a long way to ensuring a long term and sustainable business plan. Also, be sure to do your homework regarding programs available (identified above) for this type of project as many of the programs do require that the owner of the facility be structured as a non profit.

**Resources:**

South Dakota Department of Social Services – Winner Office  
Division on Adult Services and Aging  
649 W 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Winner SD 57580  
605-842-0400

## ACTIVE GENERATIONS

*Seniors (Senior Nutrition)*

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

Central South Dakota Enhancement District  
PO Box 220  
1205 N. Harrison Avenue Suite 202  
Pierre SD 57501  
605-773-2780  
<http://www.scded.org>

US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)  
2400 West 49<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite I-201  
Sioux Falls SD 57105  
605-330-4223  
<http://www.hud.gov/local/sd/working/localoffices.cfm>

USDA Rural Development  
1717 N. Lincoln Ave., Suite 102  
Pierre, SD 57501-3109  
605-224-8870  
[www.rurdev.usda.gov/sd](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/sd)

South Dakota Housing Development Authority  
Tax Credit Program  
PO Box 1237  
221 South Central Avenue  
Pierre SD 57501  
605-773-3181  
<http://www.sdhda.org>

<b>SUB THEME: Seniors (Senior Nutrition)</b>
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**Challenge:** As was brought up during our Senior listening session, there is a significant need to continue supporting the Senior Center and the adult nutrition program with strong community participation or the program might face cuts in the future.

**Recommendation:** The recommendation for the senior nutrition program would be more support through awareness and solving of the transportation need. As state funding decreases, the state is likely to increase its evaluation of various senior programs in each community to determine if this is something that is being supported by the local residents. The more support you have, the more likely it will continue. In many small communities, there seems to be a perception that senior programs only serve low-income seniors. It is important to move beyond that and find creative ways to involve all seniors in the center's activities. You could survey

## ACTIVE GENERATIONS

*Seniors (Senior Nutrition)*

various seniors in the community to determine their level of participation and gather their ideas for other things that the senior center could do to increase their interest and support.

### **Resources:**

Directory of resources for Senior Issues in Rural Areas. Go online to:  
<http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/ruralres/seniors.htm>

# INDUSTRY & AG DEVELOPMENT

**SUB THEME: Wind Tower Development**

**Challenge:** The community of Highmore is blessed to be one of the few communities in South Dakota that has been able to capitalize on the Wind Power development trend. The challenge, now, is how to further expand this option within Hyde County.

**Recommendation:** Wind power can be a significant economic development tool for rural areas, as you have already experienced in Hyde County to an extent. One example is the impact that wind power has had on Lincoln County in southwestern Minnesota. At one time, this county had the dubious distinction of being the poorest county in the state. Now, with 300 turbines located in the county, local land owners are reaping the benefits of payments from power companies for locating these towers on their property. The county is also receiving \$500,000 per year in property taxes from this source alone.

The challenge for Hyde County, and Highmore, is how to take further advantage of your current facility and capacity for wind power development. The answer is neither simple nor clear. The challenge for wind power development is transmission line capacity, as most of the power must be shipped to high power consuming urban communities. Without existing excess capacity to transmit power, building new transmission lines becomes cost prohibitive in many cases.

It is my understanding that a study is already underway looking at the transmission line issue within your county. While this is completed, you may ask “How can we further promote wind power development?”. It is my recommendation that you:

- 1) Get organized;
- 2) Get informed; and
- 3) Get active.

This seems simple enough, but when you are running on volunteer time, and people are already stretched thin, this is problematic.

Get Organized: By this, I mean that you need to set this as a priority for local governmental units and development corporation. If this is a priority that you establish for yourselves, than it needs to be part of the strategic action plan for your local governmental entities and development corporation. Having a fully engaged and formally incorporated development corporation is a necessary and immediate first step.

Look beyond just Highmore and Hyde County. Look at ways that you can join forces with other surrounding communities and counties with an interest in wind power development. There is power in numbers. Leverage your combined efforts. Hold a regional meeting to discuss ways

## INDUSTRY & AG DEVELOPMENT

### *Wind Tower Development*

that you can take action to move a collaborative effort forward. In southwestern Minnesota, 15 counties have joined together to form the Rural Minnesota Energy Board. Like rural water development, having a separate entity tasked to develop wind power on behalf of the region might make sense.

**Get Informed:** Make sure to attend various meetings held by the SD Public Utilities Commission regarding Wind Power. These are occurring on a semi regular basis across the state. Report back to local entities about what is learned. Also, there have been wind power conferences held in South Dakota and in Minneapolis a couple of times during the last several months. Make sure that someone representing your community is sent to these conferences to gather information and represent Highmore/Hyde County. Sit down and meet with the PUC commissioners and various utility companies to discuss ways that you can pursue wind power development further. Subscribe to the Wind Energy Newsletter located at <http://www.state.sd.us/puc/energy/wind.htm> through the Public Utilities Commission.

**Get Active:** To make wind power a reality in South Dakota on a more widespread basis, it may take legislative action. Being educated on the issues will help you to know what legislative changes might be necessary. Get informed about legislative incentives recently passed in Minnesota (and in the past) that promotes wind power development. Contact PUC to find out what their legislative agenda is regarding wind power and how you can be involved in helping to promote this legislation in the upcoming sessions. Be proactive and engaged. This is one of the most beneficial things that you can do to help promote wind power in your region.

The squeaky wheel gets the grease. You need to be visible regarding this issue so that you are well positioned for additional wind power development at the time when this starts to pick up steam in South Dakota.

### **Resources:**

Public Utilities Commission  
Capitol Building, 1st floor  
500 East Capitol Avenue  
Pierre, SD 57501-5070  
<http://www.state.sd.us/puc/energy/wind.htm>

Windustry: <http://www.windustry.com/>

<http://www.me3.org/issues/wind/>

Central South Dakota Enhancement District  
PO Box 220  
1205 N. Harrison Avenue Suite 202  
Pierre SD 57501  
605-773-2780  
<http://www.scded.org>

INDUSTRY & AG DEVELOPMENT  
*Value Added Agriculture*

**Resources (Continued):**

North Central RC&D  
Joby Timm, Coordinator  
PO Box 1258  
314 S. Henry St., Suite 300  
Pierre, SD 57501-1258  
605-224-1818  
joby.timm@sd.usda.gov

GOED Regional Rep  
Mark Vaux  
416 N Production  
Aberdeen, SD 57401  
605-725-2700  
mark.vaux@state.sd.us

**SUB THEME: Value Added Agriculture**

**Sub Theme:** Value Added Agriculture

**Challenge:** Need to develop agricultural industry, strengthen local economy, capitalize on local resources related to agriculture industry and agricultural production.

**Recommendation:** Agriculture is the dominant industry in Hyde County and the Highmore area. The abundant supply of agricultural commodities such as cattle, grass, corn, wheat, hay, sunflowers and soybeans, provides opportunities for value added agriculture. Bob Weyrich of the South Dakota Department of Ag defines value added as, “capturing the intrinsic value of the products we already produce.”

I know that this concept is not new to your area in visiting with some of your local producers. Whether it is developing a better carcass grading system for beef cattle or identifying a niche market in selling grass finished beef, there are many ways to add value to our commodities.

One way to begin to identify value added opportunities is to form a value added task force through the chamber or economic development corporation, to explore agricultural development activities that fit your community. You will need to seek out your own opportunities. It needs to be a local initiative. If you want to explore the potential of an ethanol plant, your first step to determine the feasibility.

## INDUSTRY & AG DEVELOPMENT

### *Value Added Agriculture*

Once you have explored some of your options, contact Cheri Rath of the Value Added Ag Center, (VAAC) to develop strategies.

Value added agriculture receives additional support with the creation of the Value Added Ag Subfund, through the Governor's Office of Economic Development, (GOED). The subfund assists with feasibility and marketing studies for prospective value added agricultural businesses.

A partnership between the South Dakota Department of Ag and the Governor's Office of Economic Development assists companies on projects from conception to completion. Their goals are to:

- Find niche markets to add value
- Fund marketing and feasibility studies
- Assemble the right people, capital and labor to make a successful project

The South Dakota Department of Ag and the Governor's Office of Economic Development are also partnering on South Dakota Certified Beef Program, [www.SDCERTIFIEDBEEF.com](http://www.SDCERTIFIEDBEEF.com). This program offers cattle producers the opportunity to add value to their calf crop through source, age and process verification, to provide customers confidence that the South Dakota Certified Beef offers a safe, high quality and completely source verified product. This program is the first of its kind and is intended to deliver a price premium to the producers.

The South Dakota Department of Agriculture also offers the Value Added Agribusiness Relending program, (VAARP), which provides direct loans for community projects; to establish new businesses, expand existing businesses, save or add jobs, and add value to South Dakota commodities through further processing and marketing. This may be worth looking into in regard to your vacant livestock barn or meat processing plant?

The USDA – Rural Development offers Value Added Producer Grants, (VAPG). Grant funds up to \$500,000 and are available to independent producers, producer groups, and farmer owned cooperatives to develop business plans for viable marketing opportunities and to develop strategies to create marketing opportunities.

The South Dakota Department of Agriculture has several financing programs through the South Dakota Value Added Finance Authority. They include:

- Beginning Farmer Bond Program
- Agribusiness Bond
- Livestock Nutrient Management Bond
- Value Added Agribusiness Loan
- VALU guaranty
- Livestock Loan Participation
- Ag Loan Participation
- Coop Stock Guaranty

## INDUSTRY & AG DEVELOPMENT

### *Value Added Agriculture*

Many of these programs may be in participation with your local bank.

[www.dakotaflavor.com](http://www.dakotaflavor.com) is the website for value added producers to market their products online. The South Dakota State Fair designates a “Value Added Day” at the fair each year. Brookings hosts an annual “South Dakota Value Added Conference” each March. You should send representatives from your community to attend this conference which is scheduled for March 14. More information is available online at [www.sdvalueadded.coop](http://www.sdvalueadded.coop) and click on the Value Added Ag Conference link.

#### **Resources:**

Bob Weyrich  
Ag Marketing Specialist  
SD Department of Ag  
523 E Capitol Ave  
Pierre, SD 57501-3182  
605-773-5436  
DakotaFlavor@state.sd.us

Cheri Rath  
Executive Director  
Value Added Agriculture Development Center  
303 Ill Ave, SW  
Huron, SD 57350  
605-352-9177  
Cherirath@yahoo.com  
[www.sdvalueadded.coop](http://www.sdvalueadded.coop)

Kelly Rasmussen  
Value Added Ag Subfund  
Governors Office of Economic Development  
711 E Wells Ave.  
Pierre, SD 57501-3369  
1-800-872-6190  
goedinfo@state.sd.us  
[www.sdgreatprofits.com](http://www.sdgreatprofits.com)

Mark Vaux  
GOED Regional Rep  
416 N Production  
Aberdeen, SD 57401  
605-725-2700  
mark.vaux@state.sd.us

INDUSTRY & AG DEVELOPMENT  
*Industrial Attraction (Small & Large)*

**SUB THEME: Industrial Attraction (Small and Large)**

**Challenge:** Working to attract industries to locate in Highmore, creating jobs and economic opportunity for the local community.

**Recommendation:** Capitalizing on industrial development has several key components including capacity, marketing, capitalizing on local resources such as wind energy and agriculture (covered in other recommendations), financing, and industrial site development such as land and buildings.

Capacity

Capacity is a big issue when it comes to industrial attraction and development. Typically, this is a role for the local economic development corporation. Highmore is currently in the process of formally structuring the development corporation. This is going to be critical because you will need an organization that can take the lead in your economic development efforts (this is covered in more depth in the previous recommendation regarding Capacity of the Economic Development Corporation). Having a formal and active development corporation, while a necessary first step, is not in itself sufficient. There needs to be an individual – either volunteer, part time, or full time – that takes the lead in coordinating your economic and industrial development efforts. This must be an individual who has a background in business and/or economic development, understanding financial issues, can maintain confidentiality with prospects, and has the ability to elicit trust from various community organizations (i.e. city council, economic development corporation, and other local organizations). *Again, this is covered in more depth in the previous recommendation regarding the Capacity of the Economic Development Corporation.*

Promotion and Marketing

A big piece of industrial recruitment is marketing. The marketing piece put together after Highmore was named a Capital Community is an excellent example of this. This needs to be extended to the Highmore Web Site at [www.highmore.org](http://www.highmore.org). This should be another extension of your marketing efforts and include a section geared to businesses looking to locate in the Highmore community. Economic development information should feature prominently somewhere on the front page of the website with links to additional information such as various financial incentives that might be offered by the city or county, labor statistics, and pictures/descriptions of property available for locating a business in the community. If you do have land and properties available, don't forget to have these listed on the GOED state web site as well, as this is often a first stop for businesses looking to relocate or expand. Also, don't forget to list what a great community Highmore is and all the wonderful assets that you have on your web site. Things like public safety, curb and gutter, school facilities, other major local employers, the wind towers, should all be included on this list.

## INDUSTRY & AG DEVELOPMENT

### *Industrial Attraction (Small & Large)*

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

- Sioux Falls Development Foundation - <http://www.siouxfallsdevelopment.com/>
- Dakota Dunes - [www.dakotadevelopment.com](http://www.dakotadevelopment.com)
- Brookings Economic Development - <http://swiftel.net/brkecon/>
- Aberdeen Economic Development - <http://www.adcsd.com/>
- De Smet Economic Development - <http://www.desmetdevelopment.com/>
- Freeman - <http://www.freemansd.com/freeman/elev.txt>
- Madison's Lakes Area Improvement Corporation - <http://www.madisonworks.com/home.aspx>
- Chamberlain's Lake Francis Case Development corporation - <http://www.chamberlainsd.org>

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

Marketing is essentially product differentiation. How is what you have to offer different from the rest of the region? Highmore should differentiate itself from other communities within the region and state, and work to exploit those differences for its benefit.

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

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

Through these relationships, develop a "hit" list of companies to communicate with and market to. After you've determined what companies or industry would likely be the best fit for the area, develop a strategy of approaching those types of companies.

