

Economic and Population; Housing; Transportation; Energy, Environment, Natural Resources and Water; and Cultural Focus Group Summaries

ECONOMIC AND POPULATION FOCUS GROUP September 17, 2008

Attending: Jim Boyer, Sharon Haugen, Keith Meyer (Helena School District), John Solheim (St. Peter's Hospital), Linda McGillen (Blue Cross Blue Shield), Mike Mergenthaler (Helena Area Chamber of Commerce), Clint Morrison (American Federal Savings Bank), Susan Ockert (MT Department of Commerce), Aaron McNay (MT Department of Labor), Frank Rives (Lewis and Clark County Planning Department)

Retirees and Attracting New Employees

Approximately 30% of BCBS's workers will retire in about 4 years; older workers have a great work ethic. It's currently a tight job market to attract employees; they've had to offer incentives. They need to look for opportunities and focus on them more. When attracting younger workers, salaries and benefits are important for entry-level professionals.

Overall school district growth is staying about the same; it's a challenge to keep enough children in Hawthorne elementary school. They've had increased population growth from students in Broadwater and Jefferson Counties; 25-30% of the school population doesn't live in a neighborhood but parents often choose a school that's close by their work so all of Helena is the "neighborhood." With retirees, they're looking for ways to keep them in the system including part-time positions with health benefits instead of salary to keep their experience. Often retiring administrative assistants go into business for themselves at home.

Starting salary for a new teacher without experience is \$34,000 a year which is the highest in the state. The school district has put financial resources into professional salaries. Allowing high school juniors and seniors to take college credits is a great benefit.

Banking isn't affected as much by population growth like other employers, although it's difficult to attract skilled professionals. There's a demand for part-time work which allows for flexibility in family management; businesses also need to be flexible. Banks are considered a "green" business so most communities want them; what a community does in terms of impact fees can affect the economy which is also affected by what the community does not do.

Hospital – transportation and affordable housing are issues for new employees. They are adapting to older part-time workers. Having adequate infrastructure (water, streets, airport,

interchanges) are important for recruiting from other Montana cities; the importance of bike trails is over-stated. Partnership with Jefferson County is valuable. The larger employers have figures out how to keep older workers, but it's an economic issue for businesses with less than 50 employees.

Overall MT statistics show that 45-50% of the population in eastern MT will be older; Missoula and Gallatin Counties and the reservations have younger workers who will become the labor pool in the future. The challenge will be to make sure they have the needed education and skills.

Chamber receives tourism inquiries from baby boomers who are interested in quality of life.

Younger workers who leave the state want to return but need a job for both spouses. Out of state businesses are able to provide payment school loans for a commitment to stay a specific number of years. Bozeman and Missoula have a younger workforce, some of which is a technical spin-off from the universities with research activities; Carroll College does not have a research component. Discussion needs to include the younger age group.

Housing

Helena neighborhoods have a variety of housing types; housing prices have increased here by 3.7% since last year; private/public partnerships can help with affordable housing. When watching houses in the area going for sale, older people want to be closer to downtown or in condos; they are often bought by people wanting to return to Helena. The number of available lots in "Helena proper" is limited; the Chamber received a significant number of inquiries for apartments; NW Energy might have information about renters vs. homeowners. The property tax differences are significant (sometimes as much as 30%) until the mine closes in Jefferson County; it's all "proximity reality" as long as infrastructure is kept up.

Transportation

Transportation is a factor for both inside and outside the city along with parking costs. 6 major employers are doing a mini-transportation study and will discuss the results in the future. The airport is an amenity and its sustainability needs to be supported; engineering firms need air travel for business. People who commute to jobs outside of Helena (typically over 40 years old) is becoming a growing segment of the population so air travel is critical.

Tucker Transportation had a bus route from Butte to Helena but dropped it after 4 months because people weren't riding it. The school district has about 80 buses a day. It would be helpful to know how the bus system is working for state employees and if it continues to be used. The Chamber could provide a link on their website to the city bus routes.

More restaurants are needed around the Capitol complex and the Airport so employers don't have to drive for lunch; a pedestrian crossing across Washington Street will be difficult.

Telecommuting

Telecommuting has some possibilities and makes sense for service centers but not for jobs that require direct contact. The technology is available with high speed internet throughout Montana. State government has not done much with telecommuting. Issues may include workers comp, claims, and tracking hours along with personal attitudes and concerns about accountability.

