

Richland County Goals

Richland County
Community Strategic Plan

Updated by the Action Groups
for 2009

Theme: Physical Health

Goal: Get everyone physically active in Richland County

Strategy(A): Create a county-wide Parks and Recreation Department that includes family-based activities and unites existing youth activities.	Who, what, when, how?
1. Maintain calendar of events and list of opportunities and contact information.	This will be the first area of focus for completing this strategy.
2. Investigate why we don't have one, how do other communities support it?	
3. Find out what we need to do to get one.	
4. Initiate involvement with Sidney, Sidney Chamber of Commerce and Fairview's Park and Recreation board. Approach interested parties in Savage and Lambert. Talk to the Boys & Girls Club about coordinating registration.	
5. Research laws in MT related to Parks and Recreation departments.	
6. Research possible sources of funding. Go to the County Commissioners for funding or to add duties to an existing position.	
7. Develop a job description for a Parks and Recreation director.	
8. Find out benefits of having a Parks and Recreation department, such as economic, etc. Also, look at county capacity for a Parks and Recreation department (space, funding, etc.)	
9. Survey on Sidney Herald website.	
Strategy(B): Focus on providing physical activity options for all age groups.	Who, what, when, how?
1. Support and connect events that promote physical activity, and encourage people to participate in events throughout the year to keep up interest and excitement.	Begin by supporting Patti Iverson's walking marathon, Strong Women, Strong Bones, and creating a clearinghouse of opportunities. Encourage organizers to advertise for other events and keep public interest up through press (the Sidney Herald will be doing a regular feature page on health issues and opportunities).

2. Assess current options for physical activity and update assessment options.	
3. Categorize options by age group.	
4. Identify funding for low income youth to participate in sports. Check into Foundation for Community Care and the Education Foundation.	
5. Encourage provider prescriptions for exercise. Investigate options for follow-up and clinical wellness project referrals.	
6. Investigate “new/different” exercise techniques (such as boot camp themes, etc.) and new times to offer options. Get people trained to teach new classes.	Individuals are putting together walking and biking groups which can connect people with similar interests.
7. Check with the wellness committee at schools about having organized physical activity during lunch.	
8. Approach the Senior Coalition to address issues with seniors and measure level of interest. Use the survey created by Alanna Maurais (VISTA).	The VISTA survey indicated that seniors felt the timing for the lights on Central was too short and many sidewalks around town are uneven.
9. Work with HealthWorks to solidify a senior discount. Meet with Scott Doty to discuss the Silver Sneakers program. Look into Medicare payments for memberships. Help fundraise for new equipment and staff for HealthWorks to accommodate of new members.	Healthworks now offers full membership to individuals with Humana insurance and has gotten started with the Silver Sneakers program to provide discounts to seniors. They are also installing a walking track and starting a Kids Club at a time when parents can also come and work out as an option for parents.
10. Initiate contact with Public Schools and City about walking path. (Ben Larson and Bret Smelser)	There are some limited funds, one possibility is to add more benches with these funds.
11. Investigate current and possible transportation options, such as the bus system bringing county residents to HealthWorks.	
12. Implement worksite wellness programs with local employers	Sidney Health Center is restarting worksite wellness and Judy Johnson (Extension Office) is working on a Strong Women, Strong Bones program that can be used for worksite wellness.

Strategy(C): <i>Form subcommittees to address specific needs and undertake projects to serve each age group.</i>	Who, what, when, how?
1. Find interested individuals for these groups and address community need.	Use feedback and invite participants at State of the Community Conference

Theme: Physical Health
Goal: Promote outdoor physical activity

Strategy(A): <i>Increase bike and pedestrian safety</i>	Who, what, when, how?
1. Extend sidewalks/bike path to Richland Park, possibly using existing drainage system.	
2. Investigate the use of funding from former irrigation project and also potential community block grants (CTEP) for bike path extension.	
3. Look into possible roadblocks with regulations on use of irrigation canals/drainage system roads.	
4. Contact the mayor to see where they are in their process.	
5. Contact Terry Meldahl for help in writing the block grant.	
6. Talk to Russ Huotari and the County Commissioners to get them onboard (he allocates the money from the grants).	
7.	
Strategy(B): <i>Create a sustainable helmet use incentive program.</i>	This strategy will probably be implemented by the Public Safety action group.
1. Create a reward program for police officers to use when they see a child wearing a helmet.	
2. Find funding and/or donations to support the program and provide rewards. Approach Schwan's, local grocers and businesses, etc.	
Strategy(C): <i>Find ways to utilize resources and opportunities for seasonal recreation.</i>	
1. Investigate possibilities for winter seasonal recreation like cross-country skiing, snow-shoeing and other activities.	The golf course or bike paths might provide an area for cross-country skiing.

