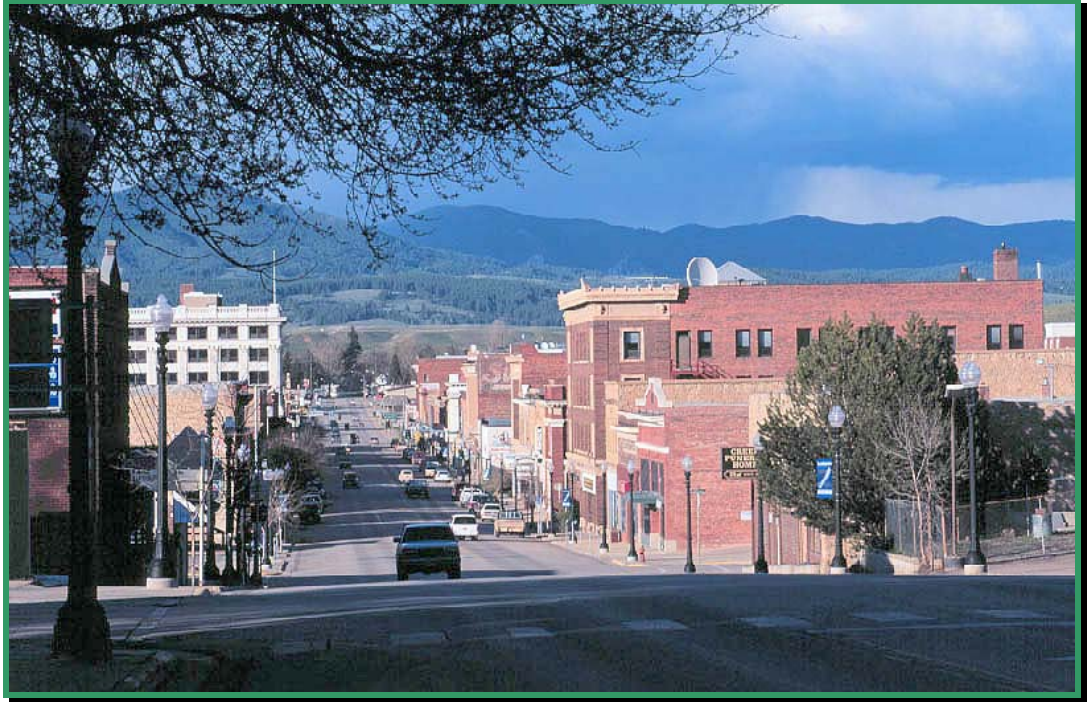


LEWISTOWN
MONTANA

2006



GROWTH POLICY

Prepared for the
LEWISTOWN CITY-COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
Lewistown, Montana

September 8, 2006

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INTRODUCTION

Montana counties, cities, and towns have been encouraged to adopt comprehensive growth plans for many years. The City of Lewistown implemented its own Comprehensive Plan in 1971. Since that time, Lewistown has not adopted or revised a new plan. In 2002, a project entitled Envision Lewistown was created in order to update the city's plan, but was not adopted.

This report, entitled the "2006 Lewistown Growth Policy" (hereinafter "Growth Policy") is an extension of the 1971 Comprehensive Plan and the 2002 Envision Lewistown project. Most of the statistical data found in this document was gathered from the September 2000 project entitled the "Lewistown Growth Policy Plan Data Element" which was created by Applied Communications from Great Falls, Montana.

The Growth Policy is intended to provide guidelines for orderly community development from 2006 until 2011, or when Lewistown's population reaches 10,000 residents, whichever comes sooner. At that time, the document will be reviewed and updated, and a new Growth Policy may be put into effect if deemed necessary. It is the purpose of this Growth Policy to present current issues and projected trends for Lewistown (and the 4½-mile area surrounding the incorporated municipal boundary) in order to make educated decisions regarding future development.

The Growth Policy aims to conserve and protect the health, safety, and general welfare of the citizens of Lewistown, as well as to plan for the efficient and economical development of the town's resources. These goals can be reached by examining the past and present, and analyzing those trends to prepare for the future. This will result in a better community through rational growth and economically sensible redevelopment.

Where warranted, the plan shall be flexible in its implementation and interpretation. It is not the intention of the Growth Policy to restrict growth, but instead to allow it to develop in a logical and thoughtful manner. The 1999 Montana Legislature passed a planning law (76-1-601, MCA) that requires the passage of a growth policy that meets certain minimum requirements, which are addressed further in this document. The Legislature adopted this change in order to create an incentive for local governments to deal with growth management issues "up front" in a community policy development process, rather than addressing the issues one subdivision at a time.

This Growth Policy is designed to be adaptable to Lewistown's changing circumstances. It is subject to ongoing and frequent monitoring and amendment if required. The policies that result from the findings of this document must remain relevant to the community and region.

POPULATION AND ECONOMICS

POPULATION

(Sources: Montana Census and Economic Information Center, U.S. Census Fact Finder, and Applied Communications)

The population of Lewistown peaked in 1960 with 7,408 people residing within the city's municipal boundaries. From 1960 to 1990, the population of Lewistown decreased 17.7 percent from 7,408 to 6,097 residents. In 2005, the population was estimated to be 6,099. These numbers are erratic, and don't necessarily reflect the current growth trends of Lewistown, since the estimated figures do not take the growth of the outskirts into account.

The shrinking birth rate continues to impact the population of Lewistown. The county population estimates for Fergus County show deaths exceeding births by 26.5 percent (346 people) from 1990 to 1999. The shrinking birthrate was, however, offset by an estimated in-migration of 478 people. The most obvious reasons for Lewistown's 17.7 percent population decline between 1960 and 1990 are the shrinking birth rate and the mechanization of agriculture. Increasingly efficient farm practices have shrunk the need for farm and ranch workers as well as reduced the amount of tires, fuel, feed, seed, fertilizer, parts and other necessities of agricultural operations.

