1. Discuss, understand, and define Spearfish Subculture and the underlying elements that are stimulating the subculture
2. Identify activities and strategies that could stimulate the subculture
3. Identify potential marketing strategies that the city and the university should attempt to broaden the awareness of area and the events occurring within the area – targeted at twenty/thirty-somethings
4. Determine and define recommended resources that may be required, as well as community business/partners to stimulate and cultivate the subculture
5. Produce a comprehensive written summary and action plan to stimulate and cultivate the subculture of Spearfish under the themes of 1) music, 2) arts, 3) culture/adventure, and 4) collaborative activities between the University and the City of Spearfish

GOAL

Using Bozeman, MT and Austin, TX as models, to cultivate and stimulate the subculture of Spearfish to create a vibrant, electric community that twenty and thirty-somethings want to be a part of regularly. Note: We want people to come to Spearfish instead of other locations within the state or region for higher education.

TIMELINE

It is estimated 4-6 meetings of the task force may be required. This does not include time to complete a master action plan and produce a written summary. It is requested a majority of the discussion be completed by July 1, 2015. The action plan and written summary draft should be distributed to Dr. Jackson and Mayor Boke in August 2015. The task force, which was jointly appointed by Tom Jackson, President of BHSU and Dana Boke, Mayor of Spearfish, will be released of their responsibilities in September 2015.
INTRODUCTION AND CHARGE OF TASK FORCE ON SPEARFISH SUBCULTURE DEVELOPMENT

As members of an appointed Task Force, we have come together to identify what we, representatives of Spearfish’s subcultures and BHSU’s campus engagement, think will help Spearfish become branded as a mindful community of arts, entertainment, dining, and outdoor adventuring.

Cities like Austin, Texas or Bozeman, Montana, represent possible archetypes for Spearfish. Their downtown areas and specific cultures have been nurtured by the businesses and patrons who live there, creating unique experiences which invite tourists and new community members.

FOR EXAMPLE:

- Austin has a deep college culture which has blossomed many underground bands, podcasts, radio stations, artists, and premiere restaurants and retailers. Austin’s unofficial motto, “Keep Austin Weird,” invites upcoming generations of artists and musicians who want to live and thrive within the city.

- Bozeman’s culture ties strongly with its geographical location – a strong parallel to Spearfish. Its college invites all to experience the “Mountains and Minds” of its campus, offering college credits in outdoor sports such as skiing and snowboarding, and focusing curricular development on design and arts, which attracts those seeking a similar lifestyle.

We believe we have the beginnings of a similar cultural development already shaping right here in Spearfish, as we have a college and community nestled conveniently in the beautiful Black Hills. Our city provides instant access to premier outdoor sports. Our hills are not as sprawling as the natural areas in Colorado, Montana, or elsewhere, thus offering less traffic and less drive time—or none at all—in an inviting and comfortable community. Furthermore, fringe arts and humanities have long existed in Spearfish, a favorable product of the people who have already settled here and share our love for the Hills. These include places like the Historic Matthews
Opera House and Arts Center or the Termesphere Gallery. Though slowly, our community has now begun to fill with the types of cultural options which become a “vibe” or “scene” specific to its own, unique identity and attracts individuals with a similar mindset.

And who are these individuals we are talking about? People in their 20s and 30s are certainly a diverse group, but any sociologist will tell you that most share a common set of values. This generation tends to be socially more liberal, but financially careful. We value and celebrate diversity, creativity and innovation, substance, personal connection, teamwork, life balance, and optimism. In Spearfish’s young population, there seems to be a general trend toward health-consciousness, adventure-seeking, creative affordable living, and a shared interest in local growth and environmental sustainability.