### Financing

As I understand it, Hyde county has a tax abatement policy in place for new businesses locating in the area. This should be highlighted on your web site. In addition, be sure to highlight the other incentives to locating in the state of South Dakota such as tax policy (comprehensive

## INDUSTRY & AG DEVELOPMENT

### *Industrial Attraction (Small & Large)*

information listed on the GOED web site). Also, provide information on other resources possibly available to new businesses such as the state's Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) loan fund as well as its related subfunds for agriculture and tourism development. There are other loan and grant opportunities such as workforce development grants available through GOED or loans through other relevant economic development programs. See the GOED web site for information on the financial incentives available through the State. See the South Dakota Resources Directory at [www.sdcommunitynetwork.com](http://www.sdcommunitynetwork.com) for a comprehensive list of various economic and business development programs. Use this as a source of information for including brief summaries on your own web site and your other marketing efforts.

If you decide to develop a local revolving loan fund (as referenced in the earlier recommendation regarding the capacity of the economic development corporation), be sure to include information on this as well.

### Industrial Site Development and Buildings

It is important to have certain areas set aside and properly zoned for industrial and business development. The Central South Dakota Enhancement District can provide technical assistance in this regard. The site should be located near one of the highways passing through town to make sure that businesses that locate there would be highly visible to people passing through the community. Several communities have made the mistake of locating industrial parks in areas out-of-site, only to later relocate them near highways. Not only is access to the highway important, but businesses want to be visible for their own marketing purposes.

There are several different programs that can assist with site development and buildings. Most all of them require you to have a "bird in hand" or business ready to move in before you can take advantage of them. The following is a list of financial resources related to potential industrial park development:

South Dakota Department of Transportation: Has developed a grant program to foster economic development and enhance community access in South Dakota. The program has three categorical purposes:

1. The Industrial Park grants are made to local unit of governments, on a competitive basis, for the development of new and expanded access for new industries located within industrial parks.
2. The Agri-Business Access Grants are made to local unit of government, on a competitive basis, for the development of roads accessing new or expanded agri-business industries.
3. The Community Access Program grants are made to communities with populations of less than 5,000, on a competitive basis, to enhance existing access to downtown areas or for roads leading to schools, hospitals, grain terminals, or other significant traffic generating features of a small community.

## INDUSTRY & AG DEVELOPMENT

### *Industrial Attraction (Small & Large)*

For eligibility and criteria, please see the website listed in the resource section, below. All grants are based on the criteria development by DOT. The expenditure authority for the program will be determined by the Transportation Commission at their May meeting for the next Federal fiscal year. All grants must be approved by the Transportation Commission, and may be used to construct or reconstruct roads and streets that are eligible for funding.

#### Community Development Block Grant Program

The South Dakota CDBG program could also be of assistance for infrastructure development of the industrial park. There are qualifications and procedures that must be met and followed, and the community must first complete an analysis of all of the costs, and identify other resources, looking to the CDBG program last for any gap financing needed. As with other programs, the community must first have a “bird in hand”. For additional information, contact Steve Harding in the Governors Office of Economic Development.

#### Economic Development Administration

1. **Public Works:** The Public Works Program empowers distressed communities to revitalize, expand, and upgrade their physical infrastructure to attract new industry, encourage business expansion, diversify local economies, and generate or retain long-term, private sector jobs and investment.
2. **Economic Adjustment Assistance Program:** The Economic Adjustment Program assists state and local interests to design and implement strategies to adjust or bring about change to an economy. The program focuses on areas that have experienced or are under threat of serious structural damage to the underlying economic base.
3. **Local Technical Assistance:** The Technical Assistance Program helps fill the knowledge and information gaps that may prevent leaders in the public and nonprofit sectors in distressed areas from making optimal decisions on local economic development issues.

#### USDA Rural Development

1. **Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program (REDLG):** The purpose of the Rural Economic Development Loan (REDL) Program is to provide zero-interest loans and grants to RUS Borrowers to promote rural economic development and job creation projects. Loan funds may be used to promote rural economic development and/or job creation projects, including, but not limited to: Start up costs; Incubator projects; and other reasonable expenses
2. **Rural Business Enterprise Grants (RBEG):** Funds may be used to finance and develop small and emerging private business enterprises. Costs that may be paid from grant funds

## INDUSTRY & AG DEVELOPMENT

*Industrial Attraction (Small & Large)*

include the acquisition and development of land, and the construction of buildings, plants, equipment, access streets and roads, parking areas, utility and service extensions, refinancing, fees, technical assistance, start-up operating cost, working capital, and providing financial assistance to third parties through a loan (starting a revolving loan fund).

### **Resources:**

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

Mary Lehecka Nelson  
Marketing/Communications Manager  
Governor's Office of Economic Development  
711 East Wells Ave.  
Pierre, SD 57501  
Phone: 605-773-3301

Central South Dakota Enhancement District  
PO Box 220  
1205 Harrison Ave., Ste. 202  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-773-2784  
enhancement@csded.org  
www.csded.org

North Central RC&D  
Joby Timm, Coordinator  
PO Box 1258  
314 S. Henry St., Suite 300  
Pierre, SD 57501-1258  
605-224-1818  
joby.timm@sd.usda.gov

USDA Rural Development  
1717 N. Lincoln Ave., Suite 102  
Pierre, SD 57501-3109  
605-224-8870  
www.rurdev.usda.gov/sd

## INDUSTRY & AG DEVELOPMENT

*Agri Tourism / Hunting / Fishing*

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

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

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

<b>SUB THEME:</b> <b>Agri Tourism / Hunting / Fishing</b>
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**Sub Theme:** Agri Tourism / Hunting / Fishing

**Challenge:** Develop ideas to develop and market agri-tourism in the Highmore area.

**Recommendation:** The popularity of travelers wanting the ranch and farm experience is growing each year. The options are numerous, including day trips, bed & breakfasts, hunting, fishing, feeding farm animals, working cattle, horseback riding, nature walks, snowmobiling, bird watching, star gazing, nature photography and ATV trails.

Parents who have moved to cities want to give their children the farm experience. Bob Weyrich of the South Dakota Department of Agriculture offers the following advice: "Combine hospitality with a good business plan and you will greatly enhance your chances of success." To be truly successful you need to combine your own interest with the wants of others. You need to ask yourself, are visitors an interruption of my work, or the reason for it? Assess your agricultural resources and develop your promotional strategies that include who your prospective customers are. We have already established a cross-selling network in South Dakota to sell our heritage via the internet.

The Office of Tourism and the South Dakota Arts Council hosted our first agri-tourism conference in late October, 2005. Your development corporation or chamber of commerce could host a local workshop with guest speakers from all aspects of Agri Tourism for interested community members.

## INDUSTRY & AG DEVELOPMENT

### *Agri Tourism / Hunting / Fishing*

Paid hunting is increasing every year. You can do this in a big or small way. You only need to offer the opportunity and hunters will come. You could accomplish this with a comfortable building with minimal services or go all out with hunting lodges, over night accommodations, meals, guide service and dogs. When developing a hunting package, you can form marketing alliances including participation of local hunting lodges, farmers, ranchers, guides, local hotels, restaurants and local businesses. You could also include options like hunting supplies, box lunches and groceries. Market this over the internet with the assistance of the SD Office of Tourism. Free listings in the “South Dakota Outfitters and Guides Fishing, Hunting, and Horseback Services” can be made by contacting the Department of Tourism.

You have an opportunity to be creative, include events for late afternoon and evening entertainment. One of your community organizations or service club could sponsor a wild game feed or auction. Work with the entire community to take full advantage of the experience. The community could coordinate the beginning of hunting with a local event, contest or celebration.

Russ Stubbles, agri tourism consultant from Brookings, SD, insists that marketing over the internet is not just important, but essential to being successful in the agri tourism business. In rural South Dakota, we are dealing with the “in between” places. We need to connect ourselves with others including; farms, ranches, antique stores, and artists. When we connect with convention visitors bureaus and chamber of commerce in various cities across the state they are not our competition, but our assistants, making it a win/win for everyone.

When tourists come, we must have something for them to see, something for them to do, something for them to eat and something for them to buy. If you don't want to get into one of these businesses you need to connect with someone else to provide the other services, (networking).

It's the simple every day things that we take for granted that are our greatest treasures.

*For other ideas regarding agri and adventure tourism, see the previous recommendation in this report regarding “Promotion”.*

### **Resources:**

Bob Weyrich  
Ag Marketing Specialist  
SD Department of Agriculture  
523 E Capitol Ave  
Pierre, SD 57501-3182  
605-773-5436  
DakotaFlavor@state.sd.us  
www.dakotaflavor.com

INDUSTRY & AG DEVELOPMENT  
*Young People and Farming*

**Resources (Continued):**

Kelly Rasmussen  
SD Office of Tourism  
Governor's Office of Economic Development  
711 E Wells Ave.  
Pierre, SD 57501-3369  
1-800-872-6190  
www.sdgreatprofit.com  
www.travelsd.com

South Dakota Arts Council  
800 Governors Dr.  
Pierre, SD 57501-2294  
605-773-3131  
www.sdac@state.sd.us/sdarts.org

Dr Russ Stubbles  
Agri Tourism Consultant  
Brookings, SD 57006  
605-691-1074 cell  
605-692-5275 home  
stubbles@brookings.net  
www.agritourism-prairie.com

<b>SUB THEMES:</b> <b>Young People and Farming</b>
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**Sub Theme:** Young People and Farming

**Challenge:** Young individuals and families have a difficult time getting started in agriculture.

**Recommendation:** The South Dakota Department of Agriculture offers the Beginning Farmer Bond program, which helps new and young producers acquire agricultural property at lower interest rates. There are also other loan programs for agribusiness, value added agribusinesses and livestock loans. They also offer Ag Finance assistance, business development plan help and a variety of other services.

Farm Credit Services of America also offers financing for young and beginning farmers under the age of 35, or with 10 years or less of experience. They also offer a variety of other services such as financing and insurance.

## INDUSTRY & AG DEVELOPMENT

### *Young People and Farming*

The USDA-Farm Service Agency provides direct and guaranteed loans to beginning farmers and ranchers. There is a local service office located in Highmore and they will be able to provide information about services and programs available to producers.

The South Dakota Cooperative Extension Service can also offer education and assistance to producers on a variety of topics including economic and business information, farm management and general agricultural and livestock information. Programming is often based on emerging needs and this is something that might be pursued by their staff.

#### **Resources:**

USDA- Farm Service Agency  
Highmore Service Center  
218 Iowa  
Highmore, SD 57345  
Phone: (605) 852-2221  
<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/sd/>

South Dakota Department of Agriculture  
Teri LaBrie Baker, Loan Administrator  
523 East Capitol Avenue  
Pierre, SD 57501-3182  
Phone (605) 773-5436  
<http://www.state.sd.us/doa>

Farm Credit Services of America  
Young and Beginning Program, Financing, Education  
Kim Larson, Financial Specialist  
123 W. Missouri Ave.  
PO Box 10  
Pierre, SD 57501  
Phone: 800-658-3627  
[www.fcsamerica.com](http://www.fcsamerica.com)

SDSU Cooperative Extension Service  
Educational Resources  
North 3 Field Education Unit  
- Serving Potter, Faulk, Sully and Hyde Counties  
<http://sdces.sdstate.edu/north3>  
Terry Hall, Extension Educator-Agronomy  
[hall.terry@ces.sdstate.edu](mailto:hall.terry@ces.sdstate.edu)  
Ken Wonnenberg, Extension Educator-Livestock  
[wonnenberg.ken@ces.sdstate.edu](mailto:wonnenberg.ken@ces.sdstate.edu)

# BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & RETENTION

**SUB THEMES:** Business Creation and Tapping Technology

**Sub Theme:** Business Creation, Tapping into Technology

**Challenge:** Support for entrepreneurs and small business within the community to start new businesses which would provide services to keep the citizens in Highmore and provide more jobs in the community.

**Recommendation:** The creation of businesses which were mentioned several times in the listening sessions (a café without a bar attached, a place where the youth could go for pizzas, sub sandwiches, etc., which might also have a small game room attached, a thrift store with more clothing articles, a new motel, a Coffee Shoppe), are very reasonable start up businesses for a community like Highmore. Some suggestions to prepare for a successful business would be:

- Visit some of the same enterprises in communities that closely resemble Highmore. Ask questions of the managers as to financing, obstacles, time commitment, etc.
- The Small Business Development Center has offices in Pierre and can help someone through the planning stages of finding a building, locating financing, creating a business plan, etc.

In promoting new business growth in general, including the area of high tech businesses, the following are recommended:

- A good investment for the city would be to sponsor a “business creation” workshop of which several organizations (see references below) could present.
- Contact past residents, alumni, etc (especially those who may own their own companies or be in management positions) and make them aware of jobs that could be provided by potential employees in the Highmore area (outsourcing) while maintaining main offices in a metropolitan area.
- Another project you might look to implement would be hosting a business plan competition. These competitions review business plans put together by people in the community and provide a cash award or in-kind services (i.e. a certain number of donated hours of services from an accountant, lawyer, advertising, etc) to the competition’s winner. The Governors Giant Vision Awards are an example of a similar type of competition done on a statewide basis. Information about the Giant Vision Awards is available online at

## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & RETENTION

### *Business Creation & Tapping Technology*

[www.2010initiative.com/gva/index.htm](http://www.2010initiative.com/gva/index.htm), and provides a basis for crafting your own business plan competition.

- Use the “Old Settler” annual event as an economic development tool. You will have many alumni coming back to the community representing a variety of professions. I would suggest starting a database of these alumni, including information such as what company or organization they work for and their position within that company.
- Having a local contact or organization designated to assist new business development and expansion
- Developing a directory of technical and financial resources available for starting a business in Highmore
- Starting a business development and support roundtable
- Compiling a local services directory
- Provide scholarships or help sponsor those interested in attending workshops held across the state.

