
Bowman County Leadership Retreat

June 26-27, 2009

Planning Results



Great leaders are almost always great simplifiers, who can cut through argument, debate, and doubt to offer a solution everybody can understand.

General Colin Powell

American statesman, retired four-star general
in the United States Army, and 65th United States
Secretary Of State, 2001-2005

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LEADERSHIP RETREAT BACKGROUND

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Bowman County Leadership Planning Retreat was to bring Bowman County leaders together to collaborate and plan for the future of Bowman County. The Bowman County Development Corporation coordinated the leadership retreat with the Strom Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation in Dickinson.

FUNDING

The retreat was identified as a Community Development Project under the Bush Foundation's Home Town Competitiveness Grant, which is managed by the Strom Center's community development project coordinator. Funding for the retreat was provided through the Bush Foundation's grant program.

The goals of the Community Development Project are to create vibrant and thriving communities in the region through development projects. Each community served by the program is requested to identify strategies in four "pillars" or focus areas. Each of the four pillars is described below:

1. Youth – creating opportunity and engagement for young community members
2. Entrepreneurship – promoting business and individual entrepreneurial efforts through idea conception to succession planning
3. Leadership – developing courageous leaders to lead and develop a community's potential
4. Charitable Assets – acknowledging community wealth and philanthropic giving to ensure that transfer of wealth will be retained

LOGISTICS

The Bowman County Leadership Planning Retreat was held June 26 and 27, 2009 at the Logging Camp Ranch north of Bowman. Invitations to participate in the Leadership Retreat were sent to the Bowman County Commissioners, City Commissioners from Bowman, Rhame, Scranton, and Gascoyne, and the board members of the Bowman County Development Corporation.

DLN Consulting, Inc. of Dickinson, ND was contracted to facilitate the retreat. The company's president, Deb Nelson, was the lead facilitator. She was assisted by Amanda Lynn Moser, community project development coordinator from the Strom Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation.

PARTICIPANTS

The following individuals attended part or all of the Leadership Retreat:

- ☪ Ashley Alderson, Executive Director, Bowman County Development Corporation
- ☪ Duane Bowman, Board member, Bowman County Development Corporation
- ☪ Lynn Brackel, Commissioner, Bowman County Commission
- ☪ Teran Doerr, Executive Secretary, Bowman Area Chamber of Commerce
- ☪ Lyn James, Mayor, City of Bowman
- ☪ Ron Palczewski, President, Dakota Western Bank, and Committee Member, Bowman Renaissance Zone Committee
- ☪ Judy Pond, Auditor, City of Bowman
- ☪ Grace Rhea, Commissioner, Bowman City Commission
- ☪ Les Snavely, Commissioner, Bowman City Commission and Bowman County Housing Authority
- ☪ Ken Steiner, Chairman, Bowman County Commission

The key to successful leadership today is influence, not authority.

-Kenneth Blanchard
American author and management expert

CHARACTERISTICS AND TRAITS OF GOOD COMMUNITY LEADERS

Leadership is like gravity. You know it's there, you know it exists, but how do you define it?

-Former San Francisco 49ers Tight End, Dr. Jamie Williams

STRUCTURE dictates the way community government and leadership organizations interact with the community.

FOLLOWERS respond to the structure and leaders.

LEADERS determine the ultimate effectiveness of the governing bodies and overall community.

No community can rise above the quality of its leadership. New and experienced leaders must make key personal choices on a daily basis because being a community leader is a position that must be earned day in and day out. The character of a good community leader is essential.

PERSONAL QUALITIES FOUND IN GOOD LEADERS

(Cox, 2001)

- Good leaders have exemplary character and high standards of personal ethics. Leaders must be trustworthy and lead their lives with honesty and integrity. A good leader “walks the talk” (Bennis, W).
- Good leaders have high levels of energy. They are enthusiastic about their work and their roles as leaders. People respond better to those who demonstrate passion and dedication. Such leaders are usually looked to as inspirational because enthusiasm is contagious.
- Good leaders demonstrate confidence – as individuals and in their leadership role. People who are confident inspire confidence in others to do good work.
- Good leaders have the ability to demonstrate competence and intelligence. Leaders do not have to be experts on every area in the community, but they do need to demonstrate they have the competence to understand the community and the intelligence to solve problems. This happens when leaders are committed to continual learning and education.