Effects of National Trends on Businesses

People still want a personal touch instead of solely relying on the internet, so not all predicted trends happen. Everyone does surveys but they only track the people who are responding, and focus groups aren't always the answer. More people are dropping their land line phone service in favor of cell phones which aren't typically reached in phone surveys; a surveyor could be

charged with “theft of service” if the cell phone being called is charged minutes for an unsolicited phone call. No one stays with one employer any more.

Energy

School district is inventorying their buildings now to identify what can be done to keep them. Electricity and water costs are the big expenses. Need to re-educate the public about energy conservation and affect attitudes;

General

Helena’s economy is service-driven and not industry-driven with diversity; business start ups are needed to encourage community diversity. In the future, core things that will attract people here include the airport, safe neighborhoods, quality of life, open lands, recreational diversity, cell phone coverage. Telecommuting could be marketed like tourism is marketed now.

HOUSING FOCUS GROUP

September 4, 2008

Discussion Questions

- 1) What are the three major trends you see relating to housing?
- 2) What are three major housing needs in our community?
- 3) What do you think the City's role is in addressing these needs?

Trends

- Population growth projected at 1.5% per year
- Aging Population
- Community is attractive to retirees
- Loss of workforce housing / costs are not in line with wages
- Private financing and Government financing is harder to acquire for home buyers
- Housing prices are increasing
- Eligibility for financing sometimes requires education and classes
- Aging housing stock
- Harder to keep up with maintenance on oldest homes
- Housing starts are down
- Demand for higher end homes is down
- Demand for homes priced around \$200,000 is up
- Difficult to find affordable City lots to build on
- Costs of regulations are up
- Decrease in affordability due to construction costs
- Very low opportunity for special needs housing
- Homes are being remodeled rather than building new
- Energy costs are up
- Preservation of all types of housing stock and affordability
- NIMBY view of growth
- Gentrification of Downtown
- Urban living is becoming desirable again to some people

Needs

- Transitional Housing
- Preservation of rental and owned housing stock
- Better public transit
- More low income housing
- New and Updated Infrastructure
- Accessibility standards in all housing

- Affordable housing for younger people with supportive services
- Affordable housing for all age classes
- Single person housing

What can the City do?

- Expand City Limits
- No Inclusionary Zoning
- Help to initially finance new Infrastructure
- Plan and guide growth by establishing desirable areas to attract growth
- Special zoning for affordable housing / PUD's
- Utilization of surplus city land
- Renovate existing housing for low/mid income affordable housing
- Develop a Land Trust in coordination with other entities
- Proactive towards sustainable funding mechanism
- Flexibility in regulations
- Coordinate with private and non-profit entities for special needs housing
- Leadership in universal design and Green building
- Incentives to provide open accessibility in new and remodeled homes
- Continue pursuing funding and grants for the community

TRANSPORTATION FOCUS GROUP

OCTOBER 28, 2008

Present: Elroy Golemon – City of Helena Community Development; Lucy Morell-Gengler - City of Helena Planning; Amy Teegarden - City of Helena Parks Department; Ron Mercer - Helena Airport; Jeff Wadekamper -Helena Airport; Tom Kohlr -Montana Department of Transportation; Jeff Key - Traffic Engineer

Transportation Issues identified:

Lack of east/west connectivity

- Interstate 15 is one of the biggest barriers to ease /west connectivity;
- Custer Interchange will help but will need to add capacity to Custer Avenue to help mobility;
- Cars use Washington Street to avoid Montana Avenue it seems most cars on Washington Avenue turn west;
- Surprisingly there seem to be a lot of cars going east on Custer Avenue around 7AM.
- Development and increased traffic congestion precedes transportation up grades; the timing seems backwards.

Complete Streets

- Concept should be included into city guidelines and policies;
- Should have amenities that keep people in the city;
- Should consider mandating all streets be ADA compliant and include pedestrian access;
- Would like to incorporate non-motorized amenities in both new and existing streets but concern that there is not enough money;
- Consider a routing plan that identifies connecting routes instead of requiring all streets to comply – need a better plan to connect existing segments of non-motorized trails;
- Biking on roads can be dangerous/ Helena is not bike friendly – need to teach rules and enforce existing laws not just build new facilities;
- Look at weighting system to show the amount of money used for streets and the number of vehicles served and the amount of money spent on non-motorized amenities and the number of people they serve – traffic counts should include bikers and pedestrians;
- Stewart Homes has more of a need for bike routes than more affluent areas;
- Balance the needs of all users – trucking industry, cars, pedestrians, bikers, etc.
- Look at serving new modes of transportation – scooters, 4 wheelers etc.

