



Memorandum

To: MAP Board

From: Bob Horne

Re: strategic planning issues

Date: November 14, 2009

Thank you for the opportunity to attend yesterday's strategic planning session. Personally, I've never run for the Board because I never felt like I could take the time necessary to do justice to the job, so my hat's off to those of you who do serve.

Meetings like the one we had yesterday always generate a lot of energy. Unfortunately, that energy is often lost when we all go home and get back to the reality of our "day jobs". I only hope that we can hold on to and take advantage of the energy we created with some quick action on the great discussions we had yesterday. Sorry I had to duck out on the last hour of the meeting, so I missed out on the assignments. But, when I got home, Kate and I talked about what was discussed, and we have a few more things for you to consider.

Outreach. In addition to all the other individuals and groups to which we need to reach out, we also need reach out to state government. Apparently, there are department heads, division heads, and managers of important projects that don't even know MAP exists. Case in point, when DNRC developed their WUI guidelines in late 2008 (and released a draft dated Jan. 5, 2009), they had an impressive list of participants in the project:

Montana League of Cities and Towns
Montana Farm Bureau
Montana Association of Counties
United Department of Agriculture State Forest Service
United States Department of Interior Bureau of Land Management
Montana Department of Labor and Industry
Montana Wood Products Association
Montana Association of Realtors
Independent Insurance Agents of Montana
Montana Department of Commerce
Montana Fire Chiefs Association
Montana State Fire Marshal
Montana Disaster and Emergency Services
Montana Health and Human Services
FireSafe Montana
Lewis and Clark County
North Western Energy

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Montana Smart Growth Coalition
Montana Bankers Association
Flathead Electric
Fire Logistics Incorporated

Notice that MAP is conspicuously absent. Sure, we got to comment on the draft, but we weren't at the table with the other players when the important decisions were made. Also, DEQ has produced urban stormwater management guidelines, and again we were not involved.

Since the WUI draft came out in January, why didn't we have someone from DNRC speak on the guidelines at our conference in Red Lodge? For that matter, why don't we invite people from other state departments and even other organizations that are engaged in some aspect of planning to speak at our conferences? That would both add variety and interest to our conferences AND let the state departments and other organizations know who we are.

Web Site and Consulting Services. Why couldn't we add a Montana consultant directory to our web site, with links to our own web sites? Applied Communications would be willing to pay for such a listing, and I'm sure others would as well. We give exposure to Montana-based consultants and generate additional revenue. Anything wrong with that?

How many of you public sector planners encourage your employers to post all planning related RFPs and RFQs on the MAP web site? Great Falls has an RFP for the West Bank Park Plan out right now that's not on the MAP site.

Permanent Address. The more I think about this, the more important I think it is. When I worked in Colorado, the state APA chapter didn't have a staff, but they had a permanent address to receive mail, and we had a phone that was regularly monitored for messages. Seems like we could partner with MACO or the League for a mail slot, and set up a phone number that would forward calls to someone on the Board.

That's it for now. Thanks for reading and thanks again for allowing me to attend yesterday. It was good seeing you all again.