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

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

### **Resources:**

Center for the Study of Rural America  
Mark Drabenstott, Vice President and Director  
925 Grand Boulevard  
Kansas City MO 64198  
816-881-2000  
800-333-1010  
<http://www.kc.frb.org/RuralCenter/RuralMain.htm>

ItsSimple.biz

*- An online resource with lots of information on business planning development issues, developed as part of an SBA grant.*

[www.itssimple.biz](http://www.itssimple.biz)

## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & RETENTION

*Business Creation & Tapping Technology*

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

Badlands / South Central Enterprise Facilitation

Freya Simpson

32551 271st St.

Hamill, SD 57534

605-842-3220

fsimpson@gwtc.net

South Dakota Business Start Up Packet

*- provides helpful information on starting a business in South Dakota*

Governors Office of Economic Development – GOED

711 E. Wells Ave.

Pierre, SD 57501

605-773-5032

goedinfo@state.sd.us

www.sdgreatprofits.com

Governors Office of Economic Development

Mark Vaux, GOED Regional Representative

711 East Wells Avenue

Pierre, SD 57501

605-725-2700

mark.vaux@state.sd.us

Enterprise Institute

823 Mendary Avenue, Box 525

Brookings, SD 57007-0499

605-697-5015

info@sdei.org

www.sdei.org

Dakota Manufacturing Extension Partnership

101 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE

PO Box 1533

Watertown, SD 57201

605-753-0153

Info@ndmep.com

www.dakotamep.com

Rural Initiative Center

100 South Spring Ave., Suite 106

Sioux Falls, SD 57104-3626

605-334-1980

www.accsd.org/RIC.html

## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & RETENTION

*Business Creation & Tapping Technology*

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

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

Small Business Development Center (Pierre)  
1205 N. Harrison Ave., Ste. 202  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-773-2783  
[www.sdsbdc.org](http://www.sdsbdc.org)

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

Mid Dakota Economic Development Corporation  
(Central South Dakota Enhancement District)  
David Hauschild  
222 E. Capitol Ave Suite 16  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-773-2782  
[davidhauschild@csded.org](mailto:davidhauschild@csded.org)

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

Small Business Administration  
2329 North Career Avenue, Ste. 105  
Sioux Falls, SD 57101  
605-330-4231  
[www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov)

## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & RETENTION

### *Business Retention & Expansion*

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

USDA Rural Development  
1717 N. Lincoln Ave., Suite 102  
Pierre, SD 57501-3109  
605-224-8870

[www.rurdev.usda.gov/sd/](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/sd/)

*- Loans and grants for community facilities, revolving loans, infrastructure, and economic development, and technical assistance.*

<b>SUB THEME:      Business Retention and Expansion</b>
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**Challenge:** In a small community, the loss of a substantial employer and service provider has a tremendous impact on the entire economic structure of the community. Insuring that employers are competent managers and are planning for continuity is important to the growth of Highmore.

**Recommendation:** Over the next five years, more business owners are expected to retire than ever before. Overwhelmingly, these businesses are owned and managed by families or founding entrepreneurs. Studies indicate that only 30% of privately owned businesses are successfully transferred to the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation, and of those, only 12% make it to the third generation.

The reason for the high succession failure rate seems to be lack of planning. There is only so much a community can do to help a business succeed, the success lies in the hand of the business owner. If the community is supporting the business but the business is poorly managed, one can expect that the business will eventually close. If the community is supporting the business, and the owner is ready to retire and has not created interest in the family to continue the business, it is often difficult to sell a business to someone already in the community or bring in an “outsider”.

Here are a few suggestions that the community leaders could consider to support the “education” of current business leaders.

- Form a Chamber of Commerce, or local business group. This group can “sponsor” or bring in speakers regarding business management and family business systems during the year for business owners throughout the area.
- Organize a community wide survey to help determine what goods and services are desired by local consumers but not available locally. While it might not be feasible to have a clothing store, as many residents might request, it might be possible to add smaller items to the inventory of existing businesses (i.e. work boots, coveralls, etc). If you can identify demand for specific consumer goods, this will help local businesses determine what types of items they might offer

## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & RETENTION

### *Business Retention & Expansion*

in the future. This can be a simple survey with response boxes located at businesses throughout the community. The survey should be brief and ask consumers what items they are shopping for outside of Highmore that they would like to have available locally. This is a project that youth could be involved in working on as a class project as well.

- Start a business visitation program. This would allow your business group (or potential chamber) to check the vital signs of each business on a regular schedule. Identify one or two businesses per month to visit and find out what their specific needs might be. Not only will this be helpful in determining what types of activities your business association might get engaged in, but it will also give you insight into shared concerns or needs among several businesses in the community. For example, are their specific financial or technical assistance services that they need help with? Are they interested in further developing their marketing skills? Are they planning to retire in the near future and are they concerned about business transition to another family member or owner? Is the business looking to potentially expand in the future? If so, are there things that they might want assistance with?
- Start a comprehensive shopping local program (more details on how to do this covered later in the next recommendation).
- As suggested in the previous recommendation, work with technical assistance providers such as the SBDC in Pierre to host technical skills training seminars in Highmore on topics such as marketing, business planning, business succession planning, etc.
- As suggested in the previous recommendation, help businesses navigate the complex and often overwhelming myriad of financial and technical resources available to them. Draft a short list of financial resources available locally, or on a statewide basis, and distribute this to the businesses in your community. The SD Resources Directory lists most of the primary business development programs throughout the state. Use this as a resource to draft you own local directory.
- Start a revolving loan fund through the economic development corporation to provide financial capital to existing businesses looking to expand or in need of working capital.

Most of the references listed under “Business Creation” are also references for speakers on current business management and family business education.

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

## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & RETENTION

### *Business Retention & Expansion*

#### **Resources:**

*See also the resources listed in the previous recommendation*

SD Family Business Association  
USDSU Campus  
2209 North Career Avenue  
Sioux Falls, SD 57107  
605-782-3225  
badamson@usd.edu  
Beth Adamson, Director

South Dakota MicroLoan Program  
*- provides low interest, gap financing for small businesses for capital, equipment, real estate or other project costs.*  
Governors Office of Economic Development – GOED  
711 E. Wells Ave.  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-773-5032  
goedinfo@state.sd.us  
www.sdgreatprofits.com

Genesis Equity Fund  
*- Invests Capital in startup and expanding businesses, creating an ownership interest.*  
444 N. Mr. Rushmore Road, Ste. 204  
Rapid City, SD 57701-1197  
605-394-6140  
jmirehouse@tie.net  
www.genesisequityfund.com

Prairie Gold Venture Partners  
*- Venture Capital Investment*  
Technology Business Center  
2329 N. Career Ave., Suite 225  
Sioux Falls, SD 57107  
605-261-6550  
jerstad@pgvp.com  
www.pgvp.com

## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & RETENTION

*Supporting Local Businesses (Shopping Local)*

### Resources (Continued):

REDI – Entrepreneur Subfund

*- Recently passed by the legislature, makes loans to South Dakota entrepreneurs and South Dakota start-up businesses to develop and promote new business activity.*

Governors Office of Economic Development – GOED

711 E. Wells Ave.

Pierre, SD 57501

605-773-5032

goedinfo@state.sd.us

www.sdgreatprofits.com

<b>SUB THEME:      Supporting Local Businesses – Shopping Local</b>
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**Challenge:** Keeping local businesses alive and thriving, and recognizing the value of shopping locally.

**Recommendation:** Give the citizens of the town in black and white what impact shopping locally has on the town. Write a newspaper story and show what a cup of coffee per day for a year will have on the café. Contact Miner County and learn how they involved their youth and increased local shopping significantly. Education is a big piece of implementing a comprehensive shopping local strategy. Getting your youth engaged in this type of a project will help people in the community understand the impact that their dollars have in helping to retain and expand existing businesses, as well as adding to the local tax base that pays for things like basic infrastructure in the community. Ideas for implementing a comprehensive “shop local” strategy in Highmore include:

- Sometimes people do not shop locally because of the service they receive. Provide hospitality training to all businesses, all employers and employees.
- Educate your community on the things that it has to offer. Often people do not shop locally because they do not know what is available. Write a feature story once a week or once a month for the local newspaper on a business, so everyone becomes more familiar with what the business has to offer. Do this for all businesses; sometimes the small one-person businesses have a lot to offer but are overlooked. This includes home-based businesses.
- Develop a directory of goods and services available in Highmore. Create a map of the community on one side with various business locations marked by a numerical symbol. On the back side, include a list of businesses sorted by category of goods and services offered (such as daycare providers, restaurants, automotive service establishments, etc). I think you will be surprised at the number of businesses in Highmore, particularly once you start including home-based businesses

## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & RETENTION

*Supporting Local Businesses (Shopping Local)*

- Develop shop local graphic for your community and post it in various marketing and promotional materials.
- Use the newspaper to promote which businesses are donating to various community efforts.
- Find out what items are purchased most often out of town. If possible, have the feasible items stocked in a local business.
- Post “Thank you for shopping in Highmore” signs in every retail establishment. Get buttons printed up as well for staff to wear.
- Challenge people and businesses to spend 10% more locally in 2006 as they did in 2005.
- Arrange for events downtown that attract customers to these areas.

Businesses can take advantage of SCORE (Service Core of Retired Executives). These individuals have a wealth of information concerning the successful running of a business, and are willing to share that knowledge.

Most of all, remember that every time you have a choice to go out of town and shop, imagine what it would be like not to have that service or store in Highmore. The more you spend in at “home”, the more likely that these businesses will be retained and other businesses and services might be available locally in the future.

### **Resources:**

#### SCORE

contact them through:

Small Business Development Center  
416 Production Street N.  
Aberdeen, SD 57401  
605-626-2565

Small Business Development Center  
1205 N Harrison Ave Suite 3  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-773-2783  
Jeff Brusseau, Regional Director  
jbrussea@usd.edu

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

**BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & RETENTION**  
*Main Street Revitalization*

**Resources (Continued):**

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

Rural Learning Center  
Jim Beddow, Director  
PO Box 702 – 123 S Main St  
Howard, SD 57349  
605-772-5139  
www.ruralllearningcenter.org

Mark Vaux, Regional Representative  
Governor's Office of Economic Development  
416 N. Production St.  
Aberdeen, SD 57401' mark.vaux@state.sd.us  
605-725-2700

<b>SUB THEME:    Main Street Revitalization</b>
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**THEME: BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & RETENTION**

**Sub Theme:** Main Street Revitalization

**Challenge:** Like many small towns, Highmore wants to find ways to support and maintain their main street business corridor.

**Recommendation:** Highmore is very unique in the fact that it has essentially two main streets. This can be both a challenge and an opportunity. One of the keys to downtown success is making sure that you get people and customers downtown to utilize and support businesses located there. Main Street viability ties in with business creation, retention and expansion efforts as well as efforts to support your local businesses through shopping local efforts, marketing, and skills development. These areas are addressed in the previous recommendations in this section of the report.

## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & RETENTION

### *Main Street Revitalization*

The focus of this recommendation deals with general Main Street specific support mechanisms as well as infrastructure. There are essentially two parts to Main Street Development. There is the business side and then there is the aesthetics of the downtown area including infrastructure.

#### Downtown Business Development

At times, it is easy to limit Main Street development strictly to a historic preservation or an infrastructural component. The real key is getting customers in the door, and the aesthetics of the downtown area will often take care of itself.

It is my understanding that you do not have a chamber or main street retailers association, which is usually devoted to local marketing efforts. Rather than trying to create wholly separate entities, this could be part of the process of formally structuring your Economic Development Corporation and making a sub-part to some of the overall goals that this organization chooses to address. This would help to expand the potential membership of the economic development corporation and bring greater resources to the table, as well as other efficiencies that having a single organization naturally implies.

A potential strategy is to develop a working subcommittee of the economic development corporation that is devoted solely to business marketing and Main Street development. Some of the activities for this group could be the planning of community events. These events or celebrations should be constructed such that they maximize exposure to Main Street businesses such as having a carnival downtown, running business specials, etc.

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

#### Downtown Preservation and Aesthetics

Street and infrastructural improvements are planned for the streets running through the downtown area in the next few years (although I believe these have been postponed on occasion by the state Department of Transportation, causing some problems to completing the street, water, and curb improvements on the east end of town). This work will have a dramatic and positive impact on the downtown area. But during the construction period, this can be a significant challenge for downtown businesses where customers might have difficulty accessing these establishments.

The city of Plankinton recently dealt with a very similar situation. Their Main Street businesses came together during this time to help mitigate these challenges by putting up signage directing traffic to through streets around the back of the businesses. The businesses also launched a “backdoor” marketing campaign with specials to get customers to use the back doors to many of these Main Street businesses during the construction period. When this construction project comes to fruition in Highmore, the Main Street businesses will need to be proactive about

## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & RETENTION

### *Main Street Revitalization*

addressing these issues and working collaboratively to make sure that customers still have appropriate access to their businesses. Keeping connected with the city as this process evolves is a must.

General signage is important to attracting people off the highway. Make sure that passing motorists on Highway 212 know where your Main Street business area is located. The signage should direct traffic to your business areas, and allow areas on the sign for advertising by local businesses.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Some communities have tackled Main Street revitalization by development Main Street specific organizations in collaboration with the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s Main Street Program. Some states have a statewide Main Street program (Wyoming and Iowa for example). South Dakota used to, but no longer has a statewide Main Street organization - although we do

## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & RETENTION

### *Main Street Revitalization*

have a couple of local-level Main Street Programs in the state (Brookings and Sioux Falls for example).

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

The State Historical Society also manages the Rehabilitation Tax credit program. This tax credit program promotes the rehabilitation of historic buildings or buildings built before 1936 by providing federal tax incentives based on the rehabilitation costs. Any work on the interior or exterior of the building qualifies for the tax credit. The South Dakota Legislature has also provided for certain property tax benefits for the rehabilitation of historic structures in SDCL-19A-20. If a historic building qualifies for the tax benefit, an eight-year moratorium is placed on the property tax assessment of certified improvements. Property tax assessments may not be increased due to certified rehabilitation of the building.