Emergency services

- Reduce pinch points such as railroad crossing

Shopping center parking lots

- Parking lots are being used to bypass congested areas but are difficult to drive through;
- Drivers are using parking lots like roads but no enforcement of stop signs and are a bit of a maze;
- Internal connectivity between shopping centers such as ShopKo and Lowes is poor; should be able to plan connectivity across private property.

Funding

- Traditional funding sources are drying up;
- Costs continue to rise;
- Need to priorities transportation needs so a few projects do not use up all the funds.

Transit

- Transit is not the solution to transportation problems – do not have the ridership, population density, or the money to support it;
- Transit should focus on serving those who really need it such as low income individuals;
- Need more frequent bus stops and later hours of operation.

Safety

- Consider a non-motorized crossing for train tracks particularly near Memorial Park – or one that is centrally located;
- Encourage roundabouts;
- Narrow walking ledge on Prospect I15 overpass is dangerous;
- Traffic seems to increase in the mornings;
- Need safe transportation for children to parks and programs;
- Kids might not be riding bikes as much as kids used to because of parent's concern over safety;
- Bike riders - seems to be more mountain bikers than street riders.

Air Travel

- Air service is a huge asset for the Helena community;
- If Helena lost the airport it would impact jobs and the economy; the entire city would be impacted;
- Air service is in better shape per capita than most cities this size;
- There are four airports within 100 miles of Helena;
- Helena airport is rated highly – excellent runway, new parking, and building renovations;
- Tourism is approximately 1% of ridership - tourists tend to go to bigger cities;
- No state or federal money available for airport improvements;
- Rising fuel costs impact air service;
- Air fairs are an issue as they get higher;
- Difficult for airport to support its self ;
- Need new revenues for infrastructure such as for improvements to Airport Road;
- Tight budgets for government and business equate to less travel;
- Travel is one of the first places businesses cut from their budget – fewer seminars etc.
- Bus transportation serving the airport is not effective - the parking is easy to get in and out of and relatively inexpensive.

Rail Transportation

- No spur line- getting products to market is more expensive by truck such as beetle kill logs;
- There seems to be an increase in train traffic in the area.

Regionalize Development

- Development nodes, cluster housing around service and commercial uses to reduce travel distances;
- Village type development - use zoning to create;
- Employment -it is difficult to predict where people will work but the city should have services near housing.

Infrastructure Maintenance

- Maintenance is an issue for trails, bike/pedestrian paths, sidewalks, etc. - the budget is not keeping up with growth in trails;
- May get money for installation of sidewalks, like CTEP, but there is no money for maintenance.

ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES and WATER

FOCUS GROUP

December 17, 2008

NOTE: This focus group includes but is not limited to agriculture, air, energy, floodplains, forests, gravel, mountains, water, and wildlife.

Attending: John Wardell, EPA; Ron Steg, EPA; Steve Carpenedu, MT DEQ; Julie Haehnel, HCC; Frank Rives, County Planning; Amy Teegarden, City Parks; Phil Hauck, City Public Works; Greta Dige, City Parks; Brad Langsather, City Natural Resources Coordinator; Paul Spengler, County DES; Maureen Kiely, Plan Helena; Matt Elsaesser, SAVE; Janet Ellis, MT Audubon; Jessica Peterson, Helena International Affairs Council; Jim Wilbur, County Health – Water Quality Protection District.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- A. What are the city's most valued energy, environment, natural resource, and water assets, issues and priorities?
- B. What is working and why, and what is not? What are the gaps?
- C. How can the City improve its management of its natural resource, environmental and energy resources?

ASSETS:

Water –

- Surface water and watersheds: Canyon Ferry Lake, Ten Mile Creek, Crystal Springs Creek, Orofino, Prickly Pear Creek and drainages
- Wetlands
- Water supply – Canyon Ferry Lake and Ten Mile Creek

Mountains, open spaces and parks –

- Mountains and open spaces are a valued resource
- Scenic visual quality
- Recreational value
- Fuels management could provide an opportunity for biomass; could be opportunities with the railroad line here
- Some thinning has occurred to protect from wildland fires
- Wetlands – to maintain groundwater supplies and quality; open space, limited recreation, wildlife habitat
- Wildlife habitat
- Entire parks system is an asset; parks have multiple purposes and provided several functions within the community. Besides the social functions of recreation, open space, and aesthetics, they can provide ecological functions as well.
- Still have parks that are not yet developed (could also be an issue)
- City-County parks, recreation and open space plan allows coordination

