Volume

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Sidney Conference

The Montana Economic **Developers Association** (MEDA) held their fall conference in Sidney, October 3-4, hosted by the Eastern Montana Impact Coalition. Attendees were treated to several interesting and informative sessions, as well as a full tour of the temporary community housing facility that's been placed five miles west of the city. Conference sessions were largely interactive and focused on professional development, innovation, and collaboration. Developers were also invited to comment on the governor's Main St. Project during a special roundtable session.

Next EPEDC Quarterly Board Meeting

Wednesday
January 15, 2014
Terry, MT
at the Prairie County Courthouse
9:30 a.m.

Contact Information

Comments or questions?

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Local Project Updates

The EPEDC is working on several infrastructure projects in the region as they transition through various stages of development.

The Town of Plevna now has enough funding to complete Phase I (\$1.6M) of its water improvement project, which will provide for a new storage tank and some water main replacement. Phase 2 will involve some adjustments to Phase I planning and a new set of grant applications in the spring of 2014. Phase 2 will further efforts to improve the water distribution system. Dawson County also received grant funding for its wastewater improvement project and will soon secure its loan financing, as the city moves closer to identifying the final cost of its wastewater treatment plant - a critical factor in setting the user rates for those on the county system. The city and county are working together to combine the systems, which will require the county to pipe effluent across the Yellowstone River to the city's new facility when it is complete.

Moreover, the EPEDC is working with the Town of Terry on a potential wastewater improvement project. Engineers are in the process of evaluating the town's system. When or if deficiencies are identified, the EPEDC will move forward with securing additional project funding. Also, the Fallon County Water & Sewer District (FCWSD), located just to the east of Baker, is currently served by individual septic systems and undersized water mains from the City of Baker. The FCWSD is moving forward with the planning necessary to evaluate both water and sewer issues. The highest priority for funding requests will involve installing a city connected wastewater collection system and removing septic systems from service. Once that critical infrastructure is in place, the effort will shift to remedying the severely undersized water mains in the area.

In other news – thanks in part to a recent Caviar grant – the Pierre Wibaux Museum was able to install two new weatherproof signs near the edges of the museum complex, which will help attract visitors (sign located on Drake Street pictured above). The EPEDC is also happy to announce that the Red River Inn and Suites in Baker is now open for business!

EPEDC Director Attends Forum in D.C.

EPEDC Executive Director Jason Rittal was selected by the Montana office of USDA Rural Development, along with Paul Tuss of BearPaw Development (Havre), to attend a "Forum on Regional Innovation in Rural America." Rittal and Tuss attended with other representatives from rural areas throughout the U.S. Rittal attended the forum representing the Eastern Montana Impact Coalition's efforts and collaborative successes.

Forum sessions included a keynote speech from Tom Vilsack Secretary of USDA, messages from the EDA and Housing and Urban Development (HUD), as well as interactive 'talk and learn' sessions between forum attendees. Rittal participated in the session on Regional Collaboration Across Political Boundaries, Asset-Based Rural Development, and Ensuring Buy-In of Multi-Sector Regional Economic Development Plans.

Rittal and Tuss also took the opportunity to meet with Senator Tester and Representative Daines, in addition to meeting with Senator Baucus' staff. MEDA sponsored the trip and covered all travel costs. Special thanks to MEDA, USDA, EDA, and the EPEDC Board of Directors for the opportunity to voice eastern Montana's successes and issues on a national stage.

"Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes the time. Vision with action can change the world."

-Joel A. Barker, American author and businessman

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The EPEDC serves the following participating counties and municipalities:
Carter County, Dawson County, Fallon County, Prairie County, and Wibaux County,
as well as the City of Baker, the Town of Ekalaka, the City of Glendive, the Town of Plevna,
the Town of Richey, the Town of Terry, and the Town of Wibaux.