



# Age Friendly

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# Carbon County

AARP/WHO Network of Age-Friendly  
Communities

COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN  
Carbon County, Montana  
March 31, 2020



# BOARD of COMMISSIONERS

COUNTY OF CARBON • STATE OF MONTANA

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March 31, 2020

The Commissioners of Carbon County Montana are pleased to present this age-friendly action plan which describes the goals and steps that the Age-Friendly Carbon County committee are taking from 2018 to 2021.

The Age-Friendly Carbon County’s Community Action Plan recognizes the important contribution our older residents make to the community and provides a forward-thinking approach to enhancing the opportunities and addressing the concerns of Carbon County residents. It promotes health and well-being and provides opportunities for folks of all ages to stay socially connected and live safely in their community of choice.

Building a community livable for people of all ages requires a sustained and focused effort. We are confident this action plan created by the Red Lodge Area Community Foundation and its Age-Friendly Carbon County committee will enhance and promote the well-being of our county residents and guide effective planning, partnership development, and community participation.

Sincerely,

Scott Blain  
Joliet-District #2  
Commissioner

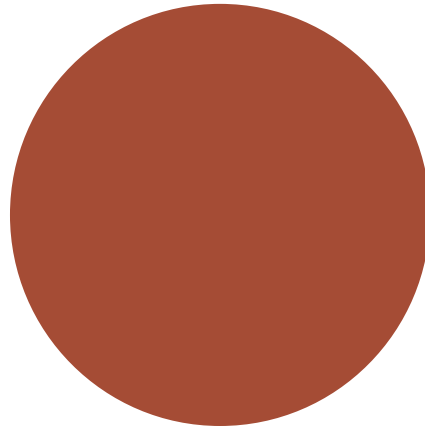
Bill E. Bullock  
Red Lodge-District #3  
Commissioner

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CONNECTING PEOPLE  
BUILDING COMMUNITY





## AGE FRIENDLY CARBON COUNTY

### VISION

A safe, vibrant Carbon County that is inclusive of all ages and abilities

### MISSION

Putting community ideas into action to create an age-friendly Carbon County

### CORE VALUES

We will:

Address aging-related concerns identified by the community

Respect and consider all ideas

Support people of all means and abilities

Prioritize working with existing community assets

Make decisions based on community input and feedback



## Community Profile

Carbon County is located in south central Montana. Communities range in size from fewer than 20 residents to more than 2,000 residents. The majority of Carbon County residents are employed in the healthcare, tourism/recreation, and agriculture sectors. Located near the Beartooth Mountains, Pryor Mountains, and the Custer-Gallatin National Forest, the county provides many opportunities for outdoor recreation. In addition, the Beartooth Highway from the county leads to the Northeast entrance of Yellowstone National Park.

Outdoor recreational activities are a major attraction in drawing people to Carbon County, but its local organizations really define the county's character. These nonprofits are dedicated to a broad range of interests, including arts, environment, health, human services, sports, veterans, youth, and older adults. Local businesses also generously give back to the community through volunteerism and financial support. Many Carbon County residents also give back through their time, skills, and financial support.

The county has a population of 10,340 with a median age of 49.6 years. Of these residents, nearly one-third are 62 years of age and older, and nearly one quarter are 65 years of age and older. Compared to the median age in Montana, the median age in Carbon County is 10 years higher (39.8 vs 49.6 years). Furthermore, the percentage of residents 62 and older and 65 and older in the county are roughly 10% higher than in Montana as a whole. These differences only increase when compared to national statistics.



**Meeting** the needs of an older population often presents different challenges compared to a younger population. The residents and organizations in Carbon County have already done a great job supporting older adults. Residents drive their neighbors around and bring meals to them. Non-profits help older adults connect with various services. They help people navigate health insurance, give grants to fund important home modifications/repairs, offer affordable meals during the week, and host social activities.

While many great assets already exist in our community for older adults, there are still gaps that should be addressed. For example, affordable and reliable transportation is lacking in our community. The lack of transportation hinders people from accessing important services, buying groceries, picking up medications, visiting friends, and attending community events. Gaps identified by the community will be addressed in more detail in later sections of this action plan.

Carbon County already offers many opportunities, programs, and services for its residents. As the population ages, local efforts are being made to address changing needs. These efforts are driven by residents, non-profit organizations, and local elected officials. As the community moves forward with the age-friendly initiative, this action plan will serve as an important guide over the next three years.

## Introduction to the Plan

Compared to less than a decade ago, figures for the number of older adults are now much higher. This aging trend will not be reversing any time soon. The U.S. Census Bureau predicts that the worldwide 65+ population will more than double by 2050. For the United States, the aging population will nearly double.

With the aging trend, it is increasingly important to address changing needs in the community. A community must support people of all ages and allow all to thrive – this is the concept of a livable community.

As a member of AARP’s Network of Age-Friendly Communities, Carbon County is committed to addressing livability concerns, especially for older adults. Residents and local groups partnered with AARP to create this three-year action plan to address needs identified by the community. The guidelines provided by the plan will steer the community as they work to make Carbon County more age-friendly.

The purpose of this plan is to provide practical and dependable guidance to age-friendly work in Carbon County. However, the plan is also constructed to be flexible in order to meet new community concerns as they arise. If urgent concerns arise during the three-year implementation period of this action plan, those concerns may take precedence over the steps in this plan.

The goal of this action plan is to list the priorities for Carbon County’s age-friendly work and provide concrete steps for addressing these priorities. The priorities are presented in the framework of the eight domains of livability. Steps for making progress in each priority domain are listed and include, among other details, the group responsible for the step and the metric used to measure the step’s completion.

This action plan will ideally build on Carbon County’s existing age-friendly initiative. Our long-term goal is to support a proactive community movement to address age-friendly and livability concerns. This movement would entail active participation by residents, public, and private sectors to make Carbon County more livable for people of all ages, means, and abilities.







# How our Plan was Developed

Over the past three years, the Red Lodge Area Community Foundation (the Foundation), through our Age-Friendly Community steering committee and community partnerships, has been using the AARP's eight domains of livability as a guide to determine opportunities for improvement as it relates to helping Carbon County citizens better age in their place of choice.

Our Age Friendly support began in 2014 with the formation of the Senior Ark Fund. The spirit of this fund is to support episodic, non-medical, emergency needs of community members over the age of 65 in Carbon County. Our initiative began in February 2017 with our facilitation of an age-friendly community panel discussion in Red Lodge. After the domains of livability were defined, the 40 + participants were asked to choose areas our community are doing well and potential areas for improvement. Transportation topped the list for areas where we could do better.

- We then applied for an AmeriCorps VISTA to help move this project forward and determine needs experienced by other Carbon County communities. We visited the six senior centers, explained the process and conducted a survey of participants. Surveys were also available at local hospitals, clinics, libraries, senior centers, Red Lodge Area Community Foundation and on line. The lack of reliable public transportation was the top concern for five of the six senior centers. These results were echoed in local community health needs assessments. Following transportation, housing and communication/information were revealed as additional areas of concern.

- During this time, we realized the value of participation in the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities. We applied for and, on February 16, 2018, became the second Montana community to be designated as part of that Network.