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

#### **Resources:**

Central South Dakota Enhancement District  
PO Box 220  
1205 Harrison Ave., Ste. 202  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-773-2784  
enhancement@csded.org  
www.csded.org

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

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

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & RETENTION  
*Main Street Revitalization*

**Resources (Continued):**

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

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

# COMMUNITY PROJECTS

**SUB THEME: Infrastructure**

- Streets & Equipment
- Water & Waste
- Curb & Gutter

**Sub Theme:** Infrastructure – Streets & Equipment / Water & Waste / Curb & Gutter / Dust

**Challenge:** A number of concerns were noted on finishing up the paving project on the east side of town. There were also concerns on the financing of the mentioned infrastructure projects listed as well as financing the equipment to maintain them.

**Recommendation:** The solution to the paving/curb/gutter project is already in the works. The Central South Dakota Enhancement District provides assistance with application writing, project planning and development in the areas of infrastructure as well as many others.

It is my understanding that work on the streets and other infrastructure issues on the east side are delayed due in part to the state highway project running through your downtown area that is planned to be completed in the next few years, as well as other financing and paperwork issues for accessing programs to finance the east side development project.. This has become problematic as citizens on the east side are anxious to see this work completed. My recommendation here is to continue to press for the completion of the highway project downtown, especially in light of the fact that it is holding up other improvements in the community. Work with Central Enhancement District, the county, and city to continue to plead your case with the SD Department of Transportation. Remember that the “squeaky wheel get the grease” and even if you not successful in getting the project moved up, hopefully it will not be further delayed.

In the mean time, residents on the east side continue to deal with issues of dust. The city could look into the cost of spraying down these roads on a regular basis during the summer to try to alleviate some of the dust problems until street and infrastructural work can begin.

Some people also expressed concern that the city did not have adequate equipment to service the roads and areas that have been updated. This is an issue that the city will need to look at and see if there is flexibility within their capital budget to fund the purchase of this type of equipment over time. Also, work with Central Enhancement District to determine what financial program might be available to purchase this type of maintenance equipment through either USDA or the State of South Dakota.

## COMMUNITY PROJECTS

### *Infrastructure*

The following is a list of programs available to assist with your water and waste infrastructural improvements. Contact Central Enhancement District to coordinate accessing these various financial resources. Many of the programs mentioned have substantial paperwork and a long process that, if done incorrectly, may take the funding away or draw out the process even further.

#### 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.

**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.

- 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.

## COMMUNITY PROJECTS

### *Infrastructure*

#### 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, not insurmountable.

#### 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.
- Infrastructure for new housing development can be financed by site development loan programs.

## COMMUNITY PROJECTS

### *Infrastructure*

#### Rural Electric Loan Funds (REED)

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

- Includes medical clinics, street projects, fire halls/ambulance shelters, fire truck/ambulances, fire equipments, water and sewer projects.

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.

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:**

Central South Dakota Enhancement District  
PO Box 220  
1205 N. Harrison Avenue Suite 202  
Pierre SD 57501  
605-773-2780  
<http://www.scded.org>

South Dakota Department of Transportation  
700 E. Broadway Avenue  
Pierre SD 57501-2586  
605-773-3265

USDA Rural Development  
1717 N. Lincoln Ave., Suite 102  
Pierre, SD 57501-3109  
605-224-8870  
[www.rurdev.usda.gov/sd](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/sd)

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)  
% Governors Office of Economic Development  
711 E. Wells Avenue  
Pierre SD 57501  
605-773-3301  
<http://www.sdgreatprofits.com>

COMMUNITY PROJECTS  
(Facilities) Pool

**Resources (Continued):**

SD Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
Water and Waste Funding Division  
523 E. Capitol Avenue  
Joe Foss Building  
Pierre SD 57501  
605-773-4216  
<http://www.state.sd.us/denr>

Rural Electric Economic Development  
East River Electric Cooperative  
PO Box 227  
Madison SD 57042  
605-256-4536

Midwest Assistance Program (MAP)  
PO Box 1093  
Hill City SD 57745  
605-574-4795

South Dakota Association of Rural Water Systems  
5009 West 12<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 5  
Sioux Falls SD 57106  
605-336-7219  
<http://www.sdarws.com>

**SUB THEME: Facilities (Pool)**

**Challenge:** The need to upgrade and make major improvements to the pool, were a prominent reoccurring theme during the listening sessions. The current pool, due to its age, requires substantial investments by the city to keep it operating. The pool is now in a condition that it can present a public safety issue with large chunks coming off on a semi-regular basis. The estimated cost of repair is around \$240,000. Some funds have been raised for this project, but they are not nearly enough to make this project a reality in the near term. The city and county have each devoted \$10,000 or so in the next year in their budgets to support this project. While the project might be bonded, the city's bonding capacity is limited due to its other major infrastructural improvements in the community (sewer, water/waste, streets, curb & gutter).

**Recommendation:** As I stated at the town hall meeting, there is no magic bullet for financing pool repairs, which is unfortunate because so many communities are grappling with the exact

## COMMUNITY PROJECTS

### *(Facilities) Pool*

same issue. I will highlight some resources used by other communities and then discuss the situation specific to Highmore.

There is little external grant support for renovation of swimming pools, and coupled with the fact that few if any pools actually make money in a community, funding these types of renovations fall heavily on the local governments. These facilities, however, are often seen as critical for the community as a whole – as is evidenced by the responses during the assessment in Highmore.

The primary small grant opportunity for pool renovation is the Land and Water Conservation Fund Program administered through the SD Department of Game, Fish, and Parks. This program provides up to a 50/50 matching grant, but only up to \$50,000. Outdoor Swimming pools are considered high priority renovations projects for Class 1 and 2 municipalities according to the 2002 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). Highmore is a Class 2 municipality. Communities such as Elk Point and Salem have received small grants through L&WCF to help fund pool renovations.

I am aware that an attempt was made to make an application through this program in the past year, but was not successful. While these funds are very competitive, I would urge you to continue making applications for funding through this program. I would utilize the services of the Central South Dakota Enhancement District or the North Central RC&D to help you with developing this grant application as they have experience with making applications for funding grants through this program. Also, utilize this assessment to show the evidenced need in the community for this project. By quickly analyzing the projects brought up by the community, the pool was mentioned at least 50 times! This is easily the more requested priority project for the community during the assessment.

How have other communities dealt with this issue? The City of Britton recently built a new swimming pool. Construction was funded by a \$300,000 contribution from the City, \$100,000 from the local community foundation, \$150,000 from small donations, and \$250,000 borrowed and repaid with a penny sales tax.

Canistota's swimming pool underwent extensive repairs in 2002 at a cost of \$200,000. Local fundraising efforts covered a fair amount of this cost, with the remainder being covered by the city.

Flandreau also built a new aquatic facility in 2002 because its current pool was no longer code compliant and many local residents were taking their kids to nearby Pipestone, MN to swim. Flandreau was able to secure a CDBG grant for the pool's construction in the amount of \$900,000. Another \$100,000 was funded by the City Electric Fund and \$400,000 of the remaining construction costs was funded through a local bond. While the community was able to secure a CDBG grant for this project, more recently, most funds through this program are used toward major community needs such as fire halls, etc. It is worth exploring, however.

## COMMUNITY PROJECTS

### *(Facilities) Pool*

Fundraising will be key to making this project happen, and you already have several efforts underway. It will take financial commitment from the local residents and businesses to make this project happen.

The community of Lemmon has also used some creative ways to fundraise. One of the things that they did was sell “bricks” to community residents. If a person purchases a brick, they will have their name engraved in the brick, which will then be used for landscaping in the park. This can work as a great fundraiser. This strategy was also used to help solicit private funds for improvements to the Governor’s new home in Pierre.

While major grants are pretty much non-existent for pool reconstructions, there are some loan opportunities that might be able to make this project happen. Long term capital improvements could possibly be financed by issuing bonds, securing a guaranteed loan from USDA Rural Development, or through the Rural Electric Economic Development (REED) fund.

USDA Rural Development has two programs that could assist in providing loan financing for a pool reconstruction project. The Rural Economic Development Loan program (REDL) could provide 0% interest financing for a swimming facility. The loan is actually made from USDA Rural Development to a local cooperative, who then re-loans the funds to a local municipality or non profit at 0% interest for 10 years. The other USDA Rural Development program that this fits under would be the Community Facility Loan Guarantee program, which might be able to guarantee a loan made for this type of a project.

Another source of funding for financing a pool renovation might also include a loan through REED, the Rural Electric Economic Development fund administered by East River Electric and your local member electric cooperative. Taking advantage of this loan program requires the participation of a local power cooperative (that is a member of East River Electric). REED can provide low interest financing for up to a 20 year term for a certain percentage of the project’s costs.

Finally, there is the possibility of bonding for this type of project – although this becomes more difficult as I understand that the city’s current bonding ability is limited for another few years until the major infrastructural projects have been completed.

Undoubtedly, fundraising will play a major role in making this project happen. Trying to fund this entire project, however, with fundraising alone may be very difficult given the large amount of money that needs to be raised.

This is a long term capital improvement project. In those terms, you can consider long-term financing to help make the project happen. Both the city and county are incurring costs to maintain the existing pool. It is important to do an analysis of how much this is costing these entities and whether it would be more or less to borrow some funds for the project and pay them off over an extended period as opposed to annual costs to maintain the existing pool. While the city might not have the capacity to borrow independently, it might consider entering into a joint powers agreement with the county to devote long term funds to making this project happen.

COMMUNITY PROJECTS  
*(Facilities) Pool*

Think strategically about how much fundraising is possible. Set a goal, and perhaps once that amount is raised, agree to help finance the remainder through a long-term financing alternative such as bonds, a guaranteed loan, or a loan through a revolving loan fund supported by local governmental entities. Central South Dakota Enhancement District should be able to provide technical assistance to your local governmental entities and pool renovation taskforce to pursue some of these alternatives.

**Resources:**

REED Fund  
Linda Salmonson  
East River Electric Cooperative  
PO Box 227  
Madison, SD 57042  
605-256-4536  
lsalmonson@eastriver.coop

Governor's Office of Economic Development  
*Community Development Block Grant*  
Steve Harding  
711 E. Wells Ave.  
Pierre, SD 57501  
800-872-6190  
www.sdgreatprofits.com

Department of Game, Fish and Parks  
*Land Water Conservation Fund*  
523 E. Capitol  
Pierre, SD 57501  
(605)773-3391

Publication: Land & Water Conservation Fund Manual  
<http://www.sdgfp.info/Publications/Parks/LWCFmanual.pdf>

Central South Dakota Enhancement District  
PO Box 220  
1205 Harrison Ave., Ste. 202  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-773-2784  
enhancement@csded.org  
www.csded.org

COMMUNITY PROJECTS  
*(Facilities) Pool*

**Resources (Continued):**

North Central RC&D  
Joby Timm, Coordinator  
PO Box 1258  
314 S. Henry St., Suite 300  
Pierre, SD 57501-1258  
605-224-1818  
joby.timm@sd.usda.gov

USDA Rural Development  
1717 N. Lincoln Ave., Suite 102  
Pierre, SD 57501-3109  
605-224-8870  
www.rurdev.usda.gov/sd

Britton Swimming Pool  
Marie Marlow  
City Finance Officer  
City of Britton  
PO Box 91  
Britton, SD 57430  
605-448-5721  
cityhall@brittonsd.com

Canistota Swimming Pool  
Darin Nugteren  
City of Canistota  
531 N. East Ave  
Canistota, SD 57012  
605-333-0525  
noot@mchsi.com

Flandreau Swimming Pool  
Arlyce Derald  
City of Flandreau  
103 N. Wind Street  
PO Box 342  
Flandreau, SD 57028  
605-997-2353  
flandreau3@dignet.com

COMMUNITY PROJECTS  
*Facilities (Campground)*

**SUB THEME: Facilities (Campground)**

**Challenge:** Several respondents expressed an interest in making campground improvements to the east side park.

**Recommendation:** There are few grant opportunities that I am aware of for this type of project. Again, this fits under the Land and Water Conservation Fund grant program. Campground development, however, is assessed as a low priority for all classes of municipalities according to the 2002 State-wide recreation survey. Funding for this type of project in Highmore might then require an independent survey of your community to identify this campground project as a high priority need.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), which is administered by the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks department, provides 50/50 matching grants for outdoor recreation improvements. Requests can be for no less than \$3,000 and no more than \$50,000. Projects may range from swimming pools to playground equipment to ball field development, etc. A critical obligation that must be considered is that park or recreation areas acquired, developed, or improved with L&WCF must be dedicated to outdoor recreation use in perpetuity

Again, I would highlight the technical assistance services that could be provided by either North Central RC&D or Central Enhancement District for a grant application through the LWCF program.

This would make an excellent project for local service-related organization. With volunteer labor and donated supplies, this is a project that might not be too expensive to complete. I would also contact North Central RC&D (Joby Timm) to see if they have other ideas for funding this project. North Central RC&D has a great deal of experience working on similar projects in other communities.

**Resources:**

Department of Game, Fish and Parks  
*Land Water Conservation Fund*  
523 E. Capitol  
Pierre, SD 57501  
(605)773-3391

Publication: Land & Water Conservation Fund Manual  
<http://www.sdgfp.info/Publications/Parks/LWCFmanual.pdf>

**COMMUNITY PROJECTS**  
*Facilities (Fitness / Rec / Community Center)*

**Resources (Continued):**

North Central RC&D  
Joby Timm, Coordinator  
PO Box 1258  
314 S. Henry St., Suite 300  
Pierre, SD 57501-1258  
605-224-1818  
joby.timm@sd.usda.gov

Central South Dakota Enhancement District  
PO Box 220  
1205 Harrison Ave., Ste. 202  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-773-2784  
enhancement@csded.org  
www.csded.org

<b>SUB THEME:      Facilities (Fitness / Recreation / Community Center)</b>
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**Challenge:** Whether visiting with the youth or the adults of Highmore, the same concern came up time and again, a need for a place for people of all ages to go for recreation and wellness.