2. Investigate the state of any hiking trails and ways to publicize them.	
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Theme: Social Health

Goal: Reduce crime and drug use in Richland County

<i>Strategy(A): Create a line of communication between the community and law enforcement on how to report and follow-up on suspicious behavior.</i>	Who, what, when, how?
1. Approach Richland County Law Enforcement to find out if they have the capacity and what their current practices are. (Crimestoppers, etc.)	In progress: Crimestoppers is a possibility, but funding and an advisory board with a strong community commitment must be established. An online crime reporting form is also being worked on.
2. Research how other communities address this issue.	In progress: One community in Florida encourages youths to report drug and alcohol-related crimes via text message and MySpace. Des Moines, WA has an online reporting form that is being used as a model.
3. District II records all DUIs that come through their door.	The Misdemeanor Probation Officer and District II track statistics.
4. Contact communities about giving crime detection sessions.	
5. Utilize existing grant to address the environmental factors in Richland County that contribute to drug use and crime.	In progress: Montana Change Project has an action plan which is focused on changing environmental factors and community perceptions that relate to youth alcohol abuse and drinking and driving. They are currently working on a media campaign.
6. Create links between police and community groups such as the schools, after-school programs, and faith-based communities.	
7. Develop written material about reporting for public distribution.	
8. Develop Public Service Announcements about contacting law enforcement.	
9. Facilitate talks about seat belts, etc. with law enforcement and EMS.	The Safe Kids, Safe Communities grant, which includes seatbelt education is being reapplied for, but it is given out at the state level. There is also a primary seat belt law in the legislature this session.

10. Research seat belt usage in Richland County and what information is available.	
11. Post Neighborhood Watch signs on existing signs. (Eg. Attach below Sunrise City sign, ask the city)	In progress: Community interest in Neighborhood Watch was low the last time there was an attempt to organize it.
12. Neighborhood watch curriculum for kids and teach at BGC.	
Strategy(B): Reduce drug use	Who, what, when, how?
1. Total inventory of what's being done in town to address drug use.	
2. Have local officers help with DARE program and graduations instead of out-of-town officers to better forge relationships.	Not feasible: DARE officer training and time investment is significant, so only one officer in the county is trained, local officers are also brought in and encouraged to have a partnership with schools when possible.

Goal: Decrease domestic violence rates in Richland County

Strategy(A): Implement age-appropriate education in school system addressing domestic violence issues.	Who, what, when, how?
1. Determine what is being taught in schools.	The freshmen health and PE class receives two weeks of healthy relationship and domestic violence education. Reps from RCCADV present information on DV. At least once a year, RCCADV places a display at the Sidney High School addressing teen dating violence or sexual assault. An advocate from RCCADV attends the self-defense seminar and provides attendees with information on staying safe.
2. Determine what are the current best practices for domestic violence education.	RCCADV conducted an intense community audit with a third party and from the audit has implemented a Community Crisis Response (CCR) team.
Strategy(B): Create community awareness of domestic violence services available.	
1. Posters in bathrooms about services in high schools, public buildings, and restaurants/bars/casinos.	RCCADV posts posters where they have been given permission, they are also making posters targeting men to make them aware and ask them to discourage domestic violence. They also want to put them up in the fair bathrooms. They are