- We then reached out to the Montana Department of Transportation and received a Transportation planning grant.

- We returned to the senior centers, schools, clinics, and merchants in the county to assess transportation needs through personal visits and an informational community gathering.

- Our goal is to enhance, but not duplicate, existing transportation services. During this time, efforts were also being made to address Housing and Communication. Affordable workforce housing is a program area under Resilient Community at the Foundation. Initially, affordable housing for the workforce was the primary focus. Later, concerns over housing for seniors were voiced as well as ways to make a current dwelling adapted to aging inhabitants.

We learned that, by focusing on our primary domains of Transportation, Housing and Communication & Information, our secondary domains of Community Support and Inclusion, Social Participation and Respect and Inclusion were favorably impacted.

The Red Lodge Area Community Foundation will take the lead of managing the implementation of the action plan with the participation and guidance of the Age Friendly Carbon County Committee.



## Primary Domains:

- Transportation
- Communication and Information
- Housing

## Secondary Domains:

- Community Support and Health Services
  - Social Participation
  - Respect and Inclusion







# Our Community Action Plan

## Primary Domain: Transportation

**Goal:** Provide public county-wide transportation at no or low cost to citizens

Transportation has been identified as the number one unmet need for folks in Carbon County. The desire for a transit system was found through multiple surveys and assessments conducted by: The Carbon County Growth Assessment, Beartooth Billings Clinic and The Red Lodge Area Community Foundation. Members of our local paramedicine service, the Community Care Team, also identified a need for a transportation system to serve all of Carbon County citizens, especially, the elderly, low income families and the persons with disabilities.

The Community Care Team regularly receives calls for rides to medical appointments, and attempts to tie in miscellaneous errands into the trip because of a lack of reliable transportation. Having a transit service will reduce this use of vital emergency services and provide mobility for people in our county.

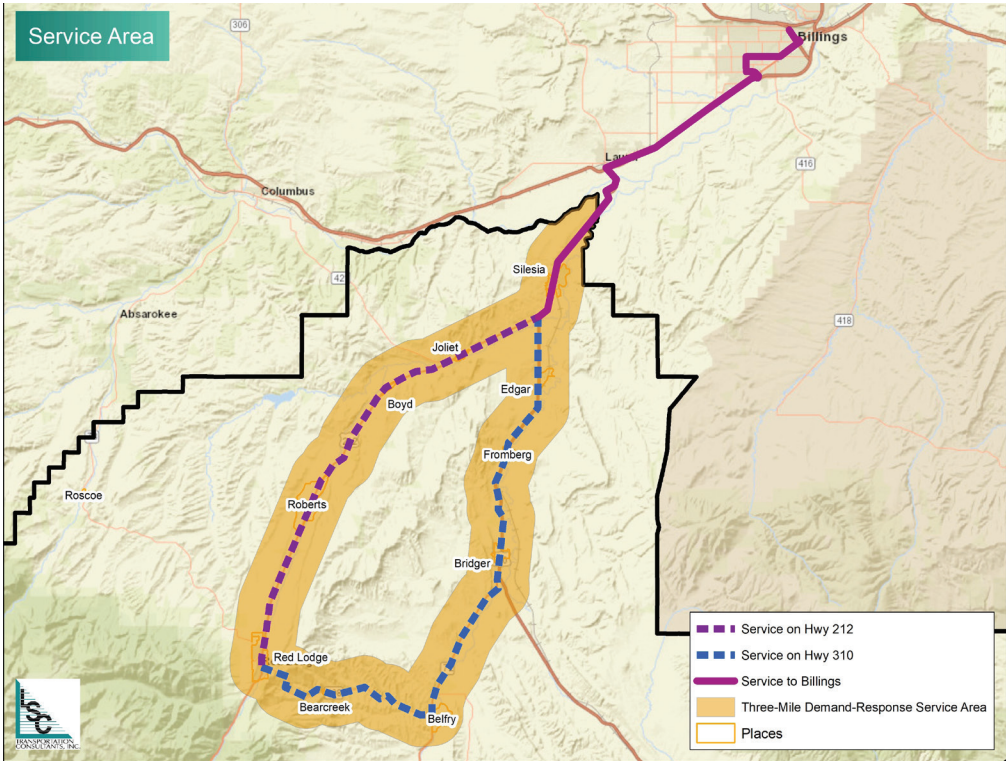
With the help of our AmeriCorps VISTA, George Man, the first step was to apply to Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) for a planning grant. We also formed a transportation advisory committee (TAC) made up of county commissioners, a city planner, county law enforcement, our local taxi service, paramedicine program providers, local health clinics, Red Lodge Area Community Foundation board members, local trails association members and Age Friendly Carbon County committee members.

With MDT planning funds received we hired LSC Transportation Consultants based in Colorado Springs, CO. They conducted an in-depth statistical analysis of Carbon County during a six-month period. Based upon the survey results, LSC Transportation Consultants proposed a two-part transportation system:

Three-days-a-week, demand response system: Rides will be scheduled 24 hours in advance, and service within Carbon County will be free to riders living within three miles of the major highways and in towns. The riders will be picked up at their home. Fixed route system: Twice monthly bus service will go to Billings, MT, with the ultimate stops being the hospitals on the northeast side of the city.

The TAC named the transit plan Carbon County Area Ride and Transit or CART. In March of 2020, the capital and operating grant application was submitted to MDT. Funding notification is in July of 2020 with a matching fundraising plan and fine-tuning position descriptions in the meantime. The hope is funding will be received and a county-wide kick-off event will be set for November 2020.

The goal for CART is to fill a community need while working with existing transportation businesses to enhance, not duplicate services. It is also a priority to focus transportation on access to local services and businesses (such as grocers and pharmacies) in Carbon County. The trip to Billings will be primarily for riders to see medical specialists not found in our local clinics.





# Primary Domain: Communication and Information

## Goal: Connection to resources and the community

The aforementioned community surveys and assessments also revealed a concern among community members to receive more connection to resources and to the community in general. Red Lodge is the county seat and the central hub of Carbon County with a population of around 2200. Other communities in the county contain well under 1,000 citizens and many are considered frontier communities. The local schools and senior centers are the main source of information disbursement. During regular visits to the six senior centers in the county, participants expressed that they sometimes feel forgotten by Red Lodge and had a desire to receive more information about resources outside of their communities. Although the communities do a very good job helping each other, physical distance and lack of technical resources cause more rural folks to feel especially socially isolated and disconnected. They may not be aware of resource applications and the help available to complete these applications.

Red Lodge Area Community Foundation, Age Friendly Carbon County and many community partners are working on five Communication and Information Objectives to improve connections to community and county-wide resources.



## Carbon County Connect Community Services Directory

Carbon County Connect is both a hard copy and web-based directory hosted by the Red Lodge Area Community Foundation. Carbon County Connect evolved in an effort to create an efficient and up-to-date resource to help the community easily link to local services. Our hope is that this collaborative community effort will maximize awareness and utilization of the many services our county has to offer. In 2011, the Foundation's first AmeriCorps VISTA produced an online resource directory for our community. The updated Carbon County Connect includes 28 topics from Addiction to Wellness and Recreation. The web version went live in 2018 and is updated quarterly. The 60-page hard copy version was first printed in 2018 with an updated second printing of 1500 in January of 2020. The hard copy is free and delivered county-wide to schools, laundromats, senior centers, clinics, mental health centers, public health and more. It is also available at the Foundation. Carbon County Connect is especially helpful for families who live out of state and have loved ones living in Carbon County. They can go online and link to programs to support their loved ones at [carboncountyconnect.org](http://carboncountyconnect.org).