Our intention is not to mimic what other cities have done, but simply to examine how Spearfish can further develop into a true community, which not only attracts tourists, but becomes a desirable location for new college students and active community members to live and stay. Through this narrative, we will identify some key focus areas intended to stimulate future, strategic cultural growth in Spearfish.
Our first task was to develop a plan to stimulate Spearfish’s subcultures within the younger generation. During our first two sessions, we spent time working to establish what that meant. We discussed funding, recruiting, board formation, and many other organizational alignments, each purposed to create an effective result. We established our limitations as a Task Force, and focused on what we could provide to help cultivate the growth we seek.

From this discussion, we decided the Task Force had been created to be a short-term focus group rather than a long-term board or work group. We are a committee of local individuals brainstorming ideas we hope can express key ideas to other players within our community. As members of the current subculture, we are all “experts” in what we like about Spearfish, past growth we have witnessed, and the direction we desire for Spearfish.

We would like our ideas to help guide the hands of other experts who currently shape the community. These are the current business owners, developers, administrative directors, and retailers, as well as appointed boards/groups such as Visit Spearfish, Chamber of Commerce, City Council, and BHSU Faculty. We created a timeline stretching to the end of July 2015, and determined our task to be completion of a presentation to pass on our discussion to those who will build from it. We especially hope that we can get these discussions into the hands of influential people like entrepreneurs and real estate and City developers—the folks who are going to financially risk what it takes to build the community we see Spearfish can become.

So, what are some activities and potential marketing strategies that could continue to stimulate the growing subcultures of Spearfish?

We focused our discussions on four key categories:

1. RETAIL AND FOOD
2. ENTERTAINMENT AND MUSIC
3. ADVENTURE AND OUTDOORS
4. COMMUNICATIONS

This document discusses both the current and future directions of these areas, in order to better identify the subcultures Spearfish has and could potentially further develop. As a note, some categories overlap with others, and some businesses will reoccur throughout this presentation.
Spearfish has several current retailers and restaurants which we feel fill a specific niche within the subcultures we enjoy. Many of these places are unique to Spearfish, with thoughtful entrepreneurs who buy into and actively reinforce our uniqueness, all while pouring themselves into businesses which bring them livelihood. While larger corporate entities such as Walmart, Applebee’s, and Qdoba are necessary to provide a more diverse economy and create an infrastructure to support influx populations such as tourists and students, these places do not feel location specific. Within this section, we will list what our community currently has and what we think our community needs, though these ideas would require a developer to bring them to life.

While all developers must be wary of the population deficit that challenges robust returns, a good cultural scene should not only bring in visitors, but keep current community members shopping and eating in Spearfish. Loyal local patronship, especially during tourism lulls, creates the stability needed to allow new, innovative businesses to ‘stick’ and current businesses to expand their offerings. Some members of the task force are current retailers; therefore we understand mitigating the risk of failure requires keeping projects relatively inexpensive and concise. We believe this is precisely what makes them fit well within Spearfish. Here are a handful of examples of current establishments—but certainly not all—which “feel” distinctly Spearfish. We realize some may come and go:

- Barbacoa’s Burritos and Wraps – fast food alternative with eclectic and health conscious options
- Base Camp Adventure Sports – outfitter with kayak, climbing, and adventure gear
- Blackbird Espresso – gourmet coffee shop focusing on quality and process, no artificial syrups, and featuring cold brews and pourovers as opposed to industrialized brewing techniques
- Common Grounds – established coffee shop featuring lunch and Alaskan salmon products
- Crow Peak Brewery – first longstanding craft brewery in a unique farmer’s market location
- Cycle Farm, Becks, and Gages – historical farmers markets and greenhouses
- Dough Trader Pizza – simple non-traditional sourdough crust with upcycled atmosphere
- Good Earth Foods – classic health food store with café and retail
- Killian’s Tavern – small, eclectic option focused on artisanal eats
- Leone’s Creamery – artisanal ice cream in funky old city hall setting
- Naked Olive & Junk Drawer – upcycled retail and niche shopping
- Rushmore Mountain Sports – local bike and outfitting store with Trek and Salsa featured brands
- Spearfish Bike COOP – non-profit bicycle parts and labor
- The Bay Leaf – small, eclectic option with a Mediterranean focus
- The Green Bean – established, traditional coffee shop with a varied lunch menu
We must increase the community awareness, especially on campus, of these styles of retail, while encouraging these retailers to perform and grow. In other words, we would like to say to these retailers – increase your hours of operations, continue to bring special events and live music, and communicate your efforts more effectively. And we should be saying to residents – frequent the local shops and eateries that make Spearfish a unique place to live.