	distributed in January, April and October.
Strategy(C): Determine who is in the coalition for domestic violence, what their goals are, and how they can be implemented.	
1. Determine who is on the board and meet with them, presenting collected data.	Board members are Patti Boyer, Rita Braun, Twyla Gustafson, John Dynnesson and Brad Baisch. Goals are written into each grant specific to that grant.
Strategy(D): Implement a county-wide reporting/tracking system for domestic violence situations.	RCCADV already has a program for tracking offenders, the Domestic Abuse Intervention Network (DAIN). We also have a program for tracking victims and what services they are provided, this program is called PDQ.
1. Track entire system: all calls, arrests, convictions, and prosecutions (for assistance), the number of home visits – Partner and Family Member Assault (PFMA) and counselor referrals.	The 7 th Judicial District Court has hired Amber Ellis to perform duties as ½ time misdemeanor probation officer and ½ time PFMA compliance officer. Amber will work with RCCADV to keep track of arrests, convictions, etc. She will sit on the CCR team. The 7 th District will soon be served by a Victim Witness Advocate, a position which was previously out of Glendive and will now be out of the Richland County Attorney’s office.
2. Compile the data to show the system.	Data is available from the RCCADV.
3. Strengthen advocacy in response.	RCCADV would like to increase the number of volunteer advocates.
4. Determine what information is given to victims.	Law enforcement gives out packets which include Victim Rights and RCCADV also gives out packets. RCCADV packets contain Temporary Order for Protection paperwork along with a Montana Crime Victim’s Compensation brochure and other handouts.
5. Make sure on-call list is available for all service providers for crisis calls.	RCCADV gives copies to Law Enforcement and the Sidney Health Center.

Theme: Social Health

Goal: Increase life-long learning opportunities in Richland County

Strategy(A): <i>Develop and maintain a resource which lists all life-long learning opportunities (formal and informal) in Richland County</i>	Who, what, when, how?
1. Advertise that the Sidney Library and Job Service proctor exams for any college or anything, for free.	Will be done through the wiki, other channels are possible.
2. Create a resource website linked to library links on county site, job service, schools.	The Sidney Public Library is developing and hosting a wiki resource that providers of life-long learning opportunities can update to share information with community members.
3. Publicize and distribute this resource so that it becomes a “one-stop” place to both advertise and learn about LLL opportunities.	
Strategy(B): <i>Create a life-long learning center.</i>	
1. Develop and maintain a wiki website which will serve as a virtual life-long learning center, providing information and support to individuals, businesses and providers.	The Sidney Public Library is developing and hosting this wiki.
Strategy(C): <i>Increase the accessibility of life-long learning opportunities in the county</i>	
1. Dawson County College, Job Service, Sidney Library and other organizations to partner to hold classes in Richland County.	This is an on-going partnership. Job Service works with a regional Community Management Team of service providers to bring in opportunities from Dawson County and other areas.
2. Identify other colleges that may be interested in coming to Richland County such as Williston or bringing resources through the MSU Extension office.	
3. Tie in lifelong learning opportunities with the newly created higher education opportunities.	The MSU Extension Office, Job Service and Sidney Public Library are collaborating to do this through the Life-Long Learning Action Group.
Strategy(D): <i>Determine which trainings</i>	

<i>and other learning opportunities are needed and recruit more members</i>	
1. Create and distribute a survey which assesses needs, wants and accessibility issues for individuals and businesses	The Life-Long Learning Group is helping Job Service and the Sidney Public Library develop this survey.
2. Establish BEAR (Business Expansion and Retention) as a resource for county businesses	
3. Encourage collaboration between local businesses, organizations and service providers so they can share trainings and other resources	The Community Management Team and JSEC meet regularly with this goal.

Theme: Environmental Health

Goal: Monitor impact of oil drilling on water quality in Richland County

<i>Strategy (A): Establish a system of water monitoring and control.</i>	Who, what, when, how?
1) There is already testing taking place for city water in Sidney, Savage, Crane, and Fairview. MDU is also already doing water testing of the river under EPA regulations. Determine the kind of water testing being conducted.	Research completed by Water Quality Action Group Information published in “Water Quality in Richland County” brochure and “Water Quality Information” website linked to Health Department and Conservation District sites. (Dec. 2008)
2) Investigate if oil companies have to test their environmental impact.	Research done by Water Quality Action Group Information published on “Water Quality Information” website linked to Health Department and Conservation District sites. (Dec. 2008)
3) Partner with the Conservation District (Julie Goss) to investigate the boundaries and depth of the aquifer using the existing holes that are drilled.	Aquifer study completed as of March 2008 by Conservation District. New strategy: “Continue to seek funding and support for additional study and monitoring of the aquifer.”
4) Decide what to test for on the aquifer (temperature, contaminants, and salinity).	Done by Conservation District, also becomes action step under new strategy.
5) Find funding for water testing with possible EPA grants; partner with the Conservation District.	Limited funding is available and what is appropriate is already being pursued by various agencies including the Conservation District and area water districts.