# Age Friendly Carbon County Newsletter

A quarterly hard copy newsletter was introduced in March of 2020. The style and content of each issue is determined by the Age Friendly Carbon County committee. The four-page newsletter ends with dates and time of county events and may include articles from local health professionals, highlight a senior center or share information on a timely subject. The newsletter is free and distributed county-wide.



Age Friendly  
Carbon County

## Carbon County Health Fair and Expo

For years, local Red Lodge health care facility, Beartooth Billings Clinic, hosted an annual health fair at their clinic. In 2018, they asked the Red Lodge Area Community Foundation's Healthy Community committee to take over the health fair in an effort to widen the scope and broaden the definition of health. The Foundation, with community partners from Beartooth Billings Clinic, RiverStone Health, and the Community Care Team hosted the event beginning in January 2019. Community members and vendors of all ages are invited to attend and participate. Demonstrations of yoga, massage, tai chi and Zumba are offered throughout the morning as well as blood draws and vaccinations, information from Alcoholics Anonymous and mental health counseling to local sustainability efforts and senior center activities.

A recent challenge is when to offer the health fair. January is the current date, but many have already had their flu vaccinations and the sidewalks and parking lot may be snowy/icy during that time. We are currently surveying vendors to consider a fall fair.





## Caring Cards Project Expansion

Caring Cards is an intergenerational card writing project that was piloted in the spring of 2019 in the Red Lodge 5th grade classroom. Brandelyn Simpson was the teacher and a champion of the Caring Cards Project, having created a lesson plan keeping in mind Montana state standards. This project partners elementary students with elders who receive a cheerful greeting in the mail each month. The students improve their letter writing skills as they connect with older adults. The elders receive information about local school activities and feel more socially connected with local youth.

The pilot was very successful with 50 cards being written each month to local folks. Reply letters were received expressing gratitude for the thoughtful letters. The replies also posed questions to the students, which helped to determine topics to include in subsequent letters. The Foundation is currently in the process of introducing Caring Cards to other Carbon County schools. Funding has been secured to assist with postage and greeting cards procurement, although much of this has been donated from community members and organizations, including AARP Montana.



## Expansion of the Navigator Program

Navigators are volunteers trained to act as guides to individuals who need assistance with resource applications such as health care, energy assistance, section 8 housing. The Foundation also facilitates other funds that the Navigators may assist with including Salvation Army, free firewood program, Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program and Senior Ark. Senior Ark offers financial assistance to those 65+ within 200% of poverty who need funds to make repairs and updates to enable them to live as long as they can in their place of choice.

The Navigator program and training expanded with the closure of the county Office of Public Assistance due to state budget cuts in 2018.

The Navigator program is available to all Carbon County citizens, but many who live outside of Red Lodge are not aware of the program. We plan to increase awareness of this program by including information in the Age Friendly Carbon County newsletter which is widely distributed, offering Navigator training in communities outside of Red Lodge and distributing flyers about the Navigator program and other resources to libraries, clinics, senior centers and schools. The option of contacting a Navigator is also found in Carbon County Connect community services directory.







# Primary Domain: Housing

**Goal:** Living safely and affordably in place of choice

Currently, the Red Lodge Area Community Foundation has focused on housing designed to support the local work force. The Foundation is partnering with Helena Habitat for Humanity and Trust Montana to build four to six mutual self-help homes intended more for first-time home buyers. Groundbreaking should commence in the summer of 2020.

During previous housing forums, age friendly housing has been expressed as a concern but has not been an area of focus. Starting the summer of 2020, we hope to take initial steps in this regard. First, we would like to gather community members together as a subcommittee to further determine concerns in relation to housing. Members of the committee could be from the workforce housing committee, Age Friendly Carbon County committee and other interested community members. We would then determine opportunities for improvement based on discussion/assessment or determine that a forum be planned to have a larger discussion.

Secondly, we plan to dig deeper into existing resources regarding staying in the place of choice, downsizing current home, co-living options, etc., to share with the Carbon County community. AARP has many options to offer here.

In addition, we would like to more widely communicate existing resource options to assist folks to make necessary repairs and upgrades and to pay bills if there is an emergent need. Programs currently in place at the Foundation and through area community action councils are: Navigator program (volunteer guides trained to assist with resource applications), Senior Ark fund (intended for seniors to better afford staying in their place of choice through funding small projects), energy assistance, Salvation Army, and the firewood program.

We were inspired by the adaptive tool document created by Age-Friendly Bowdoinham, Maine and plan to review their guide with our local Occupational Therapist and update products, prices and places of purchase as needed.

Lastly, we will have a representative from the Age Friendly Carbon County committee keep abreast of the local workforce housing partnership with Helena Habitat for Humanity and Trust Montana. As we learn more, there could be an opportunity for development of an Age Friendly focused project in the future.







## Secondary Domains

- Community Support and Health Services
- Social Participation
- Respect and Inclusion

We have found that our work on our primary domains has positively impacted our second domains of Community Support and Health Services, Social Participation and Respect and Inclusion. For starters, when CART is up and running, it will provide another option for transportation to health appointments and trips to the pharmacy. Transit will address social participation by enabling riders to attend social gatherings, socializing with ride-sharing neighbors. Our newsletter supports the health of its readers as it connects them to other resources. The annual Carbon County Health Fair and Expo encourages social participation and information gathering. The Caring Cards Project teaches youth empathy as they help their card recipients feel more engaged and included.



## Implementation of Action Plan

Please see the following tables describing our plans for transportation, communication & information and housing.



TRANSPORTATION

Goal: Provide public county-wide transportation at no or low cost to citizens

Objectives	Steps	Resources	Barriers	Metrics	Lead/Partners	Status
Apply for transit planning funding	1. Apply to Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) for a planning grant	AmeriCorps Age Friendly VISTA with supervision of Foundation staff and committee			Red Lodge Area Community Foundation and its Age Friendly Community committee, LSC Transportation	Done
	2. Create a Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) representing county law enforcement, commissioners, age friendly community committee members, Foundation board, city government, health care, senior centers, local taxi service, local EMS/Community Care Team and other interested parties	MDT, Age Friendly Committee, Foundation		Meeting minutes, committee member's time	Red Lodge Area Community Foundation and its Age Friendly Community committee, county law enforcement, city planners, senior center representation, local government, healthcare, taxi service, community care (para medicine), county commissioners, interested citizens	Done
Create Transit Plan Carbon County Area Ride and Transit (CART)	Develop a transit plan based on information gathered at the planning sessions	LSC Transportation Consultants, TAC, Transportation Coordinator, Age Friendly Committee, Foundation Board	Some community members uncomfortable with the size of this undertaking: too expensive, concerned about sustainability, concerned about cooperative efforts	meeting minutes, community surveys, route map, pick up radius	LSC Transportation Consultants, Red Lodge Area Community Foundation and its Age Friendly Community committee, TAC	Done
Strategically plan for successful implementation and longevity of CART	1. ID the best mechanisms for sustainable funding, staffing & leadership.	Hiring a program evaluation specialist, TAC, Transit plan	Perceived competition with other transit services	To be determined during this planning phase	RLACF and TAC members	Plans developed by November 2020 with ongoing evaluation
	2. Broaden stakeholders & engage public countrywide					
	3. Fine tune marketing plan					
	4. Develop strategy for collection and evaluation of data					