Aging Trends

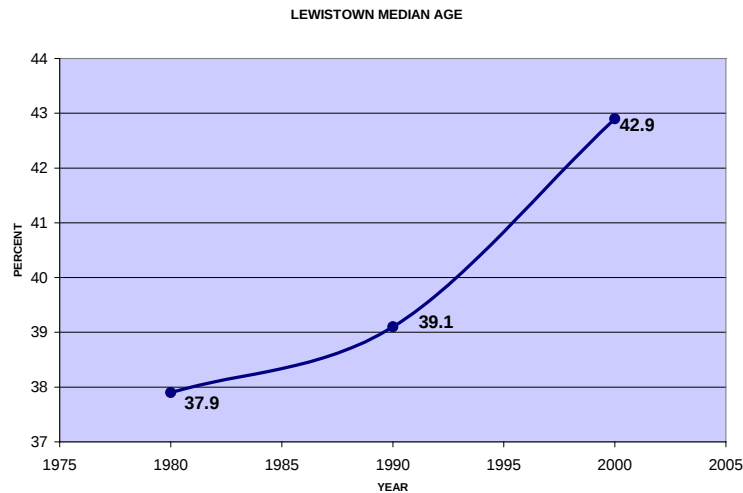
When comparing the Lewistown age groups in the 1980, 1990, and 2000 censuses, an aging trend becomes visible. The 2002 Census determined the median age in Fergus County to be 42.4 years, versus the Montana median age of 37.5 (See Figure 1 in Appendix). In 2000, 19.9 percent of Fergus County's population was 65 years and older. This contrasts Montana's average of 13.4 percent and the U.S. average of 12.4 percent (See Figure 2). Overall, Montana is one of the leading baby boomer states in the nation with 27.9 percent of the state's residents being between the ages of 45 and 64. The aging trend is especially visible when compared in Chart 1 (page 7). This graph shows the median age in Lewistown in 1980, 1990, and 2000, at 37.9, 39.1, and 42.9 respectively.

In 2000, 47.9 percent of Lewistown's population had pursued educational attainment or technical training above the high school level (compared to 38.2 percent in 1990). However, only 19.5 percent had actually received an associate or college level degree in 2000. The 1990 data shows Lewistown residents who obtained a bachelors degree or higher to be 14 percent, compared to 19.8 percent for the State of Montana.

Overall, it appears there Lewistown is experiencing moderate growth, with an increase in the age of residents. Older individuals tend to be wealthier and better educated which would result in a shift in economic trends.

CHART 1

Data Source: Applied Communications, 2000



ECONOMICS

(Sources: Montana Census and Economic Information Center, U.S. Census Fact Finder, and Applied Communications)

The United States and the State of Montana are experiencing a prolonged period of economic expansion. During the 1990s, the stock market reached record heights, inflation was held in check, and interest rates remained low, providing relatively inexpensive investment capital. Montana's economy has not been as vibrant as the national economy, but growth has been steady. These trends, however, are not reflected in Fergus County. The economy of this region has been impacted by the agricultural and mining industries. Over the past decade, the agricultural industry has had zero growth and mining is no longer a viable source of income for many residents. Chart 2 displays a comparison of employment data by industry in Fergus County.

CHART 2

EMPLOYMENT SECTOR	1991	1994	1998
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	3.8	3.4	1.4
Construction	4.5	4.9	4.4
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	3.8	4.2	3.5
Government	27.7	26.9	26.2
Manufacturing	5.1	6.1	6.4
Retail Trade, Arts, Entertainment, Tourism Services	20.7	19.8	20.2
Professional, Health, and Social Services	25.3	25.8	28.6
Transportation and Public Utilities	3.6	3.7	3.5
Wholesale Trade	5.3	5.1	5.8

Sources: Montana Department of Labor and Industry, Office of Research and Analysis and U.S. Census Bureau

From 1991 to 1998, total employment in Fergus County grew by 13.4 percent. Unemployment has shown a slight decline in the County, which is still slightly higher than Montana's unemployment rate. Chart 3 ranks the ten major employers in Lewistown during April 2000, and gives the approximate number of employees for each employer.

CHART 3	
<i>Source: Applied Communications, April 2000</i>	
Major Employers	Approximate Number of Employees (full and part time)
Central Montana Medical Center	315
Lewistown School District	300
MT Mental Health Nursing Care Center	215
Century Construction	90 to 120
Albertsons	100
Valle Vista Manor	65
Berg Lumber Company	63
Fergus County	61
City of Lewistown	60

Although Fergus County may not appear to be significant to Montana's overall economic conditions, it is the most influential county in the central region of the state. Lewistown is the largest community in a vast but sparsely populated county. At 4,339 square miles, Fergus County is the 8th largest county in the State. The estimated 1999 population ranks Fergus County as the 15th most populated, with 12,180 residents. Fergus County is the hub of the agriculturally based center of the state. As shown in Figure 3, Fergus County has a significantly higher per capita income than its surrounding counties.

In 2003, Fergus County was home to 1,392 private business establishments. This figure is not noteworthy in comparison to the rest of the state's data; however, it is significant compared to the majority of the counties in the same region (See Figure 4).

Projections

(Sources: U.S. Census Bureau and Montana Census and Economic Information Center)

From now until 2030, Montana's total population is expected to increase by 251,000 people. Among this gain, 13,000 of those people will be gained as a result of international migration. This will likely affect the overall racial composition of Lewistown which was 98.7 percent white in 1997. Montana's population will become increasingly ethnically diverse as the state grows. Lewistown must be prepared for the social and economic implications of this change.