6) Establish a flow chart of which agencies are responsible for which regulatory actions and who has what information.	Completed by Water Quality Action Group (Nov. 2008)
7) Approach Board of Health to help create this system of monitoring and control.	No problems were found with current monitoring system to warrant taking this step, change to: "If necessary, approach Board of Health to create a system of monitoring and control to address specific problems."
Strategy (B): Provide community access to water quality findings.	
1) Partner with the Conservation District to use their website to create a clearing house for all available data on water quality and a space for frequently asked questions.	Completed by Water Quality Action Group (Dec. 2008)
2) Continue to maintain and update the information on the Water Quality website to meet community needs for information about water quality and testing.	Water Quality Action Group - Ongoing
Strategy (C): Continue to seek funding and support for additional study and monitoring of the aquifer.	
1) Pursue funding opportunities through agencies on the state and federal level as they become available.	Conservation District - Ongoing
2) Decide what to test for on the aquifer (temperature, contaminants, and salinity) as funding becomes available	Conservation District - Ongoing

Goal: Monitor impact of oil drilling on air quality in Richland County

Strategy (A): Provide community access to air quality findings.	Who, what, when, how?
1) Partner with the county website to create a clearinghouse for all available data on air quality with space allotted to answer frequently asked questions.	
Strategy (B): Establish a system of air monitoring and control.	
1) Talk to MDU about what they are currently testing for air quality. Research other local	The MT DEQ has placed an air monitoring site in Sidney and publishes results on their webpage.

businesses/organizations that could be doing air quality testing and determine who does what testing in the community.	
2) Establish a flow chart of which agencies are responsible for which regulatory actions and who has what information.	
3) Determine what dirty air is: dust particulates? What are the EPA's standards? Research DEQ and the National Weather Service in Glasgow and Williston.	
4) Approach the Board of Health to help create this system of monitoring and control.	
5) Approach the Conservation District to get them on board.	

Theme: Environmental Health

Goal: Improve structural safety and appearance in Richland County

Strategy (A): <i>Make a plan for City and County Commissioners to partner with property owners to establish a definitive explanation for 'hazardous structure' and plan follow through with Community Decay Ordinance.</i>	Who, what, when, how?
1. Define "Hazardous Structures" and look if it's detrimental to health.	
2. Research other towns of comparable size for decay ordinance- Williston, Watford City, Miles City.	
3. Find a hazardous building authority.	
4. Get Planning Board or Housing Authority to become review board for within city limits.	
5. Follow up with Fairview about the decaying house with the printing press and if it's successfully condemned use this house as a model.	
6. Training on how to identify hazardous structures.	
7. Research the universal building codes.	

<i>Strategy (B): Improve the appearance of Richland County.</i>	
1. Talk to RED about possible visual improvements that could be done to the downtown area.	

Theme: Community Well-Being

Goal: Increase quality and availability of housing to allow for population growth

<i>Strategy(A): Explore possible methods of renovating old buildings on existing lots, potential for duplexes and also senior housing.</i>	Who, what, when, how?
1. Sidney Housing Committee and the Richland Housing Authority. Find out where they are.	
2. County-wide housing evaluation: How many houses are sitting empty?	
3. Look at how other areas of similar size are dealing with the housing crunch. Example: Gillette, Wyoming, Western Montana (Polson), Columbia Falls, Miles City.	
4. Explore co-op housing: 5-6 families build a condo together.	
5. Talk to Robert Rauschendorfer who is currently building spec houses about his plans for senior housing.	
6. Review price range of houses in Richland County.	
7. Talk to Adam Gill at Credit Counseling in Great Falls	
8. Horizons development is looking for a new project, approach them about taking this on.	
9. Research what it would take to get National Civilian Community Corps volunteers here to take on a housing project.	
10. Review the Lambert housing program for the process/results as queues for a model program.	

Theme: Community Well-being

Goal: Decrease the high school drop-out rate in Richland County

<i>Strategy(A): Address the risk factors that promote drop-out</i>	Who, what, when, how?
1. Research the reasons kids drop out.	
2. Assess where parents are involved in the school system.	
3. Assess what the schools need.	
<i>Strategy(B): Create mentoring/educational programs</i>	
1. Support Partnership for Promise's efforts to develop a youth mentoring program.	
2. Expand the parenting classes and family resource center to include the middle and high schools.	
<i>Strategy(C): Utilize law enforcement, judicial courts, and public assistance to decrease drop-out rates</i>	
1. Provide training to police about juvenile crimes and how to identify truancy.	
2. Explore the option of tying in welfare (bonus or penalty based on child's school attendance, like in Canada).	
3. Judicial sentencing to parenting classes.	