TRANSPORTATION

Goal: Provide public county-wide transportation at no or low cost to citizens

Objectives	Steps	Resources	Barriers	Metrics	Lead/Partners	Status
Apply to MDT for operation/ capital grant	Complete required documents including, vehicle selection, a budget, cooperation plan, fundraising plan, sustainability plan, transportation coordinator position description, dispatch position description, drivers position, letters of support, outreach plan	MDT, Transit Coordinator, TAC, Age Friendly Committee, other Montana rural transit systems	Inability to reach matching fund goals, possible incomplete application, possible lack of community support	Meeting minutes, volunteer time, letters of support	Red Lodge Area Community Foundation, Transportation coordinator, TAC, TAC subcommittee,	grant submitted 3.2.20
Purchase vehicle and hire staffing	Work with MDT to order vehicle, publish position descriptions and interview	MDT, TAC	MDT grant not funded	Meeting minutes, interviews numbers	MDT, Red Lodge Area Community Foundation, Transportation coordinator, TAC	Funding notification July, 2020
Kick off event for CART	Move forward with outreach plan, find champions from each community to share information about the advantages of CART and ride with their community	TAC, Age Friendly Community, Community Senior Centers	Community uncertainties about CART	Outreach, flyers, social media posts, testimonials, ridership	Red Lodge Area Community Foundation, TAC, Community Champions	Set for November 2020
Assessment of CART after one year in service	Determine ridership with current route, review sustainability plan, review hours for staff in plan vs hours needed, review position descriptions, outreach needs	TAC, CART Coordinator, Disptach	MDT grant not funded	Ridership stats via dispatch, testimonials, requests for rides outside of route	Red Lodge Area Community Foundation, TAC, CART staff	Set for November 2021



COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION

Goal: Connection to resources and the community

Objectives	Steps	Resources	Barriers	Metrics	Lead/Partners	Status
Communication & Info Objective 1						
Offer and continually update Carbon County Connect community services directory	1. Create a hard copy and online services directory for Carbon County	1. Carbon County Connect committee	Funding for project	1. Number of directories printed and delivered	Red Lodge Area Community Foundation	2018 - ongoing with new directory printed in 2020
	2. Update online version quarterly and hard copy every two years	2.carboncountyconnect.org		2. Google analytics	RiverStone Health, Beartooth Billings Clinic, Community Care Team	
	3. Distribute county wide via mail, in person delivery or at an event	3. Plan to receive sponsorships for printing				
Communication & Info Objective 2						
Create a quarterly 'Age Friendly Carbon County' Newsletter to share happenings within the community and at each senior center in the county and health-related tips.	1. Develop style and content of newsletter	1. Events in the county	Time for planning	1. Newsletters printed	Red Lodge Area Community Foundation	Introduce in Spring of 2020
	2. Research & plan quarterly content themes	2. Current community interests and concerns		2. Testamonials from recipients	Age Friendly Carbon County Steering Committee	
	3. Develop a logo for newsletter and committee	3. Local Health professionals and committee members		3. Topic requests from recipients	Local Health Centers and Public Health	Ongoing
	4. Create distribution plan	4. Exerpts from other newsletters such as AARP, Harvard Health Letter, etc				

COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION

Goal: Connection to resources and the community

Communication & Info Objective 3						
Objectives	Steps	Resources	Barriers	Metrics	Lead/Partners	Status
Host annual Carbon County Health Fair & Expo	1. Local Beartooth Billings Clinic asked Foundation to host this event to ‘broaden our definition of health’	1. Information and time-line from Beartooth Billings Clinic Event	1. Determining opportune time of year and date for both participants and vendors	1. Number of Vendors	Red Lodge Area Community Foundation/	Began in January of 2019 and ongoing
	2. Invite community programs included in Carbon County Connect as well as children’s programs, senior programs	2. Healthy Community Steering Committee	2. Parking and transportation for participants outside of Red Lodge	2. Number of Partipcants	RiverStone Health, Beartooth Billings Clinic, Community Care Team	
	3. Offer demonstrations, local healthy food, flu vaccinations, swag and invite new clinicians	3. Services in Carbon County Connect		3. Survey results and Testamonials from both vendors and participants		
Communication & Info Objective 4						
Introduce and expand Caring Cards Intergenerational Card Writing Project which partners elementary students with elders who may appreciate a cheerful greeting in the mail. The students improve their letter writing skills as they connect with older adults. The elders receive information about local school activities and may feel more socially connected with local youth	1. Pilot the Caring Cards Project at the Red Lodge Elementary 5th grade class	1. Local Elementary Schools: Red Lodge, Roberts, Luther, Joliet, Fromberg, Bridger, Belfry	Possible lack of donations of postage and greeting cards	1. Number of students writing letters	Red Lodge Area Community Foundation	Spring 2019, Pilot ended and in the process of expanding the Caring Cards Project to other Carbon County Schools
	2. Assess pilot results			2. Number of card recipients in each school	Age Friendly Carbon County Steering Committee, Carbon County schools, local senior centers, assisted living, Community Care Team	
	3. Request donations of postage and greeting cards blank on the inside	3. Churches, Assisted Living, Community Care Team		3. Content/Testamonials of card recipients		
	4. If pilot successful reach out to other Carbon County schools and communities to invite them to participate			4. Testamonials of students writng cards and their teachers		
	5. Invite county senior centers to share contacts of people who may be socially isolated					



COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION

Goal: Connection to resources and the community

Communication & Info Objective 5						
Objectives	Steps	Resources	Barriers	Metrics	Lead/Partners	Status
Expansion of the Navigator Program. Navigators are volunteers trained to act as guides to individuals who need assistance with resource applications such as health care, energy assistance, section 8 housing. The Foundation also facilitates other funds which the Navigators may assist with including Salvation Army, free firewood program, Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program and Senior Ark.	1. Include Navigator information in the Age Friendly Carbon County Newsletter	Age Friendly Carbon County committee and Foundation staff		1. Number of inquiries, number of requests for navigation outside of Red Lodge	Red Lodge Area Community Foundation and Age Friendly Carbon County Committee	Ongoing
	2. Offer Navigator training county wide	Foundation staff		2. Number of persons interested in receiving training		
	3. Distribute flyers to libraries, clinics, seniors and schools outside of Red Lodge and share information in person during senior lunch	Senior centers, RiverStone Clinic, Foundation staff		3. Number of flyers distributed		