Agricultural lands that are still working

Energy/Environment -

- Alternative energy potential – solar; energy and water conservation
- Waste Water Treatment Plant is exploring capturing methane gas as an energy source; former city landfill does not appear to consistently generate enough methane right now
- Recycling: Needs to be convenient for the customer; City is reviewing options; County landfill was established to serve for 50 years; due to some modifications in operations, it still can last for 50 years
- Waste streams as resources with opportunities; for example, compost
- EPA wastewater targeted grant – reconnaissance-level analysis will be done by summer 2009 with an eye to reducing nutrient loads and increasing capacity
- Boulevard trees

Air -

- Generally have good air quality (for breathing, health and seeing)

Transportation –

- Walkability with non-motorized options
- Bus provides an option that can help with energy use
- Rail lines – existing lines that are used and not used; located in transportation rights of way

Growth -

- City has the ability to influence how and where it grows – Helena is the center with shopping, entertainment and employment; people will gravitate to the center
- Land is available next to the city for growth

ISSUES:

Water –

- Supply – Canyon Ferry Lake, Helena Valley Irrigation District; Groundwater is needed by County residents
 - Using wastewater for irrigation of recreational fields (i.e., golf course, soccer and baseball fields, etc.); legal issue: who owns the water when it leaves the treatment plant
- Quality – Potential for reduced water quality;
 - Groundwater: if groundwater becomes contaminated, help will be requested from the City such as the Woodlawn-Dunbar area; older subdivisions have aging lagoons.
 - Surface water: Regulating reservoir removes sedimentation from water coming to the City from Canyon Ferry Lake; surface water can be contaminated by metals and nutrients – there's a limit on how much a water body can assimilate; 10 Mile, Lake Helena and Prickly Pear Creek already have problems; the City discharges into Prickly Pear Creek and phosphorous and nitrogen will increase in the creek if the current course continues; need to focus on improvements; need to establish capacity limits before quality limits are exceeded; erosion and sediment control after wildfires causes risks for Helena's watershed; older subdivision lagoons – Missouri River Treatment Plant may be able to help; fisheries may be affected by stormwater drainage and wastewater pollution – Crystal Springs, Fairgrounds, related to wetlands
 - Wetlands – affects groundwater supply and quality, and wildlife habitat as they are lost
 - Stormwater management and floodplains – north Helena Valley is a floodplain
 - General: Shared water shed with Lewis and Clark County and East Helena. What is the shared vision with these jurisdictions?
 -

- Quantity –
 - Water conservation could be a public outreach opportunity
 - Landscaping – Zoning Ordinance doesn't promote conservation; xeriscaping with native plant species; limit rocks as landscaping; look at landscaping to meet other needs (i.e., stormwater management)

Air –

- Shared air shed. What is the shared city-county vision? With East Helena?
- Potential for reduced air quality with inversions
- Traffic congestion affects air quality
- Burning beetle-killed trees can affect air quality

Energy/Environment -

- Sustainability for new and existing infrastructure and buildings so they use less water and energy
- Recycling: unstable market; economy of scale combined with transportation costs to markets
- Asbestos in older homes – safety issue and public awareness
- Light pollution is related to energy conservation and pedestrian safety in addition to visual aspects (signs, street lights, parking lot lights, etc. – becoming like Las Vegas)
- Mono-culture and age of boulevard trees – tree health is declining

Mountains and open spaces -

- Beetle-killed trees and fire potential for Mount Helena and the south hills area, especially with increased recreational use
- Biomass opportunities are challenging with transportation requirements; some needs to be left for soil enrichment
- Wildland-urban interface – fuels treatment and management
- Increased use of parks, potential for congestion; popular activities receive heavy use
- Still have parks that are not yet developed (could also be an asset)

Transportation –

- Traffic congestion now on certain arterials

Growth -

- Community blight and potential redevelopment areas/brownfields; may find some environmental issues
- East Helena is looking at expanding and is looking at ASARCO area
- Zoning outside the city to control growth

GAPS:

Current Growth Policy:

- Doesn't give guidance about how to address conflicts between goals; there's no ranking system to identify or weight priorities; could have environmental and economic development conflicts; public health and safety are the primary goals
- Implementation strategy and timeframe aren't clear
- Riparian areas and wetlands protection is limited in the City's Growth Policy and Open Space Plan, and not identified in the Subdivision Regulations or Zoning Regulations; consider adopting standards similar to Lewis and Clark County
- Need strong environmental protection language in the Growth Policy; refer to Lewis and Clark County's Growth Policy
- GIS environmental mapping (identify soils, rainfall, etc.); EPA has water quality data