- Good leaders must function in an orderly, organized and purposeful manner in situations of uncertainty. This is called tolerance to ambiguity. The community looks to its leaders during such times to find reassurance and security.
- Good leaders remain calm, composed, and steadfast. Emotional outbursts, community storms, and crisis situations come and go in a community, and good leaders take these on with a cool head. Leaders who can stay cool under pressure empower others to remain calm, too.
- Good leaders focus on the main goal in an analytical manner. Good leaders must be able to view a situation as a whole, but also break it down into manageable steps to make progress toward the goal.
- Good leaders are committed to excellence. Excellence is “being all you can be” within the boundaries of doing what is right for the community. Leaders are proactive in raising the bar in order to achieve excellence in all areas. Good community leaders, however, do not command excellence, they build excellence.
- The desire to help others succeed is the mark of a truly GREAT leader. Synergy is created when leaders truly invest their efforts in the success of others. “People don’t know how much you know until they know how much you care about them” -- Zig Ziglar (Cox 2001).
- Leadership character develops over time. People are not “born with it,” nor is leadership formed early in life.
- Leaders who have the ability to bring about exceptional results tend to engage in specific behavior (Kouzes and Posner 1995). A person’s observable behavior is a good indication of his or her character. A person with strong character shows drive, energy, determination, self-discipline, willpower, and nerve.

PRACTICES OF GOOD LEADERS

Challenge the Process – Always look for innovative ways to improve the organization or, in this case, Bowman County

- Search for opportunities
- Experiment and take risks
- Ask what has been done to add value to the community
- Dare to be different
- Ask the right questions and search for the right answers

Inspire a Shared Vision – Envision the future and create an ideal image of what Bowman County can become

- Use future focus and strategic anticipation that is not always easy to achieve
- Recognize the importance of setting goals that will bring about success
- Enlist others

Enable Others to Act – Build spirited teams of people to help carry out the work

- Foster collaboration and involve others in the changes to take place
- Strengthen partners

Model the Way – Establish principles for how people will be treated and how goals will be pursued

- Set the example
- Achieve small wins
- Continue to learn and grow
- Do things right and do the right things (but are willing to make mistakes)

Encourage the Heart – Make people feel like heroes

- Recognize and reward contributions
- Celebrate accomplishments
- Create a desire in others to become community leaders

- Puccio, Murdock, & Mance (2007)

The strongest community leaders will implement what is often called the *creative problem solving process* when they undertake community planning (Puccio, Murdock, & Mance 2007). This process involves a number of different thinking styles. While it is not necessary for all leaders participating in a planning process to possess the ability to function within each thinking style, it is imperative that each thinking style is represented by at least one of the planning participants if the process is to be

successful. There are seven basic steps for strategic planning, and coincidentally, there are seven different creative thinking styles (Guilford 1968).

Thinking Skills Associated with Creative Problem Solving

	Assessing the Situation	Exploring the Vision	Formulating Challenges	Exploring Ideas	Formulating Solutions	Exploring Acceptance	Formulating the Plan
Planning Steps	Describe and identify relevant data	Develop a vision of a desired outcome	Identify the gaps and barriers that must be addressed to achieve the desired outcome	Generate ideas that address the most important challenges	Move from ideas to strategies that will solve the problems	Identify activities that will increase the likelihood for successful strategies	Develop a full implementation plan
Thinking Styles	<i>Diagnostic Thinking</i> Making a careful examination of a situation, describing the nature of the problem, and making decisions about the steps to be taken	<i>Visionary Thinking</i> Articulating a vivid image of the desired outcome	<i>Strategic Thinking</i> Identifying the critical issues that must be addressed and pathways needed to move toward the desired outcome	<i>Ideational Thinking</i> Producing original mental images and thoughts that respond to important challenges	<i>Evaluative Thinking</i> Assessing the reasonableness and quality of ideas in order to develop workable solutions	<i>Contextual Thinking</i> Understanding the interrelated conditions and circumstances that will support or hinder success	<i>Tactical Thinking</i> Devising a plan that includes specific and measurable steps for attaining a desired end and methods for monitoring its effectiveness

LEADERSHIP TRAITS OF RETREAT PARTICIPANTS

Each participant in the Leadership Retreat was asked to think about and identify the qualities, skills and talents of the other participants. This identification was meant as an exercise to determine if the leadership traits of the participants are sufficient to lead the citizens of Bowman County into the future. What follows is a listing of the participants' identified leadership traits.