HOUSING

Goal: Living safely and affordably in place of choice

Objectives	Steps	Resources	Barriers	Metrics	Lead/Partners	Status
Building Community Partnerships	1. Gathering with community members to further determine concerns in relation to housing	Foundation staff, possibly the Age Friendly CC Newsletter, Age Friendly CC Housing sub Committee		survey questions, survey results, testimonials	Red Lodge Area Community Foundation, Age Friendly CC Committee	Plan to start in summer of 2020
	2. Determine opportunities for improvement based on results of discussion/assessment					
Provide housing resources for community	Gather community resources regarding staying in place of choice, downsizing current home, co-living options and share with the Carbon County Community	AARP, local organizations		Number of resources, number of resources distributed, number of ways resources distributed	Red Lodge Area Community Foundation, Age Friendly CC Committee	Plan to start in fall of 2020
Financial support to stay at home	Communicating resource options to assist folks to make necessary repairs and upgrades and to pay bills if there is an emergent need	Navigator Program and the Senior Ark Fund at the Red Lodge Area Community Foundation, LIEAP, Section 8, Salvation Army, Housing, firewood program	Some citizens may feel hesitant to ask for assistance, lack of resources	Number of applicants and funds distributed each month/year, testimonials, which communities are requesting assistance	Red Lodge Area Community Foundation, Age Friendly CC Committee, Local Healthcare facilities, HRDC	Ongoing



HOUSING

Goal: Living safely and affordably in place of choice

Objectives	Steps	Resources	Barriers	Metrics	Lead/Partners	Status
Developing an Adaptive Tool Document	1. Using the Age Friendly Bowdoinham 'Tools to make Life a Little Easier' as a guide, adopt an Adaptive Tool program	Tools to Make Life a Little Easier', local occupational therapist, Foundation staff, Age Friendly CC Committee		Tools in list, number of hard copy documents distributed, number of digital copies distributed, testimonials, google analytics	Red Lodge Area Community Foundation, Age Friendly CC Committee, Beartooth Billings Clinic OT,	Plan to start in fall of 2020
	2. Review their document with local occupational therapist and update products, prices and places of purchase as needed					
	3. Distribute to healthcare facilities, senior centers, public health and provide outreach through social media and the Age Friendly Carbon County Newsletter					
Keep abreast of the local Workforce Housing partnership with Helena Habitat for Humanity and Trust Montana and share their work in our community	Receive outreach materials, speak with housing steering committee and share information through social media and the Age Friendly Carbon County Newsletter	Foundation Work Force Housing Steering Committee, Helena Habitat for Humanity, Trust Montana		Number of requests for information, number of newsletters distributed	Workforce Housing Committee, Age Friendly CC Committee	Plan to start in Spring of 2020



## Age Friendly Steering Committee

- Don Redfoot, PhD, RLACF Board Member, AARP, retired
- Jack Exley, MD, Red Lodge Fire/Rescue
- Gretchen Nolan, Carbon County Citizen
- Wanda Kennicott, Carbon County Citizen
- Barbara Marquardt, Carbon County Citizen
- Ruth Bilyeu, Community Care Team
- Sarah Ewald, Community Care Team
- Kaci Jansma, PA, RiverStone Health, Joliet and Bridger, MT
- Jessica Schwend, RN, RiverStone Health, Joliet and Bridger, MT
- Jody McCampbell, Adult Protective Services
- Lanette Dalley, Social Worker, Beartooth Billings Clinic
- Kathy Kenyon, Carbon County Citizen retired healthcare attorney
- Leslie Indreland, Homecare/Hospice Director, Beartooth Billings Clinic
- Marcia Sullivan, Willows, Assisted Living, Red Lodge
- Whitney Thompson, Alzheimer's Association
- Carbon Stillwater Senior and Community Services
- Karen Ulrickson, Regional Ombudsman
- Area II Council on Aging
- Red Lodge Senior Center
- Therese Picasso-Edwards, Foundation Programs Director, Resilient Community/Youth



## Transportation Advisory Committee

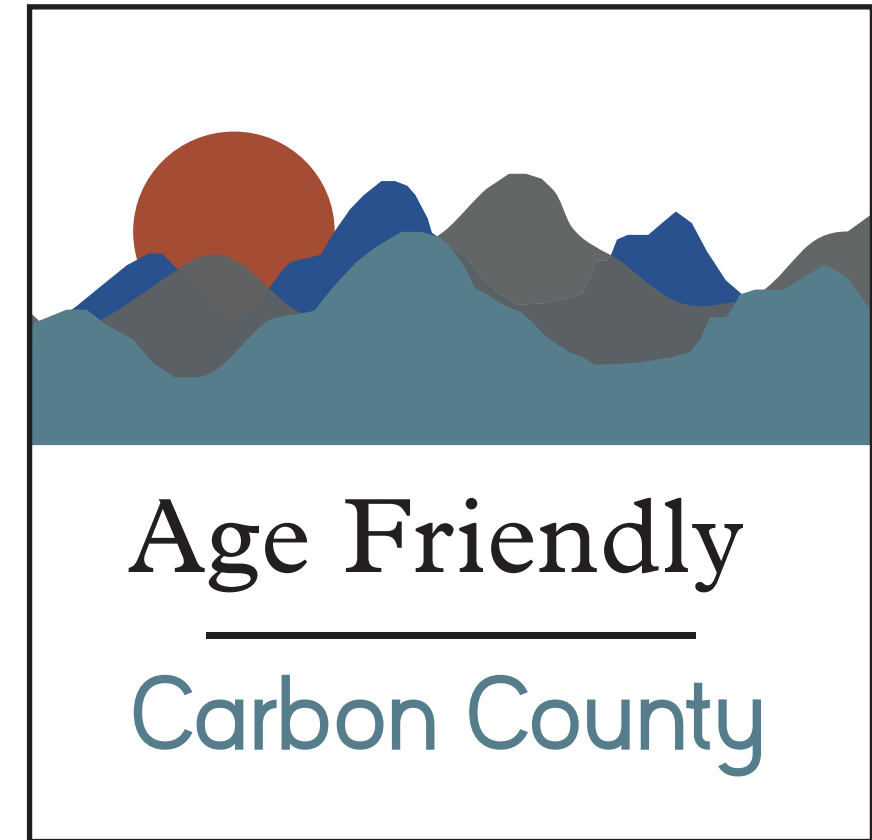
- Stephen Kalb-Koensfeld, Foundation Transportation Coordinator
- Therese Picasso-Edwards, Foundation Programs Director, Resilient Community/Youth
- Gretchen Nolan, Carbon County Citizen
- Angela Newell, Carbon County
- Bill Bullock, Carbon County Commissioner
- Josh McQuillan, Carbon County Sherriff
- Margaret (Maggie) Karas, Beartooth Billings Clinic
- James Caniglia, City of Red Lodge
- Don Redfoot, RLACF Board Member
- William Foisy, RLACF Board Member
- Rhonda Spaulding, Red Lodge Tour and Taxi
- Kaci Jansma, PA, Riverstone Health
- Ruth Bilyeu, Community Care Team
- Sarah Ewald, Community Care Team
- Town of Bridger
- Town of Joliet
- Beth Pulse, Community of Belfry
- Cheri Mondragon, Community of Roberts