Below we listed what we believe our community needs. We focused on how likely each future business would fit considering the experience of those retailers and their impact on the lifestyles of students, faculty, and future residents. Our group views some of these possibilities as “no-brainers.” We understand it will take the risks of others to take on some of this, but we hope our City administrators will examine with a keen eye discussions of developments that come to the table. We also hope BHSU will find ways to incorporate Spearfish culture as described into its marketing and strategic development. Hopefully, some collaboration between City and Campus will continue to evoke positive cultural unity.

**SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE -**

- **More Breweries** – Fort Collins was built on outdoor living and multiple breweries. We believe the introduction of another brewery would eventually “grow the pie,” not take a slice from current operations of well-established Crow Peak.
- **Authentic Thai/Asian or Middle Eastern Flavors** – Rapid City has shown support for several sushi and Nepalese cuisine ventures. We feel Spearfish would greatly benefit from a small, manageable location of something niche.
- **Non-traditional Breakfast or Waffle House** – while Perkins and the Millstone exist, these places are geared for volume, meeting the role of traditional diners. Some current facilities offer part time breakfast options, such as brunches, or breakfast burritos and plates. Spearfish lacks a handmade flare for any meal before 10 AM, and has only a few non-traditional options which serve breakfast throughout the day.
- **Open Late – Any Restaurant** – current or future coffee shops, restaurants, or even a FOOD TRUCK – could meet this need. Eating and socializing remains difficult after 11pm. There are very few simply social offerings, and fewer still without alcohol as a central theme. Concerning the Food Truck option, do our current street vending codes interfere? Do they fit the needs of a community hoping to open the door to entrepreneurs on the fringe?
- **Sweet Shop/ Bakery** – anything artisanal and local. Any hours of operations will certainly need to be considered by the developer, but we understand shrewd strategies of profitability will need to be applied, as we’ve seen a few come and go. In the past, some of the more successful shops included wedding services and a mixture of chocolates and baked goods.
Used Retail for Adults – we have several for children, but the fact is the under 35 group would stay and shop more if there was an option that didn’t break the bank, but was geared with the progressive generation in mind. Used apparel, records/music, books, and furniture outside of the Salvation Army and hand me downs. The right store would BRING IN shoppers from neighboring communities. We’ve actually seen some of this in Belle Fourche with its plethora of used retail, and Green Thread had a solid run in Spearfish. A major factor in the success of such a venture is availability of affordable and feasible space, which may be a challenge in Spearfish currently.

More Outfitting – Visit Spearfish describes Spearfish as “Naturally Inviting.” Our generation of Spearfish residents tend to seek out healthy, active lifestyles; we take advantage of outdoor opportunities the area provides. However, despite a few small venues, no one has tackled outdoor gear’s “whole hog” so to speak. A great example of a local store which meets this much-needed market is Granite Sports in Hill City.

NEW NICHE/SUBCULTURAL OPTIONS! – attitudes of the young Spearfish crowd create a great support structure for small, weird local retail – let’s welcome creative entrepreneurs and provide an environment conducive to their success!
ENTERTAINMENT

Most communities, from sprawling metropolises to those of rural South Dakota, include venues, both free and for-profit, tailored to entertain people via live music, arts, and cultural entertainment. These entertainment avenues feature localized, specific culture to the area (think country music in a bar in South Dakota) or may introduce a completely new style (such as world music at the Opera House.) This generation, with access to more diverse arts genres thanks to the Internet and YouTube, values a good mix of both. Spearfish audiences are still maturing, which causes greater risks for both performers and performance centers that host these events. However, younger area audiences are also curious and our recent track record has been progressive, with facilities embracing new acts and budding festivals and music series.