Multi-jurisdictional Coordination:

- Enforcement of weed management plans (City-County) and other multi-jurisdictional plans, and especially pre-annexation agreements
- Coordination and consistency between City and County regulations and land use reviews
- Stormwater sediment control during construction prior to annexation (after property has received conditional annexation approval)
- More responsibility for protection of riparian areas and wetlands is falling on local governments instead of federal agencies

VISION:

- ❖ Infill; public transportation; city parks for neighborhood focus and identification; use existing infrastructure which is more compact instead of sprawl (EPA, Smart Growth, Plan Helena)
- ❖ Reduce global footprint and environment impacts – both as a local government and for individuals; incorporate recommendations of City Climate Change Committee.
- ❖ Risk-mitigation policy should have a strong role in the Growth Policy; risk-avoidance is best.
- ❖ Incentives could be established for good development; public recognition/innovation awards could be given; public education opportunities; the City should lead by example
- ❖ Intergovernmental cooperation with counties and East Helena

CULTURAL FOCUS GROUP

September 30, 2008

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Are the cultural issues identified in 2004 (listed on back) still relevant?
2. What are the city's most valued cultural assets?
3. What are the cultural issues in Helena?
4. What is working and why, and what is not? What are the gaps - who isn't being served?
5. How can the City improve the affordability, quality and availability of cultural resources?
6. What are the priorities?
7. How can information from the Cultural focus group integrate with information from the other focus groups?

During the City of Helena's cultural planning process in 1994, the following **priorities** were articulated:

- 1) *publicity and promotion;*
- 2) *maintain a community cultural calendar; and*
- 3) *advocacy, lobbying and support for long-term organizational planning.*

The following **recommendations** also came from this process:

- 1) *A non-profit Helena cultural organization should be established with City government sanction to maximize effectiveness for public input and financial capabilities;*
- 2) *A broad financial base should be established to build and maintain adequate resources; and two recommendations related to economic impact:*
 - A) *Update and expand the study on the economic impact of the arts annually; and*
 - B) *Create joint ventures for a coordinated promotion of the arts among art groups, economic development entities, and the convention and hospitality industries.*

DISCUSSION:

1. Are the cultural issues identified in 1994 (listed above) still relevant?

Yes to publicity, promotion and maintaining a community cultural calendar (these items could be tied together) that can be used by people inside and outside of the community.

The recent branding effort has brought more attention to Helena's cultural offerings with its focus on recreation, art, history and travel which then have educational opportunities ("Helena Institute") that can economically benefit the community as a whole. Promotions could include merchants' discount coupons good on Sundays or a "high speed nickel run" that includes merchant promotions.

The cultural calendar website would need to have an internet location where it could be hosted (Lewis and Clark County Library? Helena Chamber of Commerce?) by an affiliated party that doesn't have a vested interest. Public websites have limitations for posting such information while such a website could provide better communication and distribution of information for

community events; the website could work with other groups to avoid scheduling conflicts; joint ventures could be done with businesses; organizations could submit and update their information; perhaps a small annual fee could be paid to assist with maintaining the calendar. The website would need to tie to key words so it could be googled and not be buried behind other websites from outside the area.

There's a need to inventory what we have in the community and to take a long-term look at facilities for events and activities; explore all kinds of partnerships; are groups conducting similar activities? Inside vs. outside recreational activities;

No to advocacy, lobbying and support for long-term organizational planning which might be better done by other organizations? The branding effort seems to have helped with increasing awareness about the benefits of a strong cultural community.

These previous priorities and recommendations might be better stated as follows:

Revised suggested priorities:

- 1) *publicity and promotion;*
- 2) *maintain a community cultural calendar; and*
- 3) *establish a broad financial base to build and maintain adequate resources; and two recommendations related to economic impact:*
 - A) *Update and expand the study on the economic impact of the arts and recreation annually; and (MBAC has a publication*
 - B) *Create joint ventures for a coordinated promotion of the area's cultural opportunities among arts and recreation groups, economic development entities, and the convention and hospitality industries.*

Previous recommendation from 1994:

A non-profit Helena cultural organization should be established with City government sanction to maximize effectiveness for public input and financial capabilities;

Comments: Look at existing organizations; explore merging with the branding committee; consider this organization as a business and not volunteer-driven.