Fergus County is expected to maintain moderate growth over the next few decades. The 2030 population projection estimates a 3.3 percent gain to the existing population (See Figure 5). As the Baby Boom generation (those born between 1946 and 1964) reaches retirement age, the growth of the elderly population (65 and over) is expected to accelerate rapidly. Specifically, Fergus County is expected to see an increase of 44.9 percent of the amount of residents 65 years and over by 2030 (See Figure 6).

In 1989, the per capita income for Lewistown was \$10,530, compared to the statewide average of \$11,213. In 2000, the per capita income for Lewistown was \$16,817 compared to the statewide average of \$17,151. Thus, in 1989, Lewistown residents made 6.09 percent less than the rest of Montana, and in 2000, Lewistown residents made 1.96 percent less than the rest of Montana. Overall, it appears Lewistown is gaining economic strength equal to that of the rest of Montana.

Through this data, it is clear that Fergus County isn't expected to experience rapid growth; however, it will be growing at a moderate rate, which must be prepared for. Despite the number of newcomers to the area, Fergus County is expected to experience a tremendous increase in the amount of people 65 and over. Housing types and availability will be an influential factor when planning for that trend. Additionally, as Lewistown gains economic strength, it can be expected that housing and land values will increase, as well as income levels for the residents of the town.

HOUSING

(Source: U.S. Census Bureau)

According to the 1990 U.S. Census data, the predominant housing type in Lewistown was single-family homes. At this time, it was found that 35 percent of the homes had a significant degree of deferred maintenance. The 1971 Comprehensive Plan identified that 25 percent of the existing housing stock in Lewistown was in "below average" condition at that time. The Envision Lewistown project found that four areas in Lewistown were believed to have 90 percent or more substandard housing units.

The Lewistown Community Housing Plan completed in 1996 indicated that housing of adequate quality was becoming rapidly less affordable. Additionally, the elderly age group in Fergus County has been on an upward trend since 1950, and this movement is expected to continue. The Lewistown Housing Task Force is currently undertaking projects to enhance the home ownership opportunities through the Montana Home Investment Partnership Program. Furthermore, business owners have purchased such areas as the Broadway Building and Hobbs Property with the objective to refurbish the buildings into condominiums and apartments. Although the Lewistown Housing Task Force is taking steps to improve the housing conditions, much of the current rental housing supply is substandard and a wide selection of rental housing is not available in the community.

In 2000, Lewistown had 2,868 total housing units, 90.4 percent of which were occupied. Of these housing units, owners occupied 68.5 percent and 31.5 percent were occupied by renters (See Chart 4). In addition, 34.3 percent of these housing units had at least one occupant who was 65 years and over. Of these housing units, 67.9 percent were built before 1959. One-unit detached structures accounted for 70 percent of the total housing units, while 9 percent were mobile homes. In 2000, the average house was worth \$70,500 versus \$39,800 in 1990.

The Lewistown Housing Task Force completed the "Lewistown Housing Plan" in 1996. This plan indicated that there is a need for more rental housing that is more affordable and of better quality. The survey indicated that there is a shortage of units, especially larger units that would be suitable for families. With the expected increase in population, the number of households required will increase as well. Single-family home prices are expected to rise faster than the

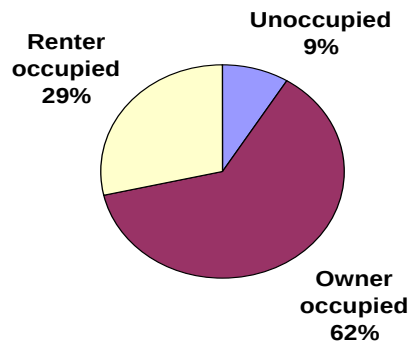
medium family income of residents in the Lewistown area. This will reduce opportunities for first-time homebuyers.

As prices for land, construction labor and materials, and processing costs continue to increase, the average Lewistown resident will be unable to find adequate housing based on current income levels. Additionally, the elderly population increasing, Lewistown will see the need for housing types aimed toward that demographic, such as apartments, single-level houses, and assisted living facilities.

CHART 4

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

LEWISTOWN HOUSING UNITS, 2000



In 1999, the Montana Department of Commerce Housing Division commissioned a “Housing Condition Study” to collect information in support of the Montana Consolidated Plan for housing. The purpose of the study was to evaluate the current stock of housing in Montana and better understand what type of housing structures are available to rent and purchase. Chart 5 displays the findings of the study for Lewistown.

CHART 5

Source: Montana Department of Housing, “Montana Housing Condition Study- Technical Appendix, Volume II”, September 1999

Rating	Single-Family	Mobile Home	Condominium	TOTAL
Missing Data	3	0	0	3
Unsound	5	0	0	5
Poor	112	6	0	118
Fair	677	41	0	718
Average	787	155	0	942
Good	441	73	49	563
Excellent	27	2	42	71
TOTAL	2052	277	91	2420

The Citizens Advisory Committee (formed during the Envision Lewistown project) focus group “Housing” and the Lewistown Housing Plan have identified the following issues to be concerned with and possible solutions to forthcoming problems:

1. Preservation and development needs to be managed through zoning, annexation/subdivision control, and the enforcement of building and housing codes.
2. The creation of housing should create minimal adverse impacts on the natural environment. Specific focus should be on compliance with the federal, state, and local environmental protection regulations.
3. Develop design guidelines and a design review ordinance would be beneficial. Special attention should be focused on using urban design guidelines that will enhance the cultural and historic identity of specific neighborhoods.
4. Encourage the continuing efforts to rehabilitate the existing housing supply to bring the units up to building code standards and to make the units more energy efficient.
5. Continue to improve educational efforts and inform the public of Lewistown’s housing situation.