These community leaders are:

***ANALYTICAL, CARING, COMPASSIONATE, COOPERATIVE, COURAGEOUS,
DEDICATED, DEPENDABLE, DETERMINED, EMPATHETIC, ENERGETIC,
INQUISITIVE, INSIGHTFUL, OPEN-MINDED, OPTIMISTIC,
PERSISTENT, PLEASANT, PRAGMATIC, PROGRESSIVE,
RESOURCEFUL, and TENACIOUS***

They possess a number of skills that are essential to their leadership positions:

- Have good skills working with groups
- Possess the ability to facilitate good public relations
- Provide mentorship to others
- Have a strong work ethic
- Are community-minded
- Are very involved in the community
- Exhibit professionalism in their leadership roles
- Have excellent execution skills
- Are good listeners and communicators
- Possess a strong passion for their communities
- Are visionary
- Possess good research knowledge and investigative skills
- Hold very successful networking skills
- Enjoy a strong sense of community history
- Own a sense of personal drive and commitment to their leadership roles
- Are visionaries

From the characteristics identified by the attendees at the Leadership Retreat, it is evident all seven creative thinking types were in attendance, which was essential for the success of the Bowman County Leadership Planning Retreat.

If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.

John Quincy Adams
Sixth President of the United States of America, 1825-1829

AN OVERVIEW OF BOWMAN COUNTY

(Economic Profile System 2008 and American Factfinder 2000)

Bowman County is located in the far southwestern corner of North Dakota, bordering both Montana and South Dakota. Bowman County sits between the Theodore Roosevelt National Park badlands to the north and the Black Hills of South Dakota to the south. There are four incorporated communities located within Bowman County: Bowman, Gascoyne, Rhame and Scranton (Bowman County Development Corporation 2009).

POPULATION

Bowman County is home to more than 3,200 people (estimated US Census). About half the people who reside in the county live in the city of Bowman. In 2008, Bowman County had the largest population increase of any county in the state, at three percent.

The median age of people who live within Bowman County is older than that of North Dakota and the United States. The fastest growing age group is 45-49, and the percentage of people age 65 and older is higher than the state and nation.

ECONOMICS

Bowman County has one of the lowest unemployment rates in the state of North Dakota. In January 2009, the unemployment rate was 3.3%. Employment opportunities are primarily found in the fields of agriculture, energy (oil and gas), healthcare, education, and government.

Per capita personal income in Bowman county averages over \$39,000, and the energy industry provides the highest paying jobs. The average per capita income is higher than the state and the nation. The poverty rate in the county is lower than that of both North Dakota and the United States.

Wages for government employees and the public sector are higher than those for the private sector, but the government share of total employment is relatively low. New jobs have been created in Bowman County. Most new jobs are wage and salary jobs attributed to the oil and gas industry. Historically, however, over half the new income has been from non-labor sources, such as dividends, interest, rent, and transfer payments from government, such as social security, Medicaid, disability, and unemployment.

The county is an employment hub, with income from people commuting into the county to work exceeding the income from people who commute out of the county. The net farming income growth has steadily declined in the county, but gross farming income exceeds production expenses. The farm and farm-related employment category demonstrated the greatest loss in income of all employment categories over the past 35 years.

The employment category whose share of total employment gained the most over the past 35 years was services and professional jobs. Service jobs, however, provide some of the lowest wages in the county.

A very active Main Street and a full-range of businesses are available throughout the county. A number of financial institutions, insurance carriers, accounting services and investment agencies prove the county and its citizens enjoy a strong financial community.

TRANSPORTATION

The two major roadways in Bowman County are US Highways 12 and 85, intersecting at the city of Bowman. Bowman County is also crossed by the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe Railroad, which goes through each of the four communities in the county. The Bowman Municipal Airport is a public airport operated by the Bowman County Airport Authority.

HEALTH CARE

Bowman County's health care facilities offer 24-7 service and state-of-the-art technology. A critical access hospital with emergency and surgery services is located in the city of Bowman. Updated senior independent living apartments and a nursing home complex provide health care for senior citizens, along with the Assisted Living Facility, which was constructed in 2006. A number of dentists, chiropractors, optometrists, and physical therapists practice in Bowman County. Fitness facilities are open to the public.

RECREATION

Bowman County offers its residents and visitors a number of recreation options. These include two golf courses, eight public parks, campgrounds, a swimming pool, a skate park, a dog park, baseball fields, walking paths, a bowling alley, a movie theater, and the Bowman-Haley Recreation Area.

HOUSING

The county's Housing Authority is continuously attempting to address the housing needs of its citizens. Housing affordability is deemed to be very good by the U.S. Census Bureau, meaning a median-income family can afford a median-income home. Adequate housing is, however, a continuing challenge within the county.