**Recommendation:** USDA Rural Development provides financial assistance through their Community Facilities Program as does the Governors Office of Economic Development through their Community Development Block Grant Program. The Central South Dakota Enhancement District will provide technical assistance. After the resources list is a list of communities that have recently constructed community centers. The recommendation would be to contact a couple of these communities and visit with them about their experience and determining the needs to be included in the facility.

Several Communities have secured Community Development Block Grants for constructing or renovating community centers. Contact the Central Enhancement District for more information on communities that have secured CDBG grants for this purpose.

*Development of a Fitness Center is also discussed, above, under the recommendation regarding “School Facilities”*

**COMMUNITY PROJECTS**  
*Facilities (Fitness / Rec / Community Center)*

**Resources:**

USDA Rural Development  
1717 N. Lincoln Ave., Suite 102  
Pierre, SD 57501-3109  
605-224-8870  
[www.rurdev.usda.gov/sd](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/sd)

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)  
Governors Office of Economic Development  
711 E. Wells Avenue  
Pierre SD 57501  
605-773-3301  
<http://www.sdgreatprofits.com>

Central South Dakota Enhancement District  
PO Box 220  
1205 N. Harrison Avenue Suite 202  
Pierre SD 57501  
605-773-2780  
<http://www.scded.org>

Community Centers Recently Constructed:  
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  
605-892-2467

Hill City Boys and Girls Club Center  
PO Box 677  
Hill City SD 57745  
605-574-2010

Platte Development Corporation  
PO Box 336  
Platte SD 57369  
605-337-2895

COMMUNITY PROJECTS  
*Facilities (EMS Equipment and Fire Hall)*

**Resources (Continued):**

Sturgis Area Community Center  
1401 Lazelle Street  
Sturgis SD 57785  
605-347-6513

<b>SUB THEME: EMS Equipment and Fire Hall</b>
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**THEME: COMMUNITY PROJECTS**

**Sub Theme:** Facilities – EMS Equipment and Fire Hall

**Challenge:** Concerns were mentioned during the listening sessions on the need to replace and/or upgrade some of the EMS equipment as well as the fire equipment/fire hall.

**Recommendation:** The recommendation is to work with Central South Dakota Enhancement District to take advantage of various federal/state loan/grant programs. Financial assistance is available through USDA Rural Development’s Community Facilities Program, Department of Homeland Security’s Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program, the Community Development Block Grant Program, and Rural Electric Loan Funds. There are also funds available through the US Department of Health and Human Services to assist with EMT training programs and equipment.

Some of the various programs related to Emergency Services (Equipment & Training) include:

- US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) - Rural Health Outreach Grant Program - The emphasis of this grant program is on service delivery through creative strategies requiring the grantee to form a network with at least two additional partners.
- HHS - Network Development Grant Program - These grants are designed to further ongoing collaborative relationships among health care organizations by funding rural health networks that focus on integrating clinical, information, administrative, and financial systems across members.
- HHS - Network Development Planning Grant Program - This new grant program provides one-year of funding to rural communities needing assistance in the development of an integrated healthcare network. The planning grants are to be used to develop a formal network with the purpose of improving the coordination of health services in rural communities and strengthening the rural health care system as a whole.

**COMMUNITY PROJECTS**  
*Facilities (EMS Equipment and Fire Hall)*

- HHS - Rural Access to Emergency Devices (RAED) Grant Program - The Rural Access to Emergency Devices (RAED) Grant Program provides funding to rural communities to purchase automated external defibrillators (AEDs) and provide training in their use and maintenance.
- HHS – Rural Emergency Medical Services Training and Equipment Assistance Program (REMSTEP) - The REMSTEP grant program seeks to fund eligible entities that propose to develop improved emergency medical services (EMS) in rural areas. This program provides funds to help recruit and train emergency services personnel. It can also be used to acquire emergency medical services equipment and acquire personal protective equipment.
- Department of Homeland Security (DHS) – Assistance to Firefighter Grants - The AFG program awards grants directly to fire departments of a State to enhance their ability to protect the health and safety of the public and firefighting personnel, with respect to fire and fire-related hazards. Grants are awarded on a competitive basis to applicants that address AFG program priorities, demonstrate financial need, and demonstrate the benefit to be derived from their projects.
- DHS – Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grants - The purpose of the SAFER grants is to award grants directly to volunteer, combination, and career fire departments to help the departments increase their cadre of firefighters. The SAFER grants have two activities that will help grantees attain this goal: 1) hiring of firefighters and 2) recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters.
- USDA Rural Development – Community Facilities Guaranteed Loans, Direct Loans, and Grants – Provides funds to construct, enlarge, extend, or otherwise improve community facilities providing essential services to rural residents.
- Community Development Block Grants (GOED) – Can be used for the construction or expansion of essential community facilities.

The main programs used for the construction or reconstruction of fire halls are USDA Rural Development’s Community Facilities program and the Community Development Block Grants, which multiple communities have utilized for fire halls. Again, you will want to contact Central Enhancement District for more information on accessing both of these programs for this purpose.

One other resource to reference is a publication of the Federal Emergency Management Agency entitled, “Funding Alternatives for Fire and Emergency Services”. The publication and programs are dated but the information regarding local fundraising strategies might be useful as you seek alternatives to funding options. The publication is available by mail through the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s web site at <http://www.usfa.fema.gov/grants/fedguide/funding.shtm> or you can download a copy at <http://usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/fa-141.pdf>.

**COMMUNITY PROJECTS**  
*Facilities (EMS Equipment and Fire Hall)*

**Resources:**

South Dakota Department of Public Safety  
Office of Emergency Medical Services  
118 W. Capitol  
Pierre SD 57501  
605-773-4301  
<http://www.state.sd.us/dps/EMS>

US Department of Health and Human Services  
Rural Emergency Medical Service Training and Equipment Assistance Program  
Health Resource Services Administration  
301-443-0835  
<http://www.fedgrants.gov/applicants/HHS/HRSA/GAC/HRSA-05-116/listing.html>

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

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

US Department of Homeland Security  
US Fire Administration  
Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program  
16825 S. Seton Avenue  
Emmitsburn, MD 21727  
301-447-1000  
[www.usfa.fema.gov/grants/afgp](http://www.usfa.fema.gov/grants/afgp)

USDA Rural Development  
1717 N. Lincoln Ave., Suite 102  
Pierre, SD 57501-3109  
605-224-8870  
[www.rurdev.usda.gov/sd](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/sd)

**COMMUNITY PROJECTS**  
*Facilities (EMS Equipment and Fire Hall)*

**Resources (Continued) :**

Central South Dakota Enhancement District  
PO Box 220  
1205 N. Harrison Avenue Suite 202  
Pierre SD 57501  
605-773-2780  
<http://www.scded.org>

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)  
% Governors Office of Economic Development  
711 E. Wells Avenue  
Pierre SD 57501  
605-773-3301  
<http://www.sdgreatprofits.com>

Rural Electric Economic Development  
East River Electric Cooperative  
PO Box 227  
Madison SD 57042  
605-256-4536

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Issues and Challenges*

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

- Retaining the population
- Keeping businesses and people in our community
- Paving the east side of town
- Highmore deals with the political process of competing with other communities, such as Pierre, Huron and Miller for businesses etc.
- Challenges are the same in small town, economy, jobs, schools
- Paving the east side of town and ditto to what was said
- No industry or business to draw back youth, after we send them out to educate them, nothing to draw them back here other than family farms
- Census show that this is a retirement community, progress has stopped, lack of opportunity, nothing for our youth to do
- Don't have enough economics, no different than any other rural community, need to increase our income, energy inflation has an impact on everyone
- Employment opportunities, types of jobs that there are, "I can't find help" because the work is too hard, work ethic standards in decline
- Don't have resources/funding to provide what people want, an ongoing struggle
- Other towns have made themselves a hub and draw spokes out, politicians need to look beyond major hubs, and what can be done in a circumference around each hub, local and state leaders need to help fund money back into small towns
- Losing tax base in the county, taking land out of production for game etc.
- Big percentage of acreages bought up for game and fish, lost from tax base, but good move for land owners, constituents in the county left to make up for the difference
- Ditto
- Nowhere for youth to hang out, because there is nothing to do, businesses based on that can't be sustained
- Drug and alcohol problems with youth
- Business opportunities are scarce
- Southern end of county is Indian Reservation which takes away from tax base
- Need more income and that come from the land, affects everything we do
- Houses have been selling, but there are not places to rent for school teachers, etc. others who don't want to buy
- Lots of people who are "comfortable" here and others who are progressive, and have to be able to work together
- Only one town in the county, hard to compete at the state level for funding
- Small community of limited tax base
- There are no opportunities for young people, new comers, because there are a lack of services such as movie theaters, etc.
- State limitations on growth of budgets in communities, valuations going down, can't make up for lost values, hindrance to communities just keeping up with inflation factors
- Ditto
- People going to larger town to shop, which contributes to other economies, but then we have limited resources in the community but we are expected to keep up with demands

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Issues and Challenges*

- Ditto
- Roads need to be paved
- Lack of rental housing/income based housing
- Nothing for teenagers to do
- Ditto, also nothing for young adults other than bowling or bar scene
- New businesses in the community
- Not enough daycare and would like to see an after-school program
- Two major businesses have closed and are sitting vacant (sale barn and meat processing plant)
- Plenty of organized activities for youth but nothing when they are on their own
- Daycare, there have been several failed attempts with volunteer, need state assistance
- Need after-school youth activities
- Anything to help kids
- Ditto
- “6 kids, we are keeping the school going—doing our part.”
- Daycare is a real concern for parents and also for businesses when parents have to take time off to care for kids
- Bring in businesses, need to take advantage of technology to attract business, take advantage of rural area
- Ditto on entertainment, businesses, jobs
- Youth are migrating to cities, need opportunities for future generations
- Need business opportunities, jobs at a decent salary so they want to raise family here
- Kids need something to do on their own time, run ragged with school activities
- Maintenance money for local government to maintain, pool, athletic facilities
- Keeping young families in community, fewer family farms, something to attract people back to the community
- There are job opportunities but not enough skilled jobs, especially if both people have education
- Dirt streets and dust (“Just wait for summer!”)
- Need for businesses, and job opportunities
- Pre-school, many people drive to Miller, need a trained professional, need to charge for it, something people can afford
- Ditto on pre-school
- Ditto on maintenance budgeting for city
- Alcohol problem with youth, leads to other problems in the community
- Youth need discipline, not getting it from family
- Entertainment opportunities, classical, drama, use their talents and creativity
- Invest in pool upkeep and maintenance, because it is an asset
- Labor situation – finding people that want to come and work
- Support and grow what we have here already
- Need to focus on our young people – give them a vision
- Need a community coordinator for projects
- Do a better job of merchandising our ag
- Big farmers vs family farmers

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Issues and Challenges*

- Getting everyone to work together and heading in the same direction
- Lack of people
- Good cooperation between county and city and people
- Need funding for some type of economic group
- Need for paved streets
- Land prices here are way overpriced
- Very hard for young people to get started here
- Loss of tax dollars, need to get tax base back
- Very hard for young people to get started
- Oil companies need to get a good hold of them
- Hard to find information and access to various programs
- Take advantage of the railroad system
- Good hard look at value added ag products
- Need to do a better job of taking care of our elderly prior to nursing home, need an assisted living facility – we are sending them out of our community
- Finding people to come into the community to work
- Finding employment for spouse
- Finding places to rent, adequate housing
- Lack of daycare, after school programs
- Lack of job opportunities
- Bring in more businesses, opportunity to bring more people into the community
- Reduce number of people in rural area, not enough to support businesses
- Need something for people to do, provide entertainment for young people
- Provide basic businesses to keep citizens here
- Need an outlet for crafts, homemade items
- Better coordination between city and county government
- Need to get younger citizens involved in running of community
- After school program, teen center for the young people
- Additional jobs to keep younger jobs, decent pay, to keep them in the community
- Inability to except change
- Too easy to run out of town, if the citizens of the community would just spend 10% more in their own community can make a huge economic difference
- Bring in more businesses
- Wish we could support a clothing store
- Lack of people/labor to fill the current open jobs in the community
- We need to support the in town businesses we already have
- Promoting local businesses, example – use current restaurants for catering instead of catering out, they are capable of doing it
- Younger generation not wanting and/or willing to work
- Don't have any quality homes for rent
- Closing the sale barn effected sales revenue by about 25%
- Need to do a better job of marketing what the local businesses have to offer the community, it is here and is affordable and they can shop local and support the local economy

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Issues and Challenges*

- If you have it here, buy it here, need to support locally – even other business owners
- Letting people know (and people recognize) all the good things we have here and spreading the word.
- Need to reinforce the relationship between parents and children. Need to revitalize the family relationship. This is the basis for and effects all things.
- Because of this, children are suffering. Broken families. Let our children have a comfortable place at home. Learn value and respect through the family unit.
- All the streets are paved on the west end of town, on the east side of town we face the mud. Whenever it rains and snows, it is mess over there.
- You can have a really great activity and put a lot of energy into a positive event, but there is a general sense of non committal and non attendance. General feeling of apathy here. People don't want to get involved. Not willing to be a part of these things.
- Trying to get the school involved in the museum. Get them to bring students there to expose them to the past and their history. Having a hard time getting a partnership built with the school.
- Almost everyone in the community works outside the home and many have more than one job. That is the standard for South Dakota. It is necessary here.
- The thought is that you can't get anybody to work. The problem is that they are not providing you a full year's worth of work. You can't support a family on that.
- I agree that there is a lack of participation in events. The problem is that people are so busy with work and making a living, the ability to give one or two or three hours to community activities.
- Need to spend more time working with Youth and focusing on God and religion. Or country's forefathers, they brought god into our daily lives through our motto "In God We Trust". We are moving away from this due to secular forces. Need to really focus on youth as they are the leaders of tomorrow and the future. Need to give the youth more attention.
- Community is a lot of older and retired people.
- There are a lot of working mothers. We have more working mothers in South Dakota than any other state.
- Need to get the youth involved not only in church, but in other community events. It is a challenge to try to get the youth involved in these activities. It is easier when they are younger.
- Wednesday's used to be nights that were left open. This conflicts with churches services and youth activities. A lot of time they will check with us before scheduling something. Even if it isn't a church activity, at least there would be one night for the family.
- Sunday is no longer sacred in the community. There are rodeos and wrestling. If the event isn't scheduled in the morning, then it is the traveling to get somewhere for these events. We have drifted too far away from our spiritual roots.
- Our priorities are changing. We go to church if nothing else is going on. Churches are the last option instead of the first option....our first priority.
- Agree that there too many events going on each Sunday outside of church.
- Not a lot to do here
- Not much to do here
- Not fun, not exciting