## Community Partners

- Alzheimer's Association
- Carbon County Senior Centers
- Carbon County Board of Health
- Mental Health Advisory Committee
- Carbon County Schools
- Active Transportation Committee



## Appendices & Supporting Documents

- Age-Friendly Carbon County Flyer
- Comparing US, MT and Carbon County
- Age-Friendly Survey Report (**Attached in Folder**)
- Carbon County Transit Development Plan Final Report pdf (**Attached in Folder**)
- CART Outreach Information
- Age Friendly Carbon County Newsletter
- Carbon County Health Fair and Expo Flyer
- Caring Cards: Lesson plans and sample reply letters

Supporting Documents >>>

CREATING AN AGE FRIENDLY  
COMMUNITY

TRACY TIMMONS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RED LODGE  
AREA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

OPENING

MODERATOR  
MARTHA BROWN

PANEL 1, SETTING THE STAGE

DON REDFOOT, PHD, AARP, RETIRED; MAGGIE KARAS,  
COMMUNITY RELATIONS COORDINATOR, BEARTOOTH  
BILLINGS CLINIC; CARLY KYTE, AMERICORPS VISTA  
BILL GEORGE, MD, BEARTOOTH BILLINGS CLINIC

PANEL 2, EXPERIENCES

KATHY KENYON, JD; BRAD FOUTS, MD, MOUNTAIN VIEW  
CLINIC; JODY MCCAMPBELL, ADULT PROTECTIVE  
SERVICES; LESLIE INDRELAND, RN, DIRECTOR OF  
BEARTOOTH BILLINGS CLINIC HOMECARE/HOSPICE;  
SARAH EWALD AND RUTH BILYEU, COMMUNITY CARE  
TEAM,

PANEL 3, ACTION

DON REDFOOT, PHD, AARP, RETIRED

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Realizing  
Reaching  
Richer  
Rewarding  
Responsible  
Rolling

Comparing US, MT, and Carbon County

Ages	United States		Montana		Carbon County
	2015	2030	2015	2030	2015
50-64	19.7%	16.7%	22.6%	18.4%	27.1%
65-74	8.6%	10.9%	10.0%	12.8%	14.3%
75-84	4.3%	7.2%	4.9%	9.4%	6.2%
85+	2.0%	2.5%	2.5%	3.6%	2.5%
65+	14.9%	20.5%	17.4%	25.8%	23.0%



# Age Friendly Carbon County

## Newsletter - Winter/Spring 2020

### >>> In This Issue

- Welcome!
- Simple Tips to Prevent a Fall
- New 2020 Carbon County Connect
- Winter Fitness & Safety
- Heart Rates for Exercising
- What's Coming Up?



**Greetings and welcome to the Age Friendly Carbon County inaugural newsletter!** We aim to deliver a quarterly newsletter which supports folks of all ages in Carbon County. The topic of this issue is staying active and avoiding slips and falls. We would also like to share resources and events in our county. Tell us what you would like to read about. We would love to hear from you! Please review the Core Values, Mission and Vision of Age Friendly Carbon County. If you are interested in participating as a member of our committee, contact Therese Picasso-Edwards at 446-2820 or [therese@rlacf.org](mailto:therese@rlacf.org) to learn more.

#### Core Values

##### We will:

1. Address aging-related concerns identified by the community.
2. Respect and consider all ideas.
3. Support people of all means and abilities.
4. Prioritize working with existing community assets.
5. Make decisions based on community input and feedback.

#### Vision

A safe, vibrant Carbon County that is inclusive of all ages and abilities.

#### Mission

Putting community ideas into action to create an age-friendly Carbon County.

Member of  
AARP/WHO  
Network of Age  
Friendly Communities!

### >>> Simple Tips to Prevent a Fall

Excerpt from [mayoclinic.com](https://www.mayoclinic.com)

Falls are a leading cause of injury among older adults. Consider six simple fall-prevention strategies.

#### 1. Make an Appointment with Your Doctor

- What medications are you taking? Your doctor can review your medications for side effects and interactions that may increase your risk of falling.
- Have you fallen before? Write down details of when, where and how you fell.
- Could your health conditions cause a fall? Do you feel any dizziness, joint pain, shortness of breath, or numbness in your feet and legs when you walk?

#### 2. Keep Moving

With your doctor's OK, consider activities such as walking, water workouts or tai chi – a gentle exercise that involves slow movements. Such activities reduce the risk of falls by improving strength, balance, coordination and flexibility. A physical therapist can create an exercise program to improve your balance, flexibility, muscle strength and gait.

#### 3. Wear Sensible Shoes

Wear properly fitting, sturdy shoes with nonskid soles. Avoid walking in stockings.

#### 4. Remove Home Hazards

- Remove boxes, newspapers, electrical cords and phone cords from walkways.
- Remove loose rugs and repair loose, wooden floorboards & carpeting
- Immediately clean spilled liquids, grease or food.
- Use nonslip mats and/or a bath seat in your bathtub or shower.

#### 5. Light Up Your Living Space

- Keep your home brightly lit to avoid tripping on objects that are hard to see. Also:
- Place night lights in your bedroom, bathroom and hallways.
  - Place a lamp within reach of your bed for middle-of-the-night needs.
  - Turn on the lights before going up or down stairs.
  - Store flashlights in easy-to-find places in case of power outages.

#### 6. Use Assistive Devices

- Your doctor might recommend a cane or walker to keep you steady. Also consider:
- Handrails for both sides of stairways
  - Nonslip treads for bare-wood steps
  - A raised toilet seat or one with armrests
  - Grab bars for the shower or tub
  - A sturdy plastic seat for the shower or tub – plus a hand-held shower nozzle for bathing while sitting down
  - An occupational therapist can provide other fall-prevention strategies.



The 2020 Carbon County Connect Community Services Directory is here! Stop by the Red Lodge Area Community Foundation at 122 Hauser Ave S to pick up a copy or contact Therese at 446-2820 or [therese@rlacf.org](mailto:therese@rlacf.org)

Check out our online directory at [carboncountyconnect.com](https://carboncountyconnect.com)

Staying active in winter in Montana is a challenge but is very important to the health of our bodies and brains. Aging brings inevitable decline in our physical and mental function but that decline can be slowed by the maintenance of a level of physical fitness. Our safety, health and mental functioning greatly benefit from our commitment to staying active physically and mentally. Also, preventing falls and injuries is an important benefit of staying active as our strength, balance and vision decline.

There are many ways to stay fit during the winter including, but certainly not limited to the following: walking (indoors if mall, school or gym are available, or outdoors if safe paths or sidewalks exist), yoga, tai chi, dancing, bowling, NIA, and exercise videos. For more options ask your medical provider, another active person, or let your fingers do the walking for online guidance.