When considering our need for entertainment, one key question comes to mind: “What will I do this Friday night?” While we partially have found an answer in Downtown Friday Nights, we feel that it may restrict the platform for some subcultures to thrive. Much like the targeted demographic, the tone of DFN is somewhat singular and does not necessarily feel like the location specific vibe we are trying to create for Spearfish’s youth and subcultures in their 20s and 30s. While it successfully brings some of the families of our community together and attracts visitors to Spearfish on Friday nights, it may inhibit some current retail businesses and limit visibility of alternative venues during the set up and show time, during what would traditionally be an otherwise lucrative time period. For example, it interferes with the ability of the Matthews Opera House to host artist receptions, banquets, and musical and theatrical performances every Friday night throughout the busy summer season. Though we generally agree the weekly event helps bring an answer to the question for some, its lack of variety may need some adjustments in order to allow room for diversified growth.

The following lists aspects of Spearfish’s entertainment subculture, broken into Current establishments and Future needs. Due to the sheer volume of current options, we have only listed in part, in order to capture the present “feel” of Spearfish:

- **Matthews Opera House** – community and professional theatrical performances, galas, musical events, and public gallery with local and regional artists
- **Spearfish Band Shell** – lease space for public performance including the new Acoustic Series in the Park on Wednesday nights. As an important note, we feel this series better fits with Spearfish’s 20s and 30s subculture than DFN because it features bluegrass, local talents, and local vendors. Its location and hours of operation also have less negative impact on other retailers as it
is removed from direct retail space. Its 6-8 PM timeline fits better with the needs of current local competitors as well.

- **Crow Peak Brewery** – musical performances year round
- **Black Hills State University** – several performance halls and exhibit spaces for students and the public
- **B&B Lounge** – offers a variety of local and national talent
- **Termesphere Gallery** – established, local artist unique to Spearfish
- **Bay Leaf Café, Roma’s, Common Grounds, and other non-bars** – offer public space and intermittent performances
- **Flanagan’s Irish Pub** – traditional and non-traditional Irish and folk rock performances regularly as well as open mic nights
- **Northern Hills Cinema** – the only movie theater in the Northern Hills
- **Festival in the Park, Dakota 5-0, Market in the Park, and other public annual, monthly, and weekly events** – varied subculture gatherings of retailers and performers

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**SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE -**

- **Public Space** – an amateur, no-cost public performance space somewhere downtown or where pedestrian traffic may spontaneously encounter street performances with no overhead or inherent financial risk
- **Off-campus Space** – a University art, photography, and possible performance gallery off-campus inviting community members to experience the work of both academia and the arts taking place here in Spearfish. (For example, Geek Speak lectures could take place here.)
- **Platform for Diverse Opportunities** – development of other performance venues that host national acts above 500 but below 6000 people. In other words, we would like something that is not an arena, but something large enough to host fringe entertainment with some national following. The former Passion Play is privately owned and therefore individuals are at great financial risk without some artistic grant and historical funding. This may discourage variety in performers. In the future perhaps we, as a community or as a City, may somehow incorporate this into some sort of publicly funded entity, or perhaps part of our park system.
- **Bridge the Gap** – we need to encourage new local artists, performers, and musicians to perform and create cost effective options to attract more artists and performers to organize their own events.
- **Public Art** – any outdoor display of art including but not limited to murals, sculptures, etc. that could make an area more beautiful, inviting, or interesting. Areas that come to mind when thinking of this include downtown alleys, areas along the bike path, and the Exit 8 industrial park. A space dedicated to free spontaneous public art (think Art Alley) would also be great.
OUTDOOR ADVENTURE

We agree that Spearfish’s location within the Black Hills gives it the potential to grow like the communities of Bozeman and Austin. Spearfish has the right combination of population, culture, and adventure to attract future students, faculty, and residents year round. We have excellent climbing, hiking, fishing, hunting, skiing, snowshoeing, camping, geocaching, snowmobiling, mountain biking, and off-roading. Traditionally, Spearfish has been progressive in protecting its outdoor infrastructure, especially when dealing with its treatment of Lookout Mountain and Spearfish Canyon.