2. What are the city's most valued cultural assets?

Great built environment in a great natural environment; parks and open spaces; Mount Helena Park (one of the largest in the nation); Centennial Park; Spring Meadow Lake; outdoor spaces; preservation ethic; great variety of individual artists and organizations; cultural and human infrastructure; Alive @ Five; Farmers Market; schools (including K-12 and higher education); special neighborhoods and their activities; historic places

3. What are the cultural issues in Helena?

Competition for funds, audiences (timing of events and activities), facilities, volunteers; volunteer burn-out; need for collaboration, cooperation and coordination with benefitting partners (including businesses); additional revenue streams are needed; need larger facilities for performance spaces, including outdoor gathering spaces with shelters.

4. What is working and why?

Alive @ Five and Farmers Market – outdoors and available to all without an admission charge; collaborative partnerships

What is not working?

Volunteer organizations have limited resources (volunteers, facilities, funds)

What are the gaps - who isn't being served?

Gaps: Low income; fixed income retirees; kids – offerings need to be reviewed and improved; minority cultural and ethnic groups – embrace everyone – go where the people are;

Entry fees can limit who participates; a comprehensive inventory of what's available, identify barriers and what needs to be done; lack of facilities; need a space for a permanent flea market; need for broadening audience development; no organizational protection for people's historic properties; information needs to be provided to the business community; connectivity, coordinated joint ventures; need better documentation about the economic benefits

5. How can the City improve the affordability, quality and availability of cultural resources?

Inventory and identify unnecessary barriers and develop outside revenue streams; address historic properties first and not as an afterthought – a heritage commission might be more effective?; support private initiatives; percent for art program;

6. What are the priorities?

City commitment for things that are important to individuals in the community; culture includes the intangible aspects of the spirit, sustained by the community, that contribute to the sense of place.

7. How can information from the Cultural focus group integrate with information from the other focus groups?

Share focus group information among the focus groups and the community at large; post focus group summaries on the website and provide to HCC, Planning Board, and City Commission; use all media options prior to public meetings and hearings; send a summary of the Cultural focus group to all cultural invitees ask for their comments; could have follow-up cultural focus group meeting if desired; ask similar questions of community youth – perhaps through Youth Connections, County Extension Office? coordinate with other planning efforts in Helena.

Organizational Information

- Helena Public Art Committee was established in 1998 to advise the City Commission about the maintenance and acquisition of public art; has produced “Best Little Art Town” publication. www.helenapublicarts.com or www.helenamt.gov
- Lewis and Clark County Library has about 25,000-30,000 people a month who use their multi-media facility; provides educational programs; contains public art. www.lewisandclarklibrary.org
- Helena/Lewis and Clark Historic Preservation Commission was established in 1989 and focuses on heritage tourism, preservation and restoration, and educational programs. www.Helenahistory.com or www.lewisandclarkcounyhistory.com
- Clay Arts Guild, 3035 Bozeman Ave., was established as a non-profit organization in 1999; works with the Archie Bray Foundation; now has 45-50 members; its primary purpose is to serve the community, offers classes and welcomes visitors. www.Helenaclayartsguild.com
- Montana Historical Society is a statewide agency that acquires and preserves historic assets for the state; has educational and information offerings; historic resource center; archeology; genealogy; historic preservation; provides support to smaller museums; has public art collections; conducts tours of historic structures and sites. www.montanahistoricalsociety.org

- Helena Softball Association maintains adult softball leagues; serves approximately 1,000 people with 3 tournaments a year with season mid-April through August; June 2008 tournament with 83 teams; benefitted by having another community event occurring that gave their players/families something to do during free time; August state tournament; benefit tournaments during the season; plays at Batch Fields and Northwest Park.
<http://www.leaguelineup.com>
- Lewis and Clark County Historical Society, 58 North Last Chance Gulch, was established in 1989; has programs related to Lewis and Clark County (including Helena, Marysville, Lincoln, York, Augusta, etc.) and works with historical organizations in those communities); Lewis and Clark County was the center for most events that occurred in the state; they do not have a permanent museum but has a temporary downtown location that's open part time with a volunteer, and has served as a visitor center and could average 50-60 visitors a day; works with neighborhoods for preservation; is working with high school students and the restoration of Trolley #3; also linked to the Montana Military Museum www.montanaguard.com at Fort Harrison.
- Montana Arts Council is a statewide agency that provides programming; artists' registry; preserved folk and traditional arts; has conducted a survey of economic benefits of the arts; 1 out of 79 people in Montana is a working artist. www.art.mt.gov