LAND USE

INTRODUCTION

(Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Montana Census and Economic Information Center)

The 1971 Comprehensive Plan for Lewistown was prepared by Clark, Coleman & Rupeiks, Inc. from Seattle, Washington. This plan designated developing area sufficient to accommodate up to 26,000 citizens. The Montana Department of Commerce established Lewistown's population to be 6,099 in 2005. Because the current population is significantly lower than 26,000, the 1971 Comprehensive Plan still holds valuable suggestions to resolve today's issues. The 1971 Plan identified land use areas, which are still applicable today. A land use study is a tool to analyze the way in which community lands are being used. Land use studies from the 1971 Comprehensive Plan, the Envision Lewistown project, and the Downtown Master Plan provide valuable insight to the current situation.

Land use classifications are important to establish in order to ensure there is adequate space to accommodate a growing population. The 1971 Comprehensive Plan developed a map that designated land use areas to exist in Lewistown until the population reaches 26,000 (See Figure 7). Again, this map still provides valuable information that is relevant to Lewistown's current situation; however, it must be noted that this plan does not include the 4½-mile fringe that this Growth Policy encompasses.

The Advisory Committee "Land Use" focus group stresses the importance that land use and transportation are interrelated. Transportation corridors must be well planned to guide where growth and development is to occur to achieve the vision of the Lewistown area.

The vision for the area and the Growth Policy calls for a prevention and/or reduction of urban and rural sprawl. "Sprawl" is low-density development that unfolds from the edges of cities and towns. It is poorly planned, land consumptive, automobile oriented, and designed without regard to its surroundings. Managing sprawl provides an opportunity for creative mixed-use development. Many opportunities abound for using creative techniques for developing higher densities without reducing livability.

If land use policies are used to direct new development into areas where public services and facilities are currently located (or proposed), efficiency will be gained.

As the population is expected to increase and age, the cost of housing will play a significant role in providing a successful region for health, safety, and welfare of the community. Land use patterns play a significant role in the cost of housing and cost of living.

A study commissioned by the National Association of Homebuilders showed that trails are among the principle amenities that new homebuyers look for when relocating (U.S. News and World Report, 2005). Open space can only be achieved if designated in land use plans before the lands are developed.

AGRICULTURE

According to the 1971 Comprehensive Plan, “agriculture is the most important aspect of the Planning Area and the region” (pg. 3). Lewistown serves as the economic hub and regional center for the central Montana agricultural area. The creators of the 1971 Plan held the insight that in the future, agriculture will have “a strong effect on the community’s economic well being” (pg. 4). The 1971 Plan stresses the importance of recognizing the connectivity between the region’s agricultural industry and the economic prosperity of the town. Notably, the plan calls for the preservation from “uncontrolled urbanization”, and the need for “exclusive agricultural zoning” of the land “lying in the path of urbanization” (pg. 4).

The more that Lewistown’s population increases, the more that agricultural areas will be threatened by urban sprawl. The 1971 Plan states that it is important to realize that “if the agricultural sector has a setback, the services that Lewistown provides will be in less demand” (pg. 57).

The 1971 Comprehensive Plan provided three goals for the city of Lewistown to implement into its policy system. The first goal was to “provide continued recognition of the importance of agriculture to the economic base of the community.” The second objective was to “develop protective measure against urban sprawl moving into agricultural areas.” The final idea encouraged protective measures such as “flood control, soil and water conservation, etc. for the agricultural lands” (pg. 79).

PARKS, RECREATIONAL FACILITIES, AND OPEN SPACE

Open space is defined as “any land which is provided or preserved for parks and recreational purposes, conservation of land or other natural resources, historic or scenic purposes, of assisting in the shaping of the character, direction, and timing of community development” (76-6-104, MCA). The Citizens Advisory Committee believes Lewistown would benefit from the designation of open space land use areas in order to prevent destruction of valuable natural resources.

The 1971 Comprehensive Plan states that “the existence or the lack of natural resources is a key factor in the location of a community” (pg. 3). With Lewistown being a town of abundant natural resources, it is imperative to conserve the open space that is available. Currently, protected areas are zoned as “Public Land” (PL) as designated in the Lewistown City Code (November 2005). However, these zoning regulations only include land within Lewistown’s city limits, and do not affect the 4½-mile fringe surrounding the city that the Growth Policy would like to include in the planning process.

The Advisory Committee focus group “Open Space and Recreation” has identified a number of concerns related to the future of available open space in the community. The need to protect valuable open space will become a major issue as the city and county populations increase. Green spaces must be utilized as pedestrian and/or non-motorized linkages within the urban area and between the town and countryside to maintain livability. These parks/open spaces will serve a variety of purposes including recreation, the preservation of wildlife habitat, wetlands, air, and water quality.

Proper landscaping and tree planting are necessary to create an attractive urban environment. Areas to make this possible must be set-aside before development consumes desirable areas for landscaping. In order to maintain a healthy environment, air and water quality must be protected and water conserved.

The City Code (November 2005) does not contain regulations outside of the Lewistown city limits. It is the purpose of the Growth Policy to analyze a 4½-mile fringe surrounding the City as well as the City itself. The consideration of designating attractive areas outside of the city boundaries as open space land use areas would be beneficial before development consumes any available land. Collaboration between the City and County is vital to creating an open space network.

Lewistown has a total of 96 acres of parkland. This amounts to approximately 15.6 acres per 1,000 people which exceeds the National Recreation and Parks Association recommended standard of 10 acres per 1,000 people. See Chart 6 for a list of Lewistown's parks.