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Issues and Challenges*

- Retaining young people and having jobs for them to do in professional areas
- Nothing to stay for
- Youth has little to do, no job opportunities
- Not much to do
- Nothing much to do, have to drive 20 plus miles for activities
- Not a lot to do, no place to hang out
- No jobs, nothing to do
- Nothing to do here
- Nothing to do here
- Nothing to do here
- Not a lot of young people, most is elderly
- Very traditional, people are afraid to speak up about new ideas, not progressive, give everyone a change to help run things
- Told not to play football on the street, old people swearing at us not to do it
- Restaurants all have bars so we can't hang out, should have games to play, cafes are very smoky
- Need sports complex
- More sidewalks for rollerblading, bikes,, better park
- Need youth center where food is available...ditto....ditto
- Parks are falling apart, the town is falling apart
- Pool is falling apart, needs to be updated
- Major projects need to get done, but there is no capitol. To do so, we need economic groups to step up. We don't have a chamber of commerce.
- Lack a labor market to fill existing jobs.
- Ditto. Lack of a labor market.
- Ditto. No people to fill jobs.
- Need a way to keep younger people here after school.
- Need something for young people to do in the community.
- Keeping money in the community. Keeping people purchasing in the community.
- Daycare is a huge problem. There are young people that want to come in don't have a place for their kids.
- Lack of housing for families and young people. All ages.
- Get financing for some businesses to start. There are grants and stuff. Some are so difficult, people give up on them. If you don't have a full time employee to do all these things, it is very difficult. Too complex to access.
- Government doesn't care to help us like they do larger metropolitan areas.
- Banking is very hard. For small business, you have to have three times the collateral. By the time you jump through all the loopholes, you just say forget it.
- We need more affordable housing for incoming teachers. Need some type of housing facilities for elderly people that would like to move out of their home, but are not ready for a nursing home. They don't want to take care of the regular home maintenance.
- There is no HUD involvement in the county. We could benefit from that.
- We need someone full time to write grants. Someone to find the money.

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Issues and Challenges*

- Need a fitness place. It is hard to get the money to get it started and run it. Little things like that into the community is one battle after another.
- The laws that we have now, one size fits all. It doesn't work for rural communities.
- It would be nice to have something for younger people to do. But it is hard to get done in a small town. There is nothing to keep anyone around right now. No opportunities to keep people here.
- The country and city people should work together a little bit more. More cooperation between the rural and city people.
- Our economic development group doesn't have any money so we can't do anything. Without a leader to oversee things, it is really hard to chase after certain economic things. Need someone to focus on those things.
- Janklow assessed 1% sales tax for REDI fund. You had to have 20 employees or more to take advantage of that. Our community donated \$70,000 to that fund. But we can't access it because small communities don't usually attract those types of businesses. Need to utilize it for small businesses so it benefits smaller communities.
- Not enough business comes into town on Saturday's to keep businesses open. Also, people can't come into town at noon, so people aren't able to buy their things here in town. But it doesn't work for businesses if they stay open and only one or two people come in.
- If the businesses were busy all day Saturday, they would have stayed open. When the customers stop showing up, the businesses started closing up.
- Banks have expanded some hours on Saturday.
- If there was a way to share or flex, people could share jobs. Maybe more people would like the part-time jobs. We need more part-time opportunities.
- Biggest problem, we are mobile society today. Not like 30 to 60 years ago. Now, 2 ½ hours, you are in Sioux Falls.
- We might not be promoting our businesses as much as we could. Need to look at ways to promote the business we have.
- Our two governing bodies need to work harder to buy things from within the community. Try to buy more locally and support local businesses. Especially larger items. That is where the tax dollars come from. People in town and in the rural areas surrounding area.
- We need to pull together to stay together.
- When kids get out of school, if they don't have sports, there is nothing for them to do.
- Lack of money
- Lack of affordable housing, rentals
- Provide activities for students besides school activities
- Isolation, no access to things like in a bigger city
- New to community, no rental housing
- Keeping people here and in the community and on the farms
- Lack of job opportunities
- Need economic development, keep people here and bring more in
- Lack of good paying jobs
- Need for a fitness center
- Need to work on the pool, lots of fundraisers, still a lack of funds to fix it
- Having something for the young people to do if not involved in sports

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Issues and Challenges*

- Need something to bring people back to the community
- Continue street improvements, east vs. west i.e. paving, sewer
- Keeping young people in the community, jobs,
- Bring more businesses here, keep people that grow up here coming back home
- Having jobs for people to come back to
- City, community, county, school work together better to complete projects, such as the pool, track, etc.
- Financial challenges for services the community would like to provide, but can't
- Having something for young kids to do
- Opportunities for kids to come back and live here is lacking
- Youth – challenge to keep them here
- Financial restrains from different governments from city to state
- Swimming pool project, would like to see it completed
- Would like to see east side of town streets completed
- Single men – not enough
- Living in a small rural community, jobs are not here for the fields of study that the kids are going to college for
- Fitness center would help for all ages to stay active
- More competition for utility companies
- Agree with well ness center
- Pool, streets
- We need a community center, swimming pool, preschool
- We need a preschool
- Wellness center
- Work together to keep community looking nice to others, to make people want to come here
- Cooperation among different governments, organizations to improve community
- Improve golf course as well as pool
- Assisted living facility
- Single women – dating service?
- Financing projects in the community
- Financial situation of fire department and EMS & costs involved
- Try to keep businesses open and maintain
- Government to keep streets up
- Funding for fire department
- Get streets done on east side of town
- Funding for community
- Keeping young people in the community
- Try to keep young people in community and opportunities to stay
- Get businesses
- Shortage of volunteers for projects and community organizations
- Keeping people in town
- Decent wage
- Same people involved in many activities – big commitment

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Issues and Challenges*

- Trying to find way to keep or bring in young people to community
- Encourage young people for volunteerism
- Tough to get people to volunteer for EMT or Fire Department
- How do you keep funding and financing going for projects?
- Need more young people in the community
- Attract factory type business to get more young people
- Need good funding to update equipment fire department
- Try to get funding and young people to come and stay in community
- Try to get commuters to live in the community
- Not everybody works together, city and county levels to solve problems
- Communication between county and city government
- Some teachers aren't up to snuff, math and science skills weren't good in college level
- Try to get help for motel but couldn't get any money
- Never can have enough EMT's.
- Difficult to keep up with training required for EMT's. Time commitment
- Pool leaks 5000 gallon per day
- Dwindling work base in the community, not enough job applicants out there
- Location in terms of getting people to hospital, the distances
- Affordable health insurance for small companies and individuals
- Difficult to find a job in certain areas
- As many don't want community to change as want the community to grow
- Access to exercise facility in Highmore
- Workforce development is difficult
- A place where you can work out in the evenings
- Would like to have a full time pharmacy
- Law enforcement should be county wide, city and county need to join to save money and to coordinate activities.
- City and county need to work together instead of duplicating services
- Shrinking population, county used to be double in size
- Limited opportunity to keep young people here
- Business closing of meat market, sale barn,
- Aging population
- Dependent upon ag, need to diversify
- Limited resources, cost of production going up but income stays the same
- Need more wind towers in our area, need county state tax adjustments to make possible
- Need tillable farming
- Preservation of native grasslands, produce extra biomass
- Need transmission line for wind power
- Bring in parts to put wind towers together that could be manufactured here
- Trying to keep youth in community
- Wind power can be a great source of development
- Lack of self sustaining jobs for young people
- Need attractive jobs for youth to come back to
- Need housing for development, few rental properties available,

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Issues and Challenges*

- Need incentive for kids to come back to community
- We're not as isolated here as some people think, internet connects you to anywhere you want, hunting, nature is abundant here
- Potential for wind tower use is there, currently getting more than they predicted
- Unfinished projects such as streets
- Closing of sale barn has hurt
- Schools are good now, but need to implement a plan to include Harrold in plans for the future
- Decline of population in the community
- Spiritual concerns
- More senior citizens to attend the senior citizens center, utilize what's here
- Housing situation, nothing to rent
- No job opportunities
- Drinking problem with youth
- Ditto on utilizing senior center
- Street paving project needs to be completed
- Ditto
- Businesses have a tendency to dabble in each others business, sometimes takes away, try to specialize, provide more services
- Sale barn
- Farming is getting bigger, danger is that we are getting to independent
- Somewhere for the place for youth to gather/Christian Riders is trying to work on teen center but misunderstanding and poor attitudes
- Need to come together as churches, unify to help youth and community with needs, in spite of differences
- Lack of rental housing, quality and affordable housing
- Too many sports activities for kids, unnecessary for younger kids
- People don't realize how good life is here
- Decline in population
- Businesses closing, sale barn and meat locker
- Lack of things for young people to do
- Property taxes are high, but have to support infrastructure for less and less people
- National farm program has had unintended consequences, grass land being plowed under,
- Street paving and curb and gutter, need more grant opportunities, already tapped out loan power
- Population decline
- Lots of elderly people, takes a lot to keep a household going
- Need more younger people
- Utilities and services rates are high, affects budgets
- Attract jobs and businesses for younger people such as technology
- Ditto
- Finish the storm sewer and curb and gutter project
- Economic development needs such as the sale barn and meat locker, hard to get a business going again, lots of risk for business owners versus reward

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Issues and Challenges*

- Ditto
- Small town businesses require a lot of hours with few, if any benefits
- Negative attitude to anything that is new in town
- Young people who graduate from Highmore are not planning to return here for jobs
- Rental houses are hard to find and are not affordable
- Trying to attract a new business in can cause problems, because you have to steal someone else's employee
- Everything takes money

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Strengths and Assets*

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

- Quality water in this community, Venture Communications and technology can attract young people
- Strong business district, although some same there isn't much here
- Everyone pulls together in times of crisis
- Located pretty well, which can be advantage or disadvantage
- Good transportation system, with both East/West and North/South highways
- Good quality of life in a small community
- Excellent school
- Excellent park and facilities for families with young children
- Major strength of this community is the people
- Highmore as a community and a county has to get in the mode that we are in and get into survival mode.
- Ask the richest and most powerful people in the community, "if this community fails, who has the most to lose?"
- There are a lot of fighters here
- Ditto
- Move over and let someone else have a shot at running things
- Ditto on the location being good, with lots of travel in every direction
- There are things to draw from here, but we have to keep building, adding businesses
- Ditto
- Main thing is the people, they are the best you will find in the world
- Schools, churches, swimming pool are great assets in our community
- Venture Communications, Ford Garage employ a lot of people, 3 restaurants and bars, banks
- Transportation and location is good, only 50 miles from state capital, 30 miles from the river, tremendous hunting (pheasant, grouse, deer)
- Wind energy is a great resource and we need to expand on that only weakness is lack of transmission
- City and county work together and try to do projects together, everyone benefits from that
- Good fire department, very efficient
- Stefan and Crow Creek High School employs 90-100 people (BIA school), some teachers live in Highmore and drive, which is an asset the community
- Pharmacy and healthcare
- Was selected as a Capital Community last year
- Things can be done if you have get up and go
- People have strong work ethic
- Strong community pride
- People are welcoming and making feel a part of the community
- Clinic and wonderful grocery store
- Churches take strong part in community
- Quality school
- Strong parent organization with activities for youth

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Strengths and Assets*

- Core business we have try to meet the needs of the locals, pricing comparative to what you find out of town
- Caring community for older people
- Great community pool
- Closeness, we know each other
- Sports and activities
- Never a lack of ideas—but need dollars
- Tight knit community, no subdivision or class system
- Caring community, people find a way to help
- A lot of talent in the community, just need to utilize it
- Kids in our school is an asset, need to stay strong
- Couldn't ask for a better place to raise your kids
- Safe community
- Churches, volunteers, people pull together in crisis
- Swimming pool, golf course, free summer rec program, soccer
- There is no generation gap in this town, we all can come together
- New High School and refurbished elementary
- Ditto
- Volunteers
- Ditto on pool
- Good civic organizations, civic league, booster club, etc.
- Welcoming community—except for my yard light was shot out before I moved in
- Can leave your doors unlocked, people watch out for you
- Clinic
- Volunteer firemen
- Ditto
- Elderly care system
- SDSU Research Farm here
- Good playground equipment at the park
- Good ratio of working age people
- Pioneer Garage provides job opportunities
- Lucky to have Venture Communications
- Wind farms are assets
- New airport runway
- Hyde County Wind Farm
- Good hard working people here
- Good place to be – great community
- Highway intersection – need to promote this
- Railroad
- Redoing airport
- Communication center
- Church never locked, no kidnapping, very caring, loving, safe community
- The people, some one in need, the community is very supportive
- Highmore is the county seat and the only town in the county
- Strong businesses here
- We have what a lot of little towns would like to have

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Strengths and Assets*

- Three good industries in town, employ a lot of people
- Have all the facilities here with the exception of a clothing store
- Very supportive strong community
- School
- Auditorium
- Have basic businesses, grocery store, gas stations, lumber yard, hardware store, banks, churches, new school, car dealership
- Couple strong businesses, venture communications, pioneer garage, with good jobs
- The people all pull together and help each other out
- Do have good businesses here, add the two grain elevators
- Can get anything we have to have right here in the community
- The people of the area, are the greatest asset, very supportive
- One of the best grocery stores
- Good businesses core
- New school
- Good teaching staff
- School district, north central accredited, exceeded last three years
- Mid Dakota RWS here, good reliable source of water
- Back up system for NW here
- Venture communications here
- Wind energy
- Railroad
- New elevator in town, enabled this community to enhance railroad, two miles of spur tracks in Highmore, secure another draw bridge on railroad crossings
- Business core for the population is very good
- Pioneer garage, Venture Communications provide a lot of decent paying jobs for the community
- Two financial institutions in town with good paying jobs
- Oldest ag experiment station in central America – we need to tap into this
- Have a clinic and drug store
- Fire department and ambulance
- Have a USDA Service Center
- We have a golf course – greens are green all year round – 9 holes
- Has two main streets
- Good kids in the community
- School is great.
- Anytime the community needs to come together for sickness or death. The community is good about pulling together during these times.
- The people are the biggest strength.
- Also, the aspects of our heritage. The people that have come before us have so much to share.
- Everybody is friendly. When you need help, they will help you. There is no class distinction in town.
- The people are definitely the biggest strength.