For example, several key local figures and events in mountain biking have put Spearfish’s Black Hills on the national map. Its unique ability to blend endurance and adventure cycling within close proximity to the city invites new enthusiasts to the sport and area with relative ease. We outshine similar communities in Colorado, Wyoming, and Montana with residents’ ability to pedal out the front door and be on the trail within minutes, as well as host events in our park system and cityscape. We feel outdoor and adventure sports are the budding cause of much of our city’s growth, and the University’s and City’s responsibility is to market these assets, as well as provide the infrastructure necessary to grow these assets responsibly.

- **Dakota 5-0** – fifty mile cross country mountain bike race that ends in Spearfish City Park with live music and awards. This race is known nationally and attracts many professional riders from across the country. It is capped at 700 riders, but brings in 1500 plus people including race support and families
- **Spearfish Canyon** – world class climbing and hiking available at all levels including the beautiful falls in Savoy. Includes well-established systems as well as opportunities to discover new, less traveled routes
- **Look Out Mountain, Crow Peak, and Tinton Trails** – trail systems which provide all levels of hiking and riding in several seasons and weather conditions, featuring many sanctioned trails for motorized and non-motorized sports
- **Spearfish Bike CO-OP** – a volunteer non-profit facility dedicated to teaching and assisting in bicycle maintenance, as well as restoring and repairing bikes for the public
- **Salsa Bicycle Manufacturers** – Salsa Bicycles makes bikes for adventure riding, specifically for long distance rides on gravel, single-track, and snow. This company named a bike the “Spearfish” model after experiencing the terrain and long race style of our 5-0. They also featured our community and a Crow Peak ride in their 2014 catalog
Countless Neighboring Features of the Hills – including Devil’s Tower, Sylvan Lake, the Needles, Centennial Trail, Bear Lodge, The BAM (bicycle, arts, and music festival) in Sturgis, as well as countless rivers, creeks, and lakes for summer recreation.

Quarq Technologies – a division of SRAM Components founded in Spearfish that manufactures and ships high performance power meters for cycling performance. This is obviously an attraction for employees who want to live a Spearfish lifestyle.

Terry Peak and Mystic Mountain Winter Sports Parks – ski resorts and mountain park within 20 miles of Spearfish in the Lead-Deadwood area.

Bike to Work Week and Spearfish Bike Week – two events that bookend the season with organized rides and events coordinated with national craft beer week.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE -

Continued Bicycle Infrastructure – especially lanes that navigate through Jackson and Main streets to accommodate and encourage campus and work commuting and bicycle parking.

Campus Outdoor Center – this could include indoor climbing facility and equipment training, as well as promote skiing and snowboarding course credits at BHSU. We would also hope this would include proper mapping and a central intelligence center for organizing the vast amount of outdoor opportunities. Equipment rental at this facility is also desirable.

Continued Race Events Hosted Downtown – similar to the DFN and Acoustic Series events, the city could participate in the organization of many styles of bike or foot races that utilize our park and trail system for profit or fund raising purposes.

Promotion and Maintenance of our Disc Golf Courses already in use including tournaments and events.

Indoor Climbing Facility – whether on campus, in the rec center, privately owned, etc. An indoor facility would stimulate climbing year round and promote the already growing sport in our area.
Despite the size of this section, communications may be the most important tool in the integration of the above developmental opportunities. We feel that many of the current establishments remain relatively exclusive and would benefit from an interlinking interface, bringing the voices of both existing and future residents to advertise and invite each other to participate in the present and growing subcultures in Spearfish.