CHART 6

Source: Lewistown Parks & Recreation Department, 2000 (revised Frog Ponds designation)

PARK NAME	ACRES	FACILITIES
Symmes Park	14.50	- Restrooms - Baseball Diamonds - Multi-Purpose Courts - Chamber Building - Horseshoe Courts - Playground
Judith Park	3.40	Playground
Kiwanis Park	1.38	- Playground - Baseball Field - Basketball Court - Tennis Court
Hawthorne Park	1.38	- Playground - Baseball Field - Basketball Court
Jaycees Park	1.38	- Playground - Multi-Purpose Court
School Park	1.38	Open Space
Frank Day Park	7.00	- Playground - Swimming Pool & Bathhouse
Railroad Park	0.20	Open Space
Reed's Fort Park	0.34	Original Post Office
Mill Ditch Park	0.34	Open Space
Boulevard Strips	0.20	Open Space
Water Tower	0.68	Open Space
Fish Hatchery	4.00	Picnic, Fishing (Outside City)
Robinson Park	9.00	Trails
D'Autremont Complex	19.00	Softball Fields (Outside City)
Frog Ponds	32.00	Ponds/Open Space, Trails

The last Comprehensive Park and Recreation Plan for the City was completed in 1974. A new plan would reflect a more up-to-date inventory of facilities and recommendations.

RESIDENTIAL

(Source: Applied Communications, 2000)

As noted in the Housing section of this Growth Policy, 67.9 percent of the housing units in Lewistown were built before 1959. Because of this fact, the 1971 Comprehensive Plan still holds value in terms of analyzing the residential land use situation. The 1971 Plan stated that there was a major problem of blighted housing conditions outside of the city, namely northwest of the city limits. This is still a noted problem that calls for action to rectify the situation. Annexation and nuisance ordinance policies would increase the overall livability of the area.

The 1971 Plan suggested two separate types of low-density residential zoning, “suburban” and “low density.” Suburban areas are those which will need public facilities and urban services to be extended into areas of new development. This will provide the city with the ability to discern which areas would be more suitable for immediate development in relation to the existing public infrastructure system.

The Applied Communications Study found the following issues in regards to residential land use in a 2000 study:

1. North/Historic Neighborhood

The area north of Main Street contains three historic districts. As development moves farther away from the central business core more modern style ranch and split level homes become more prevalent. Overall property maintenance in the area is **good** west of First Avenue. This area has primarily paved streets with curb and gutter.

2. East Lewistown

This includes the area east of First Avenue. The historic district Judith Place is located in this area and generally represents **good** property maintenance with paved streets that have curb and gutter. Property maintenance in the area directly east and west of Judith Place ranges from **low to fair** with problems such as outdoor storage, overgrown landscaping, and deferred maintenance.

3. Near South Neighborhood

This includes the area south of Main Street and the CBD. The south boundaries are generally at the railroad tracks and the Frog Ponds. This area is comprised mostly of more modest frame bungalows and cottages on small urban lots. The streets are a combination of paved, gravel, and chip and seal. Overall property maintenance is **fair to good** with some limited problems of deferred maintenance.

The eastern portion of this area that is adjacent to the industrial uses is typical of a transition area with a mix of mobile homes, single-family and multi-family. Property maintenance is **low** with outdoor storage, deferred maintenance and neglected landscaping. There is also a pocket of residential development between the industrial

area and the old hospital. This area has significant property maintenance problems with the housing study indicating that 93 percent of the homes are **substandard**.

4. Southwest Neighborhood

Southwest of Casino Creek represents a newer more suburban type development. **Good** levels of property maintenance are typical. Ranch homes are south of the high school on medium sized urban lots also with good property maintenance throughout the neighborhood.

5. Urban Fringe

On the northern edge of the City limits are two mobile home developments. The development near the fairgrounds has paved streets with generally **good** property maintenance. The area adjacent to the cemetery has gravel streets, with fair to good property maintenance.

6. Lewistown Heights

Lewistown Heights is located in the unincorporated area north of the City limits. The area is densely developed without adequate water and sewer infrastructure. The 1996 Housing Study indicated that 90 percent of the homes in this area were **substandard**. The area is a mix of mobile homes and single-family dwellings with gravel streets. The entire area has significant property maintenance problems with widespread abandoned vehicles, debris, neglected landscaping, outdoor storage, and homes in disrepair.

7. Rural Residential

Outside the City Limits in the planning area are a number of large lot rural estate subdivisions. The Housing Study identified the area around Roundhouse Road as having a significant number of **substandard** housing.

COMMERCIAL

Downtown Solutions Team, a revitalization specialist organization created a “Downtown Master Plan” for the City of Lewistown in September of 2005. This plan suggests improvements to open space and landscaping areas for the Central Business District. This plan should coordinate with the intentions of the Growth Policy.

The 1971 Comprehensive Plan called for a specific concern that there is no zoning outside of the city, which will eventually result in “virtually no controls on development beyond the economic restraints” (pg. 10). As previously stated, it is the purpose of this Growth Policy to guide and ensure the logical development of Lewistown and the 4½-mile fringe surrounding the town. With no zoning or land use classifications in effect for the surrounding city area, it is inevitable that growth in this area will proceed in an unplanned and unchecked manner. The 1971 Plan attempts to better define the commercial areas and stop the progress of commercial strip development in areas inappropriate for that type of land use. It states that the Central Business District “must not continue its lineal growth” (pg. 11).

In accordance with the 1971 Comprehensive Plan, requirements to improve the standards of development should be in effect. This includes “proper ingress and egress, parking requirements and improvements, sign controls, lighting, street dedication and improvement, effects on adjacent properties, etc.”(pg. 12).