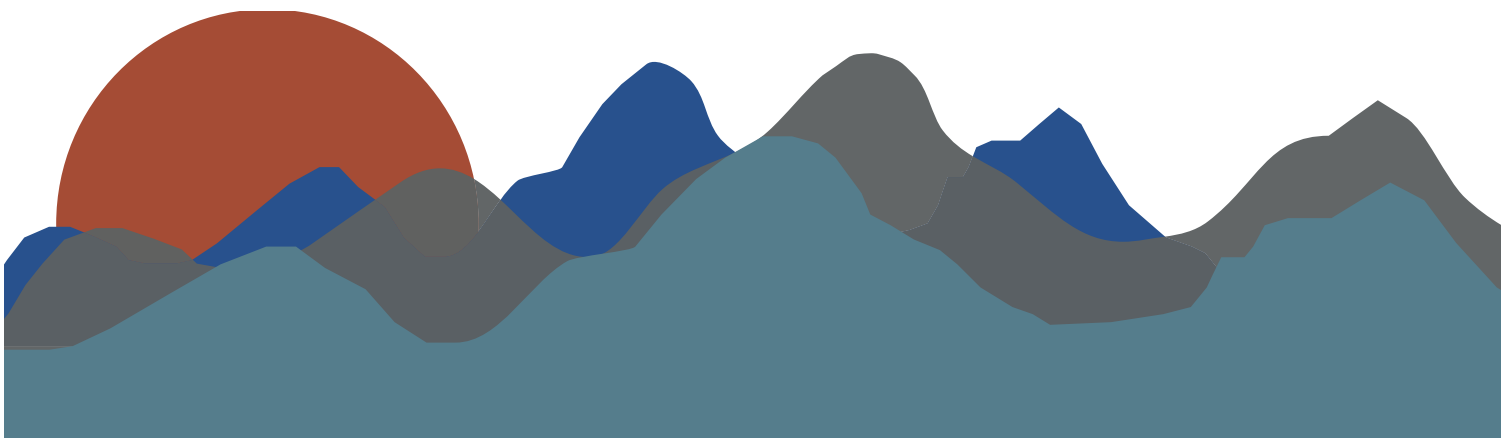
Achieving physical fitness while staying safe should be our goal. There are four components of fitness: strength, endurance, flexibility and balance and each of these has a role in keeping us safely moving and active! A physical therapist (a Medicare benefit), occupational therapist or athletic trainer can be very helpful in developing and guiding a personal program. A program can be designed even if one's disability is great, i.e. wheelchair confinement or some other limitation.

Physical activity and fitness are essential in slowing the aging process and helping us to maintain our independent living. Quality of life, continued productivity and safety can be enhanced! We can even improve our mental health and function as well as delay the onset of Alzheimer's. So--KEEP MOVING!



Estimated Heart Rates for Exercising		
Subtract your age from 220 to approximate your maximum heart rate during exercise. Note that this number is just an estimate, not a definitive limit. If you're healthy, there's no danger going above this number for short periods of time.		
Age (Years)	Maximum Heart Rate*	80% of Maximum Heart rate*
50	170	136
55	165	132
60	160	128
65	155	124
70	150	120
75	145	116
80	140	112

\* beats per minute



>>> What's Coming Up?

March 14-15

National Ski-Joring Races

- Red Lodge Fairgrounds
- Races: 11:00 am - 3:00 pm
- Gate opens at 10:00 am

March 21

Ice Sculpting Demonstration

- Absolute Zero Ice Design

- Buses of Yellowstone
  - o 124 Broadway Ave N, Red Lodge
- Noon to 4:00 pm
- Cost: Free

April 17, 18, 24, 25

Dinner Theater - You Can't Beat the House

- Free Range Banana & Mining Company
- Joliet Community Center
- Dinner at 6:00 pm - Curtain at 7:00 pm
- Tickets - \$22
- Purchase tickets at Joliet Community Center at 962-9027 or Library at 962-3013

April 19

2nd Annual Prime Rib Dinner

- Bridger Golden Age Society Senior Center
  - o 306 East Broadway Avenue
- Noon to 4:00 pm
- Tickets - \$15
- Tickets much be purchased by April 3
- Contact Wanda at 662-5092 for tickets

April 25

4th Annual Earth Day Festivities

- Red Lodge Lion's Park - 300-398 Villard Ave N, Red Lodge
- 10:00 am to 3:00 pm
- Cost - Free
- Contact Robin at (530) 450-5513

May 22

Projected Opening of the Beartooth Highway

\*If you would like your event in Age Friendly Carbon County Newsletter
 

- Contact Therese at 446-2820 or therese@rlacf.org







Where you want to go.

When you want to go.

### The Impact

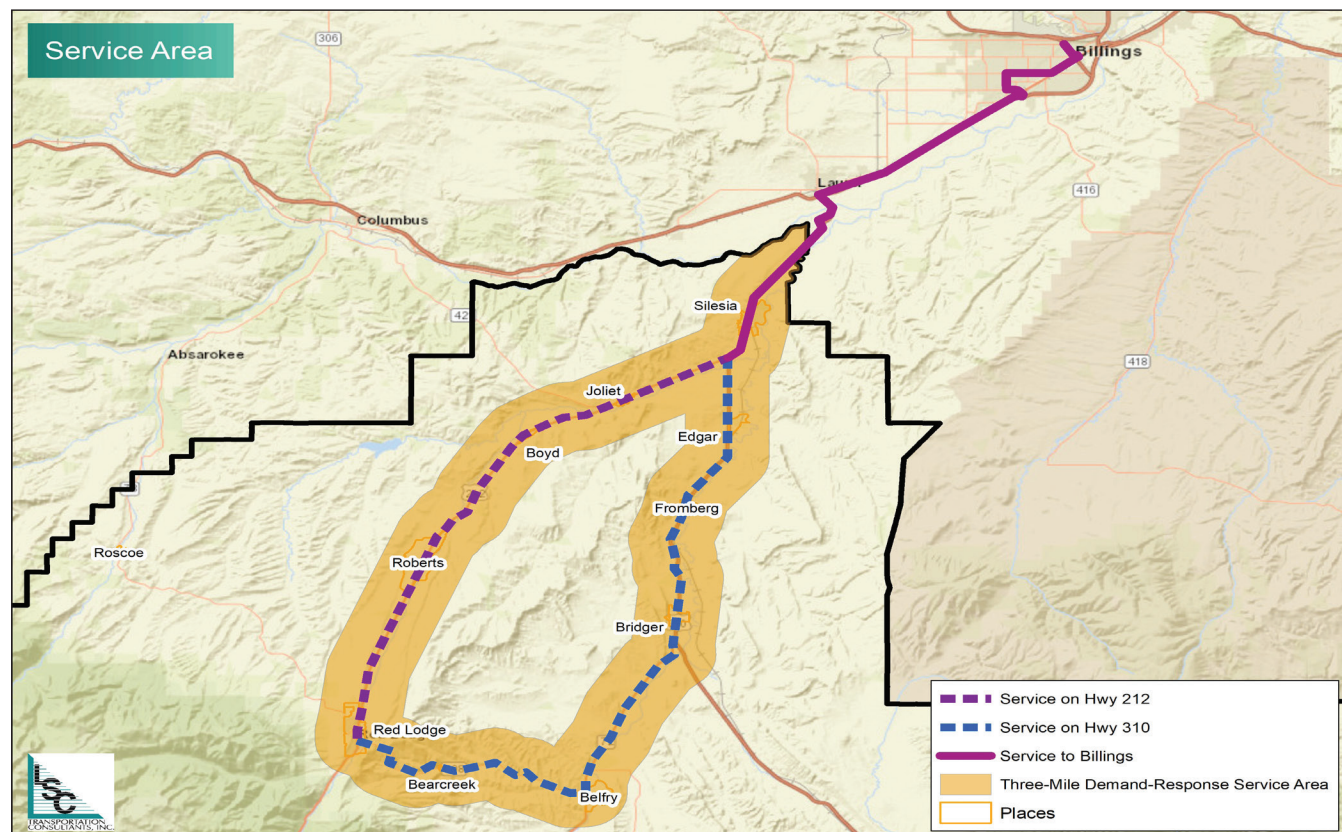
While measurables such as ridership and budgeting adjustments won't be appropriately viewable for a few years, the social impact of CART will almost be immediately recognized. Access to reliable transportation for more than 10,000 residents will be realized within months.