EDUCATION

At 10:1, Bowman County has a very low student-teacher ratio. Two high schools, two middle schools, three elementary schools, three kindergartens, and several pre-schools are located within the county. A new track and football stadium has been constructed at Bowman County High School, and students enjoy the use of new technology in their daily educational experiences.

UTILITIES

In addition to the municipal water, sewer, and garbage services in Bowman, Rhame, and Scranton, a number of Bowman County residents are served by the Southwest Water Authority. The county has cable and fiber optic services, and is served by two utility companies.

CRIME

Bowman County is served by the Bowman County Sheriff's Department, Bowman City Police Department, and the North Dakota Highway Patrol. Bowman County has one of the lowest crime rates in North Dakota.

A community is like a ship; everyone ought to be prepared to take the helm.

Henrik Ibsen
19th century Norwegian playwright,
theater director, and poet

PRIOR PLANNING IN BOWMAN COUNTY

More than 10 years ago, the City of Bowman underwent an extensive strategic planning process in an effort to make Bowman a model for rural America in the 21st Century. A thorough community assessment was completed, a vision was created, and ambitious goals and strategies were identified. In conjunction with the City plan, Bowman joined forces with the City of Hettinger in what became known as the Dakota Champion Communities Alliance. The Alliance was designed to stimulate rural development in the two southwestern North Dakota communities. The Dakota Champion plan piggybacked off and was included in the City of Bowman's strategic plan.

1998 VISION

Create a highly desirable community that can be a model for rural America in the 21st Century. This will be accomplished by increasing economic opportunities while maintaining and enhancing the quality of life advantages enjoyed by residents. Leaders see a growing community with prosperous family farms and businesses offering professional career opportunities.

1998 GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Goal #1: Reverse population declines and increase population from 1,557 to 2,336

Strategies:

- Increase total employment from 946 to 1,419
- Increase annual per capita income from \$16,740 to \$26,750
- Create and attract new “high tech” industries providing professional, good-paying career opportunities
- Create a sustainable, diversified economy including prosperous family farms that will continue to grow after 1998 without need of additional Federal grants

Goal #2: Maintain outstanding air quality, lack of congestion, and low crime, taxes and insurance rates.

Goal #3: Enhance educational opportunities

Strategies:

- Maintain high school graduation rate of over 98%
- Scores on standardized tests above national and state averages
- A computer for every student with access to an unlimited “virtual library” through the worldwide web
- Availability of online college courses so community members who are seeking a college degree can remain in the area for their first two years of college

Goal #4: Enhance superior medical system

Goal #5: Increase and upgrade housing including independent living and assisted living facilities for senior citizens

Goal #6: Substantially increase recreational and cultural facilities and programs

Goal #7: Create and continuously upgrade a state-of-the-art information and communications infrastructure

During the 2009 Leadership Retreat, participants examined the goals and strategies identified in the prior plans to determine which of them had been met, which were still important, and where changes could be made to the goals and strategies that had not been met.

The Leadership Retreat participants determined that the following progress and/or accomplishments had been met since 1998. The accomplishments they identified as the most significant for the county are bolded and in italics.

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENTS

- *Multi-purpose building*
- *Joint city-county shop*
- Bowman City park renovation
- Swimming pool update
- Upgrades to Bowman County school facilities

INFRASTRUCTURE

- *Expansion of highways through Bowman and Scranton*
- *Southwest water pipeline to Scranton and surrounding rural areas*
- Fiber optics upgrades

COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS

- *Collaboration between City and County leadership*
- *County and City leaders expending the time and resources for projects important to the communities*
- BLM funding

OIL IMPACT

- *Oil activity, royalties, and oil-related jobs have brought about more jobs, expanded wealth, and reduced dependence on agriculture*
- *Successful lobbying and organized testimony resulted in bringing revenue from additional Oil and Gas Production Taxes to the cities and county*
- Non-farm income has supplemented area ranches and farms, allowing younger generation ranchers and farmers to remain in the county and stay on the farms
- Increases in Bowman County population

RESULTS OF 1998 PLAN REVIEW

Upon careful examination, the participants determined that the accomplishments of the goals and strategies within the plan had been successful across the board. The success of the previous plan meant that the leaders participating in the Leadership Retreat could examine areas that might be enhanced, as well as look at issues that had more recently appeared in the county. This was accomplished through identification of existing community strengths and opportunities that may be built upon to plan for the future, and through identification of the county's challenges and weaknesses that leave gaps and slow progress toward new goals. Strengths, opportunities, challenges and weaknesses, along with potential new focus areas and new strategies are presented in the remainder of this plan.

Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it.

Dwight D. Eisenhower
Five-star general in the US Army and
34th president of the United States, 1953-1961

EXISTING STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES

A community's strengths are its strong characteristics that are currently in place. They are attributable to the community citizens' response to the growth and change within the community. The purpose for identifying strengths is to assess what has been done in a community or what exists in a community that currently makes it a quality place to live. These strengths should be built upon when identifying the opportunities for further community enhancement.

The **STRENGTHS** identified by those who participated in the Leadership Retreat are broken into broad categories as follows:

COMMUNITY

The citizens of Bowman County take great pride in their communities. Bowman County is a great place to raise families because of a number of factors outlined in the next identified categories. Finally, the leaders and citizens residing within Bowman County are generally quite progressive. Leaders are constantly looking for ways to improve the county, and citizens are generally open to the changes that are proposed.

CITIZENS

The people who live in Bowman County consider themselves quite friendly. They are a resilient people, and have a very strong work ethic, which is demonstrated in their daily work and in the work they take on in their communities. Citizen, civic, religious, government, health, and education-related organizations are healthy and willingly collaborate on community projects. There is strong support within the county for youth and youth activities.

COUNTY LEADERSHIP

The people placed in leadership positions are strong, dedicated, progressive leaders who recognize the importance of breaking down barriers between organizations to provide an open and collaborative atmosphere. The city and county governments have a history of working together to invest in the county's infrastructure and special projects. There appears to be very few, if any, hidden agendas, and all leadership organizations work hard to keep the best interest of the local residents in mind. The recent enlargement of the Bowman County Commission to a five-member board has provided a base for a much more solid decision-making body.

ECONOMY

Bowman County's economy is one of the strongest of all 53 counties in North Dakota. It is a diverse economy, relying not only on the agriculture and energy industries, but also on the professional, health, and business sectors to provide job opportunities. Simply put, there is job availability in Bowman County. As such, there has been an increasing trend of young professionals "moving home," which has helped boost the county's economy. The county understands its roots lie in the agriculture economic base and provides opportunities for its farm and ranch families. Bowman County's location at the intersections of US Highways 12 and 85 makes this county a stopping point for many travelers and an economic center for a large trade area that extends into Montana and South Dakota. The resurgence of the oil industry and the ensuing oil royalties has created individual wealth for a number of families within the county. Increased personal income means increased business income for the various types of businesses within the county.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Revenue that comes back to the county and communities within the county means more dollars are available to spend on community infrastructure and quality of life. The county and city governments have worked hard to collaborate on providing upgraded road systems. Healthcare services, educational facilities, and recreational opportunities have been increased, and housing for seniors has improved.

OPPORTUNITIES are those conditions that either currently exist or will soon exist within a community that allow the leadership and citizens to create opportunities for future community enhancement. The Leadership Retreat participants noted a number of opportunities for their county that will allow for improvement and county growth.

BLM funds have allowed for some special projects to be funded that would not have happened if the funding was not available. Having these funds in place allows the county to not only identify additional infrastructure and special project needs, but to have a funding base upon which to build.

The **availability of oil and gas production funds** and continued revenue from the oil industry will also help build infrastructure and provide opportunities that can increase the population within the county. The population has increased over the past several years, but not enough to fill all the available jobs. This establishes an opportunity for the county leadership to develop a plan that will attract even more people.

A robust **business environment** exists within Bowman County, and an active and strong business climate promotes growth. As the county improves its position, both economically

and through quality of life programs, the population, employment opportunities, and businesses will not only be maintained, but improved upon.

The various boards and commissions that work on behalf of the county and the communities have a history based on **collaboration and cooperation**. Progressive leadership promotes sustained growth and improvement. Positive community leadership that openly communicates with the community motivates its citizens, particularly young people, to participate in leadership opportunities. The opportunity exists for youth and young adult leadership mentoring programs, which will in turn perpetuate the desire to grow and improve over the long term.

Housing shortages, additional special projects, new business, and business and service upgrades mean additional job opportunities will exist. An increased need for contractors, plumbers, electricians, and other tradesmen will be in greater demand. As quality of life projects are implemented, increases in job opportunities will attract additional people to the county.

Additional opportunities to further diversify the community are being considered. Wind power is increasingly being viewed as a new energy industry within the state, and all the peripheral opportunities that exist with this industry could potentially place Bowman County in an even stronger economic position.

Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things.