It is the intent of this Growth Policy to guide in accordance with the Downtown Master Plan, as there is a “connection between downtown redevelopment efforts and economic development and job growth” (pg. 21). The findings and policies resulting from the analysis of the Downtown Master Plan should be considered a part of this Growth Policy.

The 1971 Comprehensive Plan emphasizes on the importance of maintaining the Central Business District as the hub or core of the community. If this core is not maintained, business will continue to be lost to Billings and Great Falls. This plan calls to “halt the spread of commercial strip development along the arterials” (pg. 11).

INDUSTRIAL

(Source: Applied Communications, 2000)

Industrial development follows the old rail line along First Avenue and Highway 238 south of Main Street. The area extends south into the unincorporated planning area. This industrial corridor generally contains uses with significant outdoor storage and heavy trucking traffic.

Additionally, there are a number of significant industrial uses in the planning area. An abandoned lumber mill is located directly north of Lewistown along 4th Street or Joyland Road. A grain elevator is located north on Highway 191 and gravel pit is located on Marcella Avenue.

LAND OWNERSHIP

Adjacent to the planning area, the Bureau of Land Management oversees public lands in the area of the Judith Mountains. These lands are classified as a Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA). This area is a mountainous region with scenic overlooks. Usage includes hiking, horseback riding, and mountain biking systems.

The State of Montana has a number of grazing allotments in the area that are administered by the State Lands office (See Figure 8).

CULTURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

Lewistown is a unique, historic, and family-oriented central Montana community with a distinct sense of place. The Growth Plan recognizes that the identification and preservation of historically and archaeologically significant sites should be taken into consideration when determining policies.

Lewistown has an active historic preservation program and has designated six historic districts, including many buildings representing local styles of stone masonry such as the stone buildings in the Lewistown and Vicinity Historic District. Individual structures not located within any

district are also listed in the National Register of Historic Places. See Figure 9 for a map of Lewistown's registered historic places.

Structures and sights listed in the National Register of Historic Places are not subject to design review in the event of a proposed alteration or demolition. A more comprehensive approach to historical preservation would be beneficial to the community.

NATURAL RESOURCES

INTRODUCTION

(Source: Applied Communications, 2000)

Lewistown and the 4 ½-mile planning area offer a diverse landscape from plains to streams to fresh water springs. This landscape along with nearby mountain ranges results in rich wildlife and habitat resources with stunning scenic views throughout the area. The area has a blue ribbon trout stream and a wealth of cultural resources within short driving distance of Lewistown.

The geography, climate, and geology of the area are favorable for a healthy quality of life that attracts many people to small towns like Lewistown. Air quality and drinking water quality are excellent. There are few sources of point pollution and issues regarding soil contaminants are generally manageable. Lewistown has taken an important step in addressing these issues through the “Big Spring Protection Program” that was prepared in 1996.

A variety of local, State, and Federal agencies are involved in the management of natural resources in the area. It is essential to develop a coordinated approach between the various levels of government and to take a comprehensive overview of all resources when establishing policy.

SURFACE AND GROUND WATER

(Sources: Natural Resource Conservation Service, 2006 and Applied Communications, 2000)

Big Spring Creek is located south of Lewistown and issues water at more than 100 cubic feet per second or about 65 million gallons per day. The Big Spring Creek is the source of drinking water for the City of Lewistown. Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks also operates a fish hatchery at the Springs.

A 100-year floodplain has been established for the city of Lewistown. The city is protected from floods of up to this magnitude by the construction of four flood-controlled dams and a flood-bypass channel (Mill Ditch). Development is restricted within the 100-year floodplain and it is the intention of this Growth Policy to advocate policies that are in accordance with the floodplain.

About 40 members comprise the Big Spring Creek Watershed Partnership. This group has assisted in installing the educational programs on conservation easements, worked on Big Spring Creek fisheries and conducted watershed aquifers and riparian stream tours. The group has been involved in stream restoration projects, cleaning up past industrial sites, groundwater and riparian zone projects, and developed a trail system (Brewery Flats).

Storm Water

Lewistown would benefit from the creation of a storm water plan that considers solutions to the current situation. There is a problem of pollutants generated by human activities being washed by rainfall into storm sewer systems, and in most cases the pollutants are discharged into Spring Creek or other area water bodies. Solution ideas include narrower streets, reduced and shared

parking, clustered development with open space dedication, preservation of floodplains and riparian areas, tree and native vegetation preservation, landscaping, filter strips around parking lots, and better thought-out designs for all project. Further research on this subject is necessary.

SOILS

The best quality soils are those found along the edges of Big Spring Creek. These soils are irrigated and are the most productive agricultural soils. Efforts should be maintained to protect these prime farmland soils. Maps of these lands can be obtained at the Lewistown Natural Resource Conservation District Office.

The bench lands and terraces around the edges of the Lewistown city limits are more suitable for development. However the area's aquifers outcrop in these areas which is an important step in the recharge process. Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology (Montana Tech in Butte) has created maps that depict where these sensitive outcrop areas are located and should be consulted before allowing development within the Big Spring Creek Watershed.

FISH AND WILDLIFE

Lewistown is famous for its abundance of wildlife and excellent fisheries. Urban deer are becoming troublesome as the native populations continue to increase. When planning future development, it is important to create wildlife corridors for deer to pass through. The state of Maryland uses a system called "hubs and corridors" in order to create a more suitable area for wildlife to pass through urban areas. This system should be researched to find its applicability to Lewistown's situation.

Big Spring Creek is home to various types of fish and fowl habitat. The presence of PCB contamination is the result from using paint that leaks chemicals and harms the environment and fish habitat. Environmental awareness must be especially present when dealing with development that affects the area surrounding Big Spring Creek.