- Visit Spearfish and the Spearfish Chamber of Commerce – both organizations have calendars and staff dedicated to communicating the happenings of our town
- BHSU Student Union – a campus facility dedicated to helping integrate the student body on campus
- BHSU Advertising Boards – places to communicate both campus and community events, though they are somewhat restrictive
- Spearfish City Website – the key to attracting people to our community as visitors or future residents
- Spearfish Economic Development – office dedicated to linking future retailers and industry to our city

**SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE -**

- BHSU Poster Policy – the poster policy at BHSU is quite inhibiting, therefore making it hard for events and local flyers to have an impact on campus. This small change would make a world of difference, when integrating campus and community. The challenge is that any poster presented to BH has 2 inhibiting qualities: they must be stamped and actually “certified” by BH endorsing the product or event mentioned, and they must be alcohol free, as BH is a dry campus by the Board of Regents. We do not believe these are negative qualities in an academic environment. However, a reevaluation of the poster policy’s “status quo” could reap significant benefits for the University and the community. One potential solution is a triangular or double sided poster presenter in front of the Student Union. Great subculture communities as previously described often have a “lamppost system” with one or two locations really over-stapled and wrapped in personal flyers and ads. We believe BHSU needs a distinct spot for the community to spontaneously advertise and communicate. Collaborating with the College Lane Apartments, Nash Street Apartments, or City parks department could also allow reasonably accessible yet less ‘structured’ communication boards.
- **A City Poster Policy** – just as important as above, a single spontaneous location for any format of communication.

- **A “really cool” City/Community Website** – we understand that this is the goal of all websites, however, with a little research, we realized other communities had successfully made more culture encompassing websites that appealed to our group. See Sheridan, Wyoming. Our community needs a website like this.

- **A Developed Spearfish App** - that would allow users and businesses to link social media info at a few moments notice.

- **A Brand of “ASK US” Administrative Desk Dedicated to Connecting All Strategies** - not a “Visit Spearfish” but a “Live Spearfish.” Mistie Caldwell, Melissa Barth, and the volunteers of DBA are understaffed and outgunned when it comes to consolidating all of the above information. We believe, within Visit Spearfish, some funding other than BID money specific to events and communication such as maintaining website data, apps, and social media, may be the next step.
CONCLUSION

The original meeting and introduction of the charge, as assigned by President Jackson of BHSU, left us considerable room to develop our plan. He made clear in the initial conversation that we were to think about our community as an empty canvas, ready to apply broad strokes of creative thinking and specific, actionable seeds that would slowly and organically develop our community into a destination which undeniably captures an up and coming brand of adventure lifestyle campus, and culture. This process, which we see as a light framework, included two months of discussions between the following individuals:

- Angie Black
- Nick Caton
- Bob Dooley
- Devin Feighan
- Gina Gibson
- Janette Hettick
- Elizabeth Moore
- Aaron Neiman
- Hannah Remington
- Ava Sauter
- Nolan Schneider
- Jami Schoenewies
- Janessa Scholl
- Michael Sehlmeyer
- Erica Whitiker
- John Williams
- Gaby Wolff

We outlined the items we believe already exist and the new ideas that would further put Spearfish on the map of regional, and possibly national, subcultures. These items, we believe, will help cultivate and unfold an outdoor, college-town culture, which is desirably unique.
Spearfish has already invited and cultivated passionate people who want to live and work here. However, the future will not fully be determined by those whom built the foundation but by those whom seek out and develop the opportunities which define their own style of City, University, and natural setting.

We suggest the following individuals, groups, and current organizations as parties potentially willing to build forward:

- City of Spearfish
- Black Hills State University
- Spearfish Chamber of Commerce
- Visit Spearfish
- Downtown Business Association
- Spearfish Economic Development
- Current developers and retailers of interest
- Current event coordinators – this includes the founders of races, music, and any future festivals
- Community service groups