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Strengths and Assets*

- Good relations between the ministerial board. Good mutual understanding among the churches. Not much rivalry or conflict among the churches. We cooperate on choral programs at Christmas time.
- The benefits that you have here. Everyone here is on equal footing because weather effects everyone the same. The benefit auctions. Example, they took this quilt and sold it several times. It was more about how much love could be poured into this family and this community. Because you are part of this community, you turn towards the common enemy – whether that is sickness or death. When a child is sick, we do whatever we can to help, working together.
- We have a grocery store. I think this community would diminish to less than half in ten years without a grocery store. I try to buy 90% of our groceries locally. Need to support these local businesses.
- Two banks, furniture store, grocery store, lumberyard, etc. We have a lot of things here.
- We have community. We may not always get along and see eye to eye, but we come together in times of need.
- When I lost my son, the community was so supportive and helpful. You can't imagine what a wonderful place this is until you are in that situation.
- We have old Settlers once a year as our main celebration. It brings a lot of people to town. And we have a unified community church service.
- I can find most anything I need here in Highmore. I don't need to go out of town for much. I am always saddened when there is one less item available in the community. I don't have time to shop out-of-town. It is so important to our local businesses.
- Agree, we have just about everything that we need. If you really needed something, they get it ordered in for you.
- You have access to basic healthcare like doctors and pharmacy.
- The people have a helping heart. All the churches work together to help out at the nursing home. Someone just needs to take the leadership. That is one thing we are lacking here. The Church can step up and take the leadership in working with youth and others.
- One of the major strengths is the Pioneer Garage. There are at least 20 families that are supported there...if not more. These are families that are retained in the community. If that business would fail, we would not just lose 20 people, we would lose 80 people. That would effect the grocery store and many other businesses.
- Plus, there are very tolerant of their employees. Willing to take on people that others might not.
- Also have Venture Communications. Have at least 40 employees.
- If you want God to bet the strength of the community, then it is up to the Pastors to do that. We have all the good ingredients of a good community – starting with the people.
- When people ask where I am from, I say that I am from Paradise. I feel that this is the best place to live and raise a family. There is nothing like being in the community that helped to raise you. No matter what short falls we have, we can overcome that. Sometimes it is about getting the community convinced that not only can we survive, but we can thrive.
- We have six churches in this community. We all serve the same god, but we all worship differently. We have options here in the community.
- We have a good volunteer system in the community. All the churches take turns doing meals on wheels, etc. That is an asset that hasn't been addressed.

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Strengths and Assets*

- A real sense of community. For example, if a senior doesn't show up to seniors lunch, they will call and find out if something is wrong. People care about each other.
- We get away with more things than getting caught in big city
- Less crime, stealing
- Lots of people volunteer
- School spirit is good
- Tight knit group, everyone pitches in
- School is new
- Trust, not much vandalism, our community pulls together when things are needed
- Traditional, old town...people are always willing to help when times are tough
- Volunteering is awesome, people are willing to help
- Low crime rate, low cost of living
- Know everyone, can talk to anyone in town
- Small and safe at night, everyone helps out
- Welcome new people
- Great swimming pool but needs help now
- Way of life, we are unique. Our community has a lot going, we're working on economic development, we need to keep it going,
- The people are great.
- Improving airport.
- We have really hard working people in town and in the country. If someone needs something, we really support them.
- We do have healthcare and a clinic in the community. That is important.
- If someone really needs something, you can call people after hours and they are really good about helping you out or going out of their way to provide that service.
- Very giving and generous community that is willing to help each other.
- People willing to help each other out.
- We have a nice new school.
- We are on two major highways.
- We have nearly every business we need except a clothing store. Two banks, furniture store, lumberyard. Really, if you don't want to, you don't have to go out of town to do your business.
- We have a great school.
- Ditto on the school.
- Full service grocery store
- State of the art phone company
- Car dealership is phenomenal for a town this size.
- Venture Communications
- Should be thankful for what we have, which is a lot.
- Businesses here are more than willing to try and order things here that they don't carry.
- Our teachers are an asset to this community. We can have a great building, but we are nothing without good teachers in the school.
- We have the wind towers down south. An effort to produce energy and not buy out of the country. We need to work to build on that.
- Nice swimming pool, and a great group of people trying to better it.
- Not all small communities have a golf course, but we do.

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Strengths and Assets*

- Very nice that we have more churches in this community than bars.
- We have two grain elevators. Keeps the farmers coming to town and supplies local jobs.
- Good volunteer ambulance service and fire department.
- People come to town and see our nice streets. We are a clean town. It is appealing to newcomers. People comment on it.
- We are on two major highways.
- We have four or five hunting lodges around here. That is something we can build upon.
- The healthcare center is very nice.
- We have two or three parks in town in good locations. The one park has places to camp.
- It is a safe place. You don't have to lock your cars or your front doors.
- People are glad to stay in our motels, be able to open their window, and not worry that someone will be crawling through it.
- One of the nicer pools in the state, want to keep it looking good
- Lots of churches
- Hard working people
- Good kids
- Nice parks
- Strong work ethic, know how to work, and how to accomplish things
- Small community – always there for each other
- Families
- Work ethic
- Safe and caring community for each other
- If someone is in trouble there is always someone there
- Activities at school are asset for community
- Ability of community to rally around a cause
- Strong support involved parents that back up the kids and the school
- School district and community services
- Dedicated people in the community and work ethic
- Fire department and ambulance crew
- Small clinic
- Good people – help out whenever you need it
- We do take care of each other
- Lots of things for little kids to do, summer rec program pool, golf, etc.
- People – lot of strong moral character – always willing to pitch in
- The businesses we have do a good job serving the community
- The strength is right in the room!
- Our kids are our major strength!
- Civic organizations
- Grocery store and main street businesses
- School
- Ditto on the excellent citizens
- Pride ourselves in making you feel welcome here
- Price of living, lot of affordable houses to buy
- Our law enforcement, sheriff and cop
- Very high standard of excellence in our education
- Good community leaders, do work hard in making things happen

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Strengths and Assets*

- Lot to said about living in a small town compared to a big city
- New school
- Proud of our history and traditions
- Strong business community and work hard to provide what is needed
- Variety of places to eat
- Gas prices
- Are isolated when it comes to shopping, but wonderful place to hunt and fish
- Do a lot of fundraising, community really steps up to help out, very supportive
- Businesses are very generous when donations needed
- Very patriotic, memorial services
- Students put forward a great effort to help reach community goals
- Good kids, it not about winning, its about being apart of what the community puts on
- Allot of meals put on by churches
- Two larger businesses providing jobs and keeping families here
- Kids involved in 4-H and ag part
- Everybody know everyone
- Work well together
- Good road system
- Good airport
- Recreation
- Pioneer Garage
- New school, operates efficiently
- Fire department, EMS
- Senior Citizens
- School system – how highly rated and performance in secondary schools
- Strong school system
- People are very friendly and close
- People work together, come together to get things done
- Centrally located
- 2 Major highways
- Rail system updates very good
- People are friendly
- Have good teachers in school now to get kids to upper level
- Paved streets on half of the town
- Paving spruced up the look of the town
- Proud of community and people
- New school
- Allowed taxes for new school, town and country
- School is biggest strength
- People are biggest strength
- School system
- Fire Department and Ambulance
- People come together and are willing to help
- Tackle swimming pool project
- Rail system
- Where we are located

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Strengths and Assets*

- Centrally located
- Fixing up swimming pool
- Good opportunities to pull more people in with its location
- People have work ethic and will pitch in and help everyone
- People are biggest asset in this community, always someone to help you
- People involved in fire department brought food and water for firefighters
- Wind towers
- Wonderful volunteer ambulance
- Impressed with community spirit
- Ditto
- Lucky with school system – offer very good education
- Fire department
- Nursing home and healthcare facility
- Access to healthcare in a community this size
- Access to rehab and pharmacy
- Don't feel like outsider. Welcomed by the community right away
- Offer people a great place to raise kids, 4-H, school sports, summer rec
- Community groups and organizations doing all they can to promote Highmore
- Nursing home has physical and occupational therapy 5 days per week
- If you need help, people will be there for you.
- Have one of best fire department and ambulance around
- Pintail duck capital of the world
- Wind towers are great base
- Most of the businesses are in good shape
- Close knit community
- Pioneer garage, Venture communications
- People are very open and work well together when there is a goal
- New school
- Excellent church community
- Railroad is an asset
- 50 semi's come through a day, brings business back to our community
- county seat
- airport and ag service is growing
- civic league is good
- newspaper is asset
- rural water is a blessing
- for our size community we have some awesome businesses
- when someone has health problems, we pull together and raise money
- great grocery store
- no income tax
- water and tax base can attract businesses
- the kids we raise here have great work ethics
- school has some of the highest grade standards
- reliable people, you can count on people here
- cattle are an asset, we can fatten them on native grass, drug free
- best yielding, best grading cattle anywhere

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Strengths and Assets*

- Medical, health center
- Wind towers
- Good school, work on consolidation with Harrold
- Drug store
- Grocery store
- Businesses and banks
- No class distinction, everyone works with everyone
- Work together
- Welcoming community, open arms
- School, Clinic, Extension Office, good resources that need to be supported
- Make sure you spend money here in town, support local economy
- Impressed with businesses in Highmore
- People are the strength of this community, very caring
- Active Civic League, puts on promotions like Snow Queen
- Low crime rate in Highmore, safe community
- Pioneer Garage, Venture Communications
- Ditto
- Good quality of life, laid back community, being a small rural community is a strength
- Grocery store, shop locally
- Ditto
- Clinic and nursing home
- People, great kids
- Hunting and fishing
- City has a website that people can advertise on
- Summer recreation program
- Good library
- Ditto
- Good place to live
- The people and the city do have services; grocery store, a great website provided by the city and Venture Comm. businesses can advertise free
- Lots of knowledgeable people in the ag industry, ag ventures are assets
- Great place to raise a family
- Businesses that we do have are strong; Venture Com, Kroepflin Ag, grocery store, lumber yard, hardware store
- Ditto
- Great people and there are more and larger businesses than other small communities in the area such as Onida
- Smallness allows people to know each other
- Clinic and drug store
- You can get just about everything your need without going out of town
- There are activities for kids such as Girls Scouts, 4-H, BB gun club, summer rec
- Safety, such as leaving your vehicle out with the keys in it
- People are good to work with
- Need more and better jobs
- Greatest strength of our community is our people.

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Strengths and Assets*

- Lots of people who have moved to larger city are choosing to come back because of quality of life in a small town
- Friendly people
- Hunting and fishing, especially pheasant hunting and fishing at the river
- Railroad and grain handling facilities
- Clean main street
- Great parks
- Excellent school and teachers
- Know all the teachers, know all the kids in the school
- Son with disability can ride bike around town and I know he is safe, people watch out for him, good communication and people look out for one another
- Old Settlers Day in the summer, families get together
- Have a number of civic organizations that do a lot of good in the community
- Good volunteer base in the community
- Friendly
- People working together
- Supporting the Senior Center
- Churches
- We do fine for a small community, pool, grocery store
- New school
- Ditto
- Nothing is so perfect that it can't be improved upon
- Togetherness and working together
- Have a Laundromat
- Rural community, easy to get around
- No crime, good place to retire
- Help each other
- Friendly community
- Ditto
- Lived here all my life
- Senior Center
- Ditto to everything
- Need more participation in the Senior Center
- Being able to harness the wind for power
- Good water system
- Don't let river run dry
- Sound infrastructure to allow community to grow
- New elevator
- Need a bus to bring people to utilize the Senior Center
- We are the county seat
- Good communications business in Venture Com
- Safest place in the world, people are friendly, helpful and honest
- Great golf course
- Friendly, helpful town
- Lots of volunteers
- Ditto

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Strengths and Assets*

- Youth and elderly interaction
- Airport
- Health care center
- Very caring community
- Good school
- Youth are active with senior center and good with benefit drives
- Nice clinic
- Nice apartments
- Nursing Home
- Pioneer Garage
- Butcher shop and sale barn should be replaced
- Great grocery store
- Great senior center
- Two sets of low income apartments
- Great Post Office

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Projects*

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

- Wind farms can offer revenue for the tapping, a resource that needs to be developed
- Ditto on wind projects
- Need daycare in the community
- Need to concentrate on our location, need more businesses on intersections of main highways, such as feed lots, ethanol and distillers grain, coal railroad coming in
- Ditto on need for transmission lines for wind energy, consider some privatization to provide power to a town, there are many political issues
- Ditto on wind energy
- City pool needs to be redone, finish curb and gutter and repaving so city looks presentable
- A business that employs 50 people, something with communications, or agribusiness, something that provides view of outside world
- Reopen the sale barn
- Wind power, railroad opportunities
- Finish the projects we started
- Job nurturing environment, take advantage of programs that are available to employee small businesses, start people staying in the community
- Ditto
- Better job of promoting agri-tourism, non impact tourism projects
- Build a packing plant
- Would like to see local meat market reopen
- Assisted living, to help people stay longer in the community
- “Highmore is so progressive it has two Main Streets to fill with businesses”
- Churches might get together to provide opportunities/center for youth
- Assisted care facility
- Ditto
- Youth center/mentoring for young people
- Paving of streets
- Outdoor recreational activities
- Community daycare and pre-school
- New businesses
- After hours day care (5 pm-11pm)
- Better lighting on streets
- Integrate after-school project with new hotel, meeting spaces, pool
- Enclose pool
- Finish the swimming pool, fix it so it is usable
- Ditto, pool provides “daycare” all summer long
- Finish the street project
- Ditto on streets and pool
- Assisted living
- Add new businesses