SCENIC & CULTURAL RESOURCES

There are many attractions within an hour's drive of Lewistown including national forests, State parks, wildlife refuge, ghost towns, warm springs, historic sites, and recreation areas. Among the notable points of interest within ten miles of Lewistown are:

1. Nez Perce National Historic Trail
2. Lewis and Clark Trail
3. Carroll Trail
4. Wildlife Viewing Area
5. Hanover Trestle
6. Hanson Creek Recreational Area
7. Carter's Pond
8. Mill House
9. East Fork
10. Casino Creek Reservoir

PUBLIC FACILITIES

INTRODUCTION

(Source: Applied Communications, 2000)

Much of the basic infrastructure has been upgraded in recent years and is in relatively good operating condition in regards to modern equipment and meeting environmental regulations. Both water and sewer systems have excess capacity that can easily handle future population growth. Portions of the distribution and collection system, however, need repair or upgrade while maintenance and upkeep is an ongoing concern.

Electric, telecommunication, and solid waste utilities are provided by the private sector. Rapid regulatory and market changes in the electric and telecommunication industries are creating a constantly evolving business environment in these areas and the City should expect changes in services and rates.

SEWER AND WATER SYSTEMS

(Source: Applied Communications, 2000)

The source of water for the City of Lewistown is Big Spring located about six miles southeast of the City. The City conducts seven different tests per month at different places around the City to monitor water quality.

The waste water plant capacity is designed for three million gallons per day spike capacity and an average one and a half million-gallon per day capacity flow. The plant is designed to be expandable to serve a population of 9,000.

According to the Envision Lewistown project, new private wells are discouraged within the growth plan area (pg. 55). Unless development is planned in accordance to the expansion of the existing sewer and water systems, private wells will continue to exist. Programs to ease the transition to public water and sewer services should be developed.

Existing on-site treatment systems should be converted to sewer service when it becomes available. Until sewer service becomes available, limitations on the use of properties may be necessary to protect public health and welfare.

Additionally, Lewistown would benefit from the development of a storm water management program and the adoption of ordinances to address storm water runoff from development projects. In 2003, the Environmental Protection Agency issued a regulation that requires all cities to address storm water issues. It may be necessary to establish a storm sewer district and construct a collector main with the existing lateral sewers discharging into the collector. This

project would represent a significant cost but would allow for treatment at a single discharge point. The main need for treatment is from motor oil and other non-point pollutants that storm water collects from the streets before entering the storm sewer system.

SOLID WASTE

(Source: Applied Communications, 2000)

The City is divided into five sections and each zone has once a week pick-up. Waste is taken to the Lewistown Disposal Inc. transfer station and later transferred to trailer trucks and taken to the High Plains Landfill near Great Falls. The landfill has an expected 70-year life span from 1995.

The transfer station accepts household waste, yard waste, and construction debris. There are no recycling services and no hazardous waste is accepted. Appliances are accepted for a charge. There is a dumping fee for private parties bringing waste to the transfer station.

Recycling

Pacific Steel and Recycling will buy back aluminum cans and computer paper. They collect magazines and newspapers but do not pay for these items. They also accept appliances free of charge and buy back scrap iron and metal. It would be beneficial for the City to reexamine its recycling options and expand the option for recycling materials such as glass and plastic.

STREETS, ROADS, AND TRANSPORTATION

It is the intent of this Growth Policy to give equal consideration to the movement of vehicles and non-motorized forms of transportation, such as walking or biking. In places where pedestrian systems cross vehicular systems, safety preference will be given to the pedestrian.

The major road networks in Lewistown serve as gateways into the community and into the neighborhoods. Land use, urban design, and landscaping standards should be considered when allowing new development in these vital community areas. Requiring developers to add landscaping features that benefit the aesthetics of community gateways is a common practice used by many growing towns.

The creation of a Master Street Plan was suggested in the Envision Lewistown Project (pg. 69). This document would establish road hierarchies and provide proper insight for the upgrading and expansion of the roadway system.

The City does not have a comprehensive street inventory or an updated capital improvement plan that would identify needed improvements and help prioritize projects. A street inventory would include an analysis of all local streets on a block by block basis and would contain information regarding pavement type, street condition, repair requirements and drainage. A transportation plan would identify safety and congestion concerns. (UPDATE)

The 1971 Comprehensive Plan defines the following design standards for roads and streets (pg. 93).

Type of Facility	Daily Traffic Volume	Proposed Rights-of-Way (in feet)	Paved Distance Between Curbs (in feet)	Number of Moving Lanes
Residential Access	Variable	60	36	2
Commercial Access	Variable	60-100	40-68	2-4
Collector	500 - 2,500	60-66	36-40	2
Minor Arterial	5,000 - 15,000	60-80	44-52	2-4
Principal Arterial	10,000 - 40,000	80-100	60-70	4-6

Definition:

- *Residential Access: Collect and distribute traffic in Residential areas*
- *Commercial Access: Collect and distribute traffic in Commercial areas*
- *Collector: Collect and distribute traffic from higher types of arterial streets to serve neighborhood traffic.*
- *Minor Arterial: Used to serve secondary traffic generators such as shopping facilities, high schools, major parks, and office complexes.*
- *Principal Arterial: Facilitate the movement of traffic to major traffic generators such as the Central Business District or through traffic.*

AIRPORT

Directly east of the City is the municipally operated airport. Light industrial uses are located along Airport Road leading up to the airport. In the past, land use around the airport was generally open agricultural land.

The City Airport is currently in an area that is experiencing encroaching subdivision developments. In the development of zoning ordinances these areas should be sure to maintain adequate height restrictions. Standards must be maintained to assure the safety of planes using the facility. Additionally, a new Methamphetamine Treatment Center being built along Airport Road will force increased use on the public infrastructure of the area.