### The Mission

The Carbon County Area Ride and Transit service will provide a safe, reliable and affordable mean of transportation, from healthcare appointments to everyday errands. A viable transportation system will improve the overall health of residents in our communities.

### The Rider

The typical rider for the CART will not be easily distinguishable. This is because CART is for everyone in Carbon County. From access to the various healthcare facilities, to local grocery shopping or haircuts, CART will be used stabilize everyday life.



Above is the service map for the three-day-a-week, free Carbon County service, as well as the twice a month routes to Billings. The route was defined by LSC Transportation Consultants, and adopted by the Transportation Advisory Committee in October 2019.

## Getting you where you want to go ... ... when you want to get there

### Needs

- About \$60,000 in local matching funds for two MDT capital and operating grants
- We're seeking a transportation dispatcher to help run day-to-day operations
- Partners to work with for after hours events and other social isolation opportunities
- One to two drivers for when the vehicles hit the road

### Timeline and Implementation

- February 2018: Transportation identified by senior centers as No. 1 county-wide need
- August 2018: Planning grant accepted; LSC Transportation Consultants begin analysis of Carbon County
- December 2018: LSC Transportation Consultants hold public forum to better understand Carbon County transportation need
- February 2019: LSC Transportation Consultants deliver final recommendation: 3-day-a-week dial-a-ride system with twice-a-month trips to Billings
- March 2019: MDT grant application completed; begin raising matching funds
- July 2019: MDT grant denied; project put on brief hold
- October 2019: TAC meetings resume; Carbon County Area Ride and Transit (CART) name formed
- March 2020: MDT grants applied for with more research and understanding in the application
- July 2020: Grant award notification
- Fall/Winter 2020: CART begins operations around Carbon County



The CART advisory committee is committed to serving the rider, meeting weekly at various locations around the county. Advisory committee members representatives from all facets around the county. From city and county government, to local healthcare provider representation. Meetings are open to the public.

# CART

The Carbon County Area Ride and Transit



A Community Partnership  
Saturday, January 12th, 2019  
8:00a.m.-11:00a.m.

The Roosevelt Center, 519 S. Broadway Ave.  
Red Lodge, MT

**We are EXPANDING OUR PARTNERSHIPS TO WIDEN OUR DEFINITION OF HEALTH**

Join us for demonstrations, exhibits, give-a-ways,  
free/low-cost health screenings, and more

Questions? Contact Therese Picasso-Edwards at [therese@rlacf.org](mailto:therese@rlacf.org) or 446-2820



Teacher: Brandelyn Simpson  
Subject: Language Arts/Writing

Lesson Date: 2 sessions/month  
Unit Title: Caring Cards

<b>Montana State Standards:</b> W.3 a-e : W.4: W.5: W.10: SL. 1.a,c: L.1, L.2, L.3	<b>Agenda:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Introduce Caring Cards</li> <li>❖ Brainstorm activities</li> <li>❖ Letter writing format</li> <li>❖ Envelope format</li> <li>❖ Writing</li> </ul>
<b>Student Objective:</b> Students will actively participate in discussions collaboratively with peers and teacher. Students will write friendly letters, stamp and address envelopes to senior citizens in our community. Students will be assessed on letter format, writing standards, and correct language usage.	
<b>Note:</b> All letters are completed with complete anonymity. Letters are signed as Mountain View 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade and not individual names.	

TIME	INSTRUCTIONAL SEQUENCE	Notes
10 min	<b>Engage:</b> How do you spread cheer and show others that you care about them?	
30 min	<b>Explore: 2 ways to complete this step.</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create Large brainstorming web to answer following questions.</li> <li>Create stations around the room with the following questions written on poster sized paper and have students articulate their answers in writing.</li> </ol> <b>Questions:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What elements are unique to our town/community? (Long winters, mountains, small town, etc.)</li> <li>How do those elements affect the population of all citizens in town? elderly citizens? (Snow and snow removal make it difficult to go outside, socialize, etc.)</li> <li>How do we take care of our community? (recycle, clean up litter)</li> <li>How do we take care of people in our community? (volunteer)</li> </ol>	
10 min	<b>Explain:</b> <i>Caring Cards introduction</i> <i>Model envelope structure</i> <i>Model Friendly letter format</i> <i>Brainstorm current events in 5<sup>th</sup> grade.</i>	
20-25 min	<b>Elaborate:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The first three monthly letters, we all write the same thing together from a teacher model on the smart board.</li> <li>-Subsequent lessons include the current events brainstorm and then individual letters for some personalization.</li> <li>- Use blank notecards to model envelopes. Use address strips and cut and glue them onto notecard to create a reference for each month.</li> </ul> <b>Closure:</b> <i>Review Objective/share their learning/ask questions</i>	



## Season's Greetings

Dear Mtn. 5<sup>th</sup>  
Grade class. Thank  
you for thinking of me.  
I really enjoyed  
hearing from you.  
Thanks very  
much.  
I love you

Dear 5<sup>th</sup> Grade  
JUST can't thank you  
ENOUGH!

## THANKS

Thank you for the thoughtful  
card. it truly made my day.  
I'm doing my best to stay warm.  
I hope you all are having a great  
year and working hard. Always  
~~do your~~ do your best! in Japanese  
GAN BA TE NE! → do your best!  
Sincerely

Dear Mtn. View Elementary,  
We really like getting  
your letters! I'm so glad  
you get to go to Yellowstone  
Park. It is known by the  
whole world as an interesting  
place to visit, so we are  
lucky to live so close  
to it. I hope you get to  
see a lot of wild animals.  
It's so important to  
protect the wild animals -  
it's their world, too!  
We hope you all had a

good spring break. I  
make these cards. It  
won't be too long before  
we see the lilacs!

I have a lot of  
art ideas. If your  
teachers want an extra  
helper with an art project,  
maybe I could help. If  
someone needs a  
"grandparent" next  
Grandparents' Day, maybe  
my husband Danny and I  
could fill in. →



To the 5<sup>th</sup> grade students at Mountain  
View.

Thank you for thinking of me. It  
was a nice surprise and very  
appreciated.

February has been a cold snowy  
month but the skiing has probably  
been good for all of you.

I like to read and so am glad  
you enjoy it too.

You can tell by this card that  
I am looking forward to spring, but  
I think the snow is pretty and I  
enjoy snow shoeing in it.

Thanks again for your note, and  
would love to hear from you again.