Peter Drucker

Writer, management consultant, and considered to be
"the father of modern management"

GAPS, CHALLENGES, AND WEAKNESSES

It is essential for any planning group to identify the potential community weaknesses it faces as it establishes accomplishable strategies. Weaknesses are characteristics and traits that exist within the community itself. When identified and addressed, the impediments to strengthening the community can be reduced.

Challenges and weaknesses erect barriers that may make it difficult to accomplish established outcomes. Once a group has identified what they may be up against, it will be easier to identify reasonable and attainable long-term outcomes. Very few challenges and weaknesses were identified to exist within Bowman County. What could be identified is listed below:

- Initially, all parties are not always on the same page, which means progress is sometimes slow to start.
- A balance must be found between community opposition to the current property tax base and the need for increased building and housing needs.
- The local newspaper is not prone to positive reporting about leaders or leadership organizations, making it difficult for citizens to fully understand and support leadership decisions.
- The protocols required for working with state and federal groups slow the processes at the local level.
- A general community perception exists that Bowman County does not need to plan ahead when it comes to future business and housing development.

Gaps, on the other hand, are needs that have yet to be met. Gaps may exist for a number of reasons, most often because of the community's challenges and weaknesses. If this is the case, the gaps can often be addressed by establishing attainable strategies to fill the gaps. Gaps identified by the planning participants as identified on the next page.

- Insufficient funding has not allowed all the gaps in services or projects to be filled. In this case, budgets can be revised or funding plans can be implemented to provide the necessary funding.
- There is a lack of community support to help fill the gaps. When this is the reason, the leadership has a much more difficult time filling or closing the gap. The best strategy that can be implemented is to educate the community to improve community-wide support.
- Leadership within all age groups has not been identified or developed
- City and county budgets have not yet developed a plan to address the likely future decline in oil production.
- Many businesses have not developed a succession plan to ensure the businesses remain open when current owners and managers choose to leave the business
- An agreement has not been reached on the required characteristics of the city/county planning function. Policies that address our city/county planning issues have not been put in place.
- The workforce does not meet the employment needs
- Housing availability does not meet the county's housing needs.
- Road infrastructure must constantly be maintained and/or improved.

The country is full of good coaches; what it takes to win is a bunch of interested players.

Don Coryell

Former NFL coach, St. Louis Chargers, 1973-1977
San Diego Chargers, 1978-1986

ATTRACTING YOUNG PEOPLE TO RURAL COMMUNITIES

Rural communities having a strong desire to attract young families and young, single adults must take a hard look at what their communities have to offer the Y-Generation, those young people born after 1976. What do these “Millenials” want and need in a community? More importantly, when a community is looking to attract young people, are they thinking about the needs of those who are fresh out of college? The first question Millenials ask is, “What can this community do for me?” (Andenas 2009)

Most young people make their decision about moving or not moving to a community prior to seeing the community first-hand. These are technologically advanced young adults who gather the majority of their information from the Internet. They will definitely do a web search of the community before they make the trip in person, and often form very strong opinions based on the website’s information. A strong **website** with easy and quick maneuverability should be the first recruitment step for a rural community.

Rural communities might consider forming partnerships with area colleges and universities to offer **business and service internships** for college students. Interns who work in a professional capacity while they are finishing their education are often hired into the business in which they interned. They immediately have more experience than someone that didn’t intern and should be better prepared to quickly move into positions of responsibility within the business. Millenials would consider internships a very positive opportunity. Locally-owned and family-owned businesses in rural communities that are struggling with how they can be sustained after the owner’s retirement might consider this strategy.

Housing availability in many rural communities do not meet the needs of the Y-Generation the communities are trying to recruit. Most Millenials do not want to buy houses because they haven’t decided if the communities they have moved to are where they will be a year after their arrivals. They are often uncertain if the position will be the job of their dreams and, as such, tend to make no long-term plans. These young people do not want to take care of big yards because they have too much going on in their lives. Most do not have the money to fix up older homes, and are looking for housing that requires, at most, a new coat of paint. Therefore, apartment buildings, condominium complexes and townhouses are crucial to attracting youth to rural communities. A Millenial may consider a small to mid-sized home with limited yard work as long as the house doesn’t look like something his grandmother just moved out of. Young professionals are looking for modern, minimalist housing.

“Green” facilities are very important to Millenials. Recycling programs, energy efficient housing, communities that promote the use of sustainable materials, and good air quality are positive factors for young adults.

Millenials were raised on *technology*. Using technology is not only second nature, but a way of life for them. Stemming the flow of outmigration or increasing the young adult population will be impossible without broadband, fiber optics, cable, and wireless services. These young adults are also looking to work for businesses that are technologically connected.