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Projects*

- Health/exercise facilities, weight room, nicer facility more accessible to public and school kids
- Hotels, current ones are outdated, places like Venture Communication have people come in and need a nice place to stay
- Shore up existing businesses for the future
- Day care and after-school program, more opportunities for kids, such as foreign languages, arts etc.
- Streets and sidewalks
- Economic development for skilled/educated workers
- Non-agricultural retail
- Fitness center for entire community and all ages
- Prevention of youth out migration, commercialized agriculture projects, value added for producers and provide employment for young people, incentive for youth to come back
- Ditto
- Seminars, clubs, entertainment for adults of a classical nature
- Pool, streets, assisted living
- Courthouse needs work
- Continue to upgrade things in the auditorium
- Library is outgrowing its facility
- Fitness center
- There is no car wash—“if I can’t get my street paved, I want to be able to wash my car”
- Day care
- Ditto
- Manufacturing businesses
- Tourism, hunting lodges, motorcycle tourism
- Ditto, plus wetland projects, better promotion
- Pool renovation
- School board lost many good candidates for teachers because there was not adequate day care and housing
- Movie theater
- Need to do more promotion in the community
- See the sale barn open back up
- Ditto – had a big effect on the community
- Ditto – sales tax revenue dropped 25%
- Ditto – pulled in other into the community for shopping
- Bring in some type of small industry, employ 10-15 people in town
- Help businesses that are here and people here to survive
- Immediate priority is the sale barn
- Swimming pool project
- Bring in some type of industry with livable wages
- Community rec / health center for all ages
- Good hard look at our ag sector, big change in ag in the next 3-5 yrs
- Clover, alfalfa, legumes by-products

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Projects*

- Need economic corporation/coordinator to develop these ideas, needs a wage and maybe could be joint with county and other smaller communities in the area
- Value added ag projects
- Putting up a feedlots – lots of red tape and too many rules to follow
- Adequate housing for rent
- Improve and/or increase the number of dairies
- Very important to keep our young people here, offer a scholarship program to keep the kids coming back, one local business does do this, but can't do it alone, offer it to the kids that will come back to the community
- I think this town needs a new motel with a rec center and indoor pool that could be used by the school for the after school program. Needs to have, maybe a couple big rooms for meetings and also could have a floor kids could roller skate on and watch movies in or whatever. I don't believe the city should spend a quarter million dollars on an outdoor pool and should spend it on an indoor pool hooked onto a motel that would attract people. An indoor pool would get people all year round and not just three months.
- Completion of infrastructure they are working on, water, sewer, streets
- Swimming pool fixed in next year – vital asset to the community
- Keep what we have, support what we have, keep it modern so it's attractive
- Rec or fitness center
- Ditto
- Like to see young people brought into the community
- Would to see this be a viable community in twenty years,
- Ditto
- Get sale barn up and running again
- Finish working on swimming pool
- Develop rec center, place to swim during the winter months as well
- Work hard at keeping our basics businesses that employ people, and bringing in more businesses
- Enhance gas stations to a truck stop, a lot of truck traffic coming through here, should develop something for them
- Day care facility
- Assisted living
- Infrastructure, street paving, equipment to maintain streets,
- Funding to economic development corporation
- Swimming pool
- Would like to see the wind power tested and see if it could run the town
- Waiting for the state to come through with the funding for enhancement on 47
- Need to get the streets paved on the east side. This is an important project to get completed.
- The fire department is all volunteer. The number of people that can be responders is limited by the telephone system. Unless someone drops off, you can't join. Only 25 people can have this single trunk line. Therefore you can't be a volunteer fireman. As people are working farther from time, there might be only 3 people available to fight a fire at any given point in time. Every able bodied person in town ought to be able to join the fire department.
- Need to get more leadership and involvement in the community of working with the youth. Need more importance given to the youth and help them get involved.

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Projects*

- Getting the streets paved on the east side and by the Lutheran church.
- I am a believer in maintaining. I don't always see much into the future. I just want to keep what we have. To stay who we are. Today is important to me. God will direct you as to how you move into the future.
- The Museum is my main concern. Need to get a lot more exposure to what we have in the museum. Get more people interested in that, including the school kids.
- Youth center, a place for teens to hangout
- YMCA with a pool, place to work out
- Ditto, a place where everyone can meet and hangout
- More jobs created
- Main street area with unique businesses
- Only two motels, another motel or nice bed and breakfast
- More shops, more jobs available
- Rec center for youth
- Ditto on YMCA, center for youth
- New sports complex, may bring more families in for our school
- Indoor pool, open year round, winter activities
- Center for youth
- Ditto on YMCA
- Movie theatre
- Ditto
- New track
- Skate part for skateboarders
- School continue to grow, add more staff, more classes offered
- Coffee shop
- More rodeo programs
- Improving the look of the town, fixing up old buildings
- Skateboard park
- Fast food, coffee shop by skateboard park with fun room for activities
- Fix old buildings
- Make sure pool gets updated
- Tear down really old houses that are not liveable
- Keep develop airport project
- Real grass greens on golf coarse, improve fairways
- Want a MX/ATV track, race track
- An economic development group to develop and lead projects (Example: Pool, Assisted Living Center, Fitness Center).
- Look at our ag sector. There are things that we can build off of that. White winter wheat is going to become a big crop here over the next few years. By 2010, they figure, they figure that it will become 40-50% of the crops grown in the state. But it cannot be mixed with regular wheat. They figure that the profit per bushel might raise \$0.75 to \$1 more profit.
- Would like to build more motel rooms.
- Would like to see a fitness center come into town.

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Projects*

- Ditto. A fitness center. I see the extension office getting moved to the county shed. Move the livestock stuff moved out to the rodeo grounds. Then add onto the existing auditorium. It should be a joint project between the city and county. We need to the motivation and interest in getting it done.
- Would like to see a full time economic development director.
- Finish the curb and gutter project
- Community daycare center.
- Assisted living.
- Need to rely on more than just agriculture. Whatever we build, we may not end up with a crop. We need things that aren't ag related too. Some kind of a trucking line. Another ag problem, we don't have little farmers anymore. They are big. If they don't want to sell their product here, they can take it elsewhere.
- Maybe a small business or small industry that would employ 10-12 people.
- Finish the swimming pool project
- Fitness Center
- Need an after school program, something for kids to do.
- Need a Day care.
- Need to complete the street project that they started. Finish that before moving on to another project.
- A community center for families, old and young. A youth center for kids to hang out.
- Swimming pool project completed by next summer.
- Car wash
- Clothing store
- Coffee shop
- Completing court house renovation
- Promote tourism
- Finish our streets
- Community should organize an economic development group. Has to involved the younger people better.
- Need more businesses on Main Street.
- Need more jobs. Jobs that pay enough to support a family.
- Need jobs with benefits. That is a main reason why so many people work these days, especially off the farm. They need the benefits.
- We send out kids off to college, and there is nothing here to bring them back.
- Fix the pool
- Finish street on east side of town
- Continue to work towards a community center
- Being able to maintain the community
- Fix the pool
- After school program
- Preschool
- Would like to see a K-6 facility
- Fix swimming pool
- Fitness center

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Projects*

- Assisted living facility
- Keep programs going that we do have
- Get a preschool started
- Swimming pool
- Preschool
- Swimming Pool
- Preschool
- Fitness center
- Something for the young people to do
- Swimming Pool
- Fitness center
- Increase our class sizes
- Bring in some new businesses, more of an economic base
- Swimming Pool
- Finish paving streets
- Pool
- Street
- Preschool
- Keep school upgraded
- Pool
- Preschool
- Ditto
- Bring in economic growth, more businesses
- Ditto
- More jobs and businesses
- Maintain streets
- Ditto
- Active headstart, would like to see it increase
- Keep good things going and work on updating
- Pool
- Street
- School
- Parks
- Keeping upkeep on above so they don't deteriorate
- Then worry about getting new things
- Pool
- Continue update school
- A lot of elderly people in the community, would like to have an assisted living facility for those that aren't ready for nursing home
- Need paved streets, hover rounds go better on paved streets
- Pool
- Area around school, "commons", develop something there
- Wellness facility ties in with gym facility at school

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Projects*

- Need motel/hotel here, not always enough rooms especially during hunting season, weddings, family reunions
- Rec center for kids, so they don't drive around and drink beer all the time
- Need a city planner to help with all the ideas
- Get streets done and storm sewers within two years
- Streets
- Swimming pool, takes a lot of funding
- Put together and econ development park for spec building
- Help younger people coming back from college and tech school with jobs
- Like to see some newer buildings to come up to replace older
- New street lighting
- Some type of coating on streets to keep dust down
- Swimming pool needs to be completed
- Need more rental housing, some in bad shape
- Would like help to get owner of trailer court to fix it up
- In next two years complete pool
- Streets need to be coated
- In five years need to get some type of housing, maybe for the elderly
- Older businesses fix up storefronts
- School keep going new fire hall
- Swimming pool
- Curb and gutter
- Problem with shortage of rental housing
- Get streets done in two years
- Pool in two to five years
- East park expanded for additional camping with jungle gym – 10 yr
- Update fire hall in 10 – 20 years, expansion, more equipment
- Like to see pool repaired
- Skate park for kids, something that is constructive for them
- Rental property, nothing decent under \$350/mo
- Need new motel, full 90% of the time
- Redo park, dump station
- Fix up trailer park
- Need camping spots
- Like to be able to fund projects
- Be able to capitalize on hunting opportunities with places for them to stay
- I suppose it's too late to bring in a Super WalMart?
- Need to have code and stick to them and fine if people don't comply
- Would like to see city annex more property, airport
- New ambulance by 2007
- Replace fire truck within the next 5 years
- Clean up the community
- Kids need something to do in this community
- Skate board park

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Projects*

- Improvement to ball field, was baseball field, needs to be for softball
- Need to put right people on econ development to get things to happen
- Motel, possibly Super 8.
- More outside businesses to come in. Manufacturing with good pay and benefits
- Exercise facility, teach aerobics, low impact machines
- Something to bring kids back to community
- Work on labor force
- Something more done with swimming pool
- Assisted living if community could support it
- Dental services
- Windmill industry developed
- Assistant living needed
- Sale barn reopened
- More incentives for young kids to come back
- Too many bars compared to churches
- Reopen sales barn meat market
- Develop something unique
- Immediate projects are streets and swimming pool
- Need manufacturing, communication industry that will employ people
- Assembly plants for wind energy
- Need a bigger, better motel
- Grain and forage produced, need to look at ethanol plant, we ship too much out
- Day care
- Something for youth to do other than drive up and down the streets
- Paving the streets all over town
- Walking path
- Completion of swimming pool repairs/upkeep
- Somewhere to keep youth out of trouble
- Paving, curb and gutter all around town
- Utilize Extension Programs such as Character Counts to help with youth, possibly use a building such as old Masonic Lodge for a center
- Golf course, greens need improving
- Deprogram then reprogram people to have more spiritual and church based things, less concentration on school and government, increase family values
- Clothing store
- Assisted living
- Ditto
- A place like The Basement, a youth center that used to be here in Highmore
- Come up with an appealing, “cool” place for teens
- People/volunteers willing to supervise teen/youth center
- Increase in volunteers in community by decreasing current responsibilities/busyness of school activities, etc.
- Streets
- Pool

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Projects*

- School combined
- Pool project needs to be finished
- Nice motel
- Storm sewer, curb and gutter
- Pool
- Take care of what we've got, maintain it
- Ditto on motel
- Last building boom was in the mid '70s, would be nice to see another, helps to attract people as they see community is alive and growing
- Sustainable energy
- Finish the projects we started
- Improved camping sites in the East Park
- Assisted living/motel/rental housing combination
- Expansion on motel
- Equipment to maintain the streets
- Pool
- Job options for young people to come back
- Maintain the existing population
- More wind towers
- Coal train would be a benefit to the whole county
- Finish storm sewer project
- Sunflower crushing factory, especially with good rail lines
- Day care center and after-school program
- Ditto
- Good millet country, bird seed plant
- Swimming pool enclosed with a rec center
- Could support a global business in a small town, utilizing internet access
- Ditto and banks have basements wired with internet connections from when school was there temporarily
- Working on the swimming pool
- Something to bring younger people in to the community, industry
- Find funding for the Senior Center for public transportation
- Ditto
- Ditto, plus make sure van is handicapped accessible
- Something to keep the young people here
- Something should be done with the sale barn
- More businesses down town, maybe a mini mall with a few stores to provide jobs and keep people shopping locally
- Pave the East end of town
- Ditto
- Day care
- Assisted living facility
- Create a local organization get in contact with Clipper Windmills, power producer and pursue wind energy projects create

## LISTENING SESSION RESPONSES

### *Projects*

- Web site to toot our horn
- Pursue solar energy as a renewable resource
- More businesses
- Ditto on public transportation for seniors
- Pave and curb and gutter on the East Side
- Make sure Senior Center stays open
- Ditto on public transportation
- Get some of the property looking better, not very appealing to people coming in
- Pave the streets
- Clean up property
- Fix the streets on the East side
- Keep working on railroad improvement, if there are 40 trains per day, need an overpass on main street
- Nice coffee house
- Nicer store fronts
- Promote the resources such as wildlife and land
- Fitness center for youth and young at heart
- Ditto
- Sign up list for people who need rides to senior center and other who drive could pick them up
- Street light, been out for a month, upkeep within the city
- Coffee house
- Place to eat where they do not serve alcohol
- Informational items, place to post information in the community, community gathering place
- Good drinking water
- Non-income controlled apartments that are also handicap accessible