Socializing is almost as important to the Y-Generation as is technology. It is very common that social activities in rural communities center around three rural social institutions – the church, the school, and the local liquor establishment. Many do not immediately get involved in a church and most do not have children who will participate in school activities. While many young people enjoy socializing over a drink with people their own age, they do not want to spend every night in the local bar. These young adults are looking for a community that provides activities and resources for them to get together with people their own age to make connections or to help advance their careers. When Millenials feel connected to other people, they will be more likely to stay in that community.

Simply saying that a community wants to stem the flow of outmigration or create job opportunities for young people may not bring, and certainly will not keep, the Y-Generation, or Millenials, in a community. Small, rural communities, such as those located in Bowman County, must support a youthful culture and project its desire for young ideas, young involvement, and young citizens through its image.

A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way.

John C. Maxwell

Author, speaker, and pastor who has written more than 50 books focusing on leadership

STRATEGIES

Small group brainstorming activities and a large group consensus building process were used to identify a number of strategies designed to improve Bowman County over the next several years. Participants started by individually identifying strategies and activities. They were encouraged to review the strategies from the 1998 plan that would still be relevant for completion or that could be enhanced. Participants were also encouraged to keep in mind the county's strengths, challenges, weaknesses and gaps as they identified strategies. The participants were also asked to categorize their ideas into Quality of Life strategies and Economics and Population strategies to be consistent with the prior community plans.

Small groups were then formed to prioritize all the ideas of the individuals assigned to the groups. Finally, all prioritized strategies from the small groups were combined to make a comprehensive list. Duplicate strategies were eliminated. When the combined list was final, each participant was asked to place a number of "votes" on the ideas they felt were the most important and that had the greatest potential for success.

Participants were then asked to look carefully at the strategies receiving votes and choose the three they thought were the most important. Each was asked to place a "3" beside the one they felt was most important and should be addressed first, and then a "2" and "1" beside the next most important, respectively. These priority vote numbers were then added up to determine the strategies the participants felt should be considered as the top priorities for the county leadership to consider.

Following the voting exercise, all strategies were analyzed to determine if they met the four "pillars" or focus areas of the Bush Foundation's Home Town Competitiveness grant that funded the retreat. Those that do fall under one of the four pillars have been identified with the corresponding pillar. Strategies identified through this process are all noted below. They are identified as a Quality of Life strategy or an Economics and Population strategy. All strategies that made it to the comprehensive list are listed in order of priority for consideration by the leadership organizations.

ECONOMIC and POPULATION STRATEGIES

- | | |
|---|-------------------|
| 1. Develop a capitol fund that will provide matching funds for grant applications | CHARITABLE ASSETS |
| 2. Educate the public about the importance of accurate census data collection | LEADERSHIP |
| 3. Establish a city/county planner position | LEADERSHIP |
| 4. Continue growth through annexation process | |

- | | |
|--|------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Develop leadership programs for young and upcoming leaders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Intergenerational programs b. NLC youth leadership program | YOUTH |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Develop new professional job opportunities | ENTREPRENEURSHIP |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Establish a Renaissance Zone for the City of Bowman | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Main Street infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. New street lights on Bowman Main Street | ENTREPRENEURSHIP |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Maintain and improve city and county roads <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. TR Expressway b. County and township roads | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Enhance tourism and area promotion to attract new businesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Hotel with convention center b. Additional eating establishments c. Creation of tourism-related attractions | ENTREPRENEURSHIP |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Continue cooperation and collaboration between officials and boards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Create job awareness of elected officials within communities b. Enhance relationships between all communities | LEADERSHIP |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Improve community information through technology, websites, Internet marketing | ENTREPRENEURSHIP |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Maintain strength of Main Street businesses and motivate them to continually challenge themselves <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Assist businesses with succession plans | ENTREPRENEURSHIP |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14. Enhance county/city/township infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Welcome signs b. Water, sewer, streets | |

QUALITY OF LIFE STRATEGIES

- | | |
|--|-----------------------|
| 1. Maintain an ongoing future vision for Bowman County | LEADERSHIP |
| 2. Improve housing opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Safe and secure housing for seniors b. New home owners c. Workforce housing d. Renovate or demolish unsafe housing | |
| 3. Create a community foundation for special projects (local fundraising efforts) | CHARITABLE ASSETS |
| 4. Enhance recreational facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Bike paths b. Improve Rec center – weights, pools, courts c. Protect theater and bowling alley d. Covered pool e. Relocate and/or expand airport | ENTREPRENEURSHIP |
| 5. Enhance healthcare facilities | ENTREPRENEURSHIP |
| 6. Provide enhanced education opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Healthy lifestyles b. Online training for adult education c. Computer for every student | LEADERSHIP &
YOUTH |

Don't tell people how to do things, tell them what to do and let them surprise you with their results.

George S. Patton
Distinguished World War II
four-star US Army General

BOWMAN COUNTY LEADERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

A Bowman County community plan cannot be completed, nor can it be expected to achieve success, without the direct involvement of the elected, appointed and designated leaders within the county. The groups that have been identified for inclusion in the full planning process and whose participation will be crucial to the plan's success include the following:

- ☺☺☺ Bowman County Commission
- ☺☺☺ Commissions of the Cities of Bowman, Gascoyne, Rhame, and Scranton

- ☺☺☺ Bowman County Housing Authority
- ☺☺☺ Bowman County Zoning Commission
- ☺☺☺ Bowman County Airport Authority
- ☺☺☺ City of Bowman Renaissance Zone Committee

- ☺☺☺ Bowman Park Board
- ☺☺☺ School Boards and school administrators of the various Bowman County Schools

- ☺☺☺ Bowman Area Chamber of Commerce
- ☺☺☺ Bowman County Development Corporation

In addition to the county's leadership, Bowman County must maintain and or improve relationships with state and federal leaders in order to enjoy the support provided to Bowman County through state and federal dollars. These leaders include:

- ☺☺☺ Governor of North Dakota
- ☺☺☺ North Dakota state legislators
- ☺☺☺ North Dakota Public Service Commission
- ☺☺☺ United States Congressional Delegation

Lastly, the final plan must be understood by the citizens of Bowman County for any chance of the strategy outcomes being attained. Once understood by the general population, the county leadership must seek the approval, cooperation, and support of the county's citizens for ultimate success.

Each participant was asked to identify current, up-and-coming or future leaders who are or who will be instrumental in helping Bowman County progress toward achievement of future goals. A comprehensive, though not conclusive, list of identified leaders is on the next page.

CURRENT OR POTENTIAL LEADERS

Pine Abrahamson

Ashley Alderson

Darrold Bertsch

Duane Bowman

Lynn Brackel

John Burke

Jeanine Clendinin

Teren Doerr

Lyn James

Trevor Kulseth

John Lindstrom

Nici Meyer-Clarkson

Chris Peterson

Dan Peterson

Damon Reitz

Kori Ruggles

Nevada Silha

Les Snavely

Justin Wolbaum

These people must be encouraged and nurtured in their leadership roles, and their accomplishments should be awarded and celebrated.

Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself. When you become a leader, success is all about growing others.

Jack Welch

Former Chairman and CEO of
General Electric, 1981 – 2001

NEXT STEPS

The goal of the Bowman County Leadership Planning Retreat was to identify and prioritize a number of strategies that could be implemented within the county to improve economic conditions, increase the county population, and improve the quality of life enjoyed by the county's citizens. That goal was achieved.

The next steps for the participants in the Leadership Retreat are as follows:

1. Take the information in this document to the organizations represented at the retreat for full member review.
2. Each organization must review the information and strategies, and determine what each is capable of attaining over the next 5-10 years.
3. Each organization should then set its own priorities. The prioritized list of strategies should be used as a guide, though additional ideas may also be considered.
4. The identification and prioritization of strategies should take no more than three months to allow for the plan to move forward in a timely manner.
5. Once each has set its own priorities, the organizations should combine their respective strategies into one plan for Bowman County.
6. Following the consolidation of plans, collaborative partnerships with other identified government, civic, and community organizations must be formed. Members of each collaborating organization must be educated in an effort to gain their support. These collaborative organizations should then be allowed to identify how they can assist through specific activities, fund raising efforts, and community education.
7. Within the first year, and on an annual basis thereafter, the key leaders should gather again to review the comprehensive county plan, identify progress, determine any problems or barriers in the plan's implementation, and make changes to strategies if necessary.

A good leader inspires people to have confidence in the leader; a great leader inspires people to have confidence in themselves.

- Eleanor Roosevelt
First Lady of the United States, 1933 – 1945

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I always believe that ultimately, if people are paying attention, we get good government and good leadership. And when we get lazy as a democracy and civically start taking shortcuts, it results in bad government and politics.

Barack Obama

44th and current President of the United States of America
2009 -