FAIRGROUNDS

The County Fairgrounds lie just north of the city in an irrigated agricultural area. The facility includes a grandstand, bleachers, rodeo pens and arena, barns, display buildings, a picnic area, and large clearing. The facilities found at the Fairgrounds are vital to many of the events of the community. The 1971 Plan states that “the general appearance should be maintained in order to preserve the large public investment in this excellent facility” (pg. 41).

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

It is the policy of the local government to regulate the placement, construction, and modification of wireless telecommunications service facilities to the fullest extent permitted by applicable law (Envision Lewistown, pg. 58). It is desirable to promote co-location and use of alternative tower structure to minimize the need to construct new towers.

Lewistown is progressive in maintaining its availability of telecommunications services for local telephone service, cable television, interactive video, and internet. As technology advances, the City can expect to have a wider variety of options regarding telecommunication services.

LOCAL SERVICES

INTRODUCTION

(Source: Applied Communications, 2000)

In general, Lewistown is providing adequate levels of service for communities of comparable size. Although population growth has not created a demand for new services, there has been a trend for increasing service calls and the number of service requests will increase with annexation of developed subdivisions.

Agencies must respond to demographic, technological, and political changes. One of the prominent demographic changes is the aging of the population. This trend corresponds with the nationwide patterns and is generally more pronounced in rural areas of Montana. Growth and the inevitable change in societal forces will continue to challenge local agencies to evolve and respond to new needs. This will require the cooperation, planning, technology, and innovation that are evident in many of the efforts that local agencies have already undertaken.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

(Source: Applied Communications, 2000)

The Police Department is located adjacent to the City Hall complex on Third and Watson Street. The City operates its own 9-1-1 dispatch service. The Department provides law enforcement services within the incorporated City limits but will respond to calls within a five-mile area of the City when assistance is requested or as the first response to an emergency.

As Lewistown's demographics change, potential issues of concern include additional service calls related to annexation, potential need for community policing, and recruitment of personnel to fill vacant positions.

FIRE PROTECTION

(Source: Applied Communications, 2000)

The Fire Department provides services within the incorporated City limit and has a contract to provide services within the Lewistown Rural Fire District (RFD). The RFD boundaries extend beyond the City-County planning area. The fire hydrant location and capacity throughout the City is adequate at the current time.

The service response time is two minutes for getting out of the station and three to five minutes overall for arriving anywhere in the City. The number of 9-1-1 calls has increased throughout the last decade.

Other services provided by the Fire Department are hazardous material cleanup and commercial and residential inspections for buildings over two units.

PUBLIC HEALTH

(Source: Applied Communications, 2000)

Central Montana Medical Facilities, Inc. was incorporated in 1969 as a non-profit and entered into a lease with Fergus County in 1978 to operate the newly built facility with no obligations to the taxpayers. The hospital service area is primarily Fergus County with parts of Judith Basin, Wheatland, and Petroleum counties.

The most influential trend relating to public health is the decrease in average length of stay as more procedures are done as outpatient treatments and home health care becomes more widespread. The aging population will account for an increased use in health care facilities over the next decade.

An ambulance service is operated by the hospital and is dispatched through the City's 9-1-1 service. Additional social services available are the Council on Aging, Human Resources Development Council, and various Public Assistance programs.

EDUCATION

Lewistown School District #1 provides K-12 education and adult education for residents in the City and surrounding areas. District administrative offices are located in the old Lincoln School Building located at 215 7th Ave. South.

Recently, the Lewistown News Argus reported that the kindergarten enrollment figures have risen from 82 to 114 students in 2004 and 2006 respectively (A1, 2006). This may reflect a change that the City is not expecting, and a more current demographic study would be helpful.

LIBRARY

(Source: Applied Communications, 2000 and 1971 Comprehensive Plan)

The library is located at 701 W. Main Street. It was constructed in 1905 as a Carnegie Library and is among the historic structures that comprise the Courthouse Square Historic District. The first addition was added in the 1960s and another addition was completed in the 1990s bringing the total area of the building to 10,793 square feet.

The Carnegie Public Library is supported by a mill levy and foundation funds. The services offered should complement those of the school district. Additionally, as the needs of the community change, this should be reflected in the acquisition of future volumes (1971 Comprehensive Plan, pg. 42).

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES

COMMUNITY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Growth Policy Citizens Advisory Committee (hereinafter “Advisory Committee”) was formed to define the goals and objectives for Lewistown. On February 15, 2000 the Advisory Committee adopted the following Community Vision Statement to effectively express these goals and objectives:

VISION STATEMENT

The Lewistown Comprehensive Growth Policy calls for our community to achieve a safe, high quality environment by seeking to conserve natural resources, improve the human condition, preserve our historic heritage and enhance our quality of life. It represents a public policy committed to well-managed growth with a progressive and diverse economy that provides its residents with nationally competitive living-wage employment and affordable housing.

The following “Goals” are intended to provide broad, general guidelines within the period the Growth Policy is in effect. These goals were developed by the Advisory Committee, which consists of a diverse group of Lewistown and Fergus County residents. The members of the Advisory Committee were divided into six Focus Groups (i.e. Central Business District, Land Use, Historic Preservation, Public Facilities and Transportation, Parks and Open Space, and Housing) to better define the goals. The following “Objectives” define strategies or steps toward implementation to attain the identified goals. It is the purpose of the Growth Policy to encourage the evaluation of these goals before the next revision process.

GOAL #1:

Strengthen and direct development toward desirable urban service areas.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Establish an Urban Growth Boundary (hereinafter “UGB”) for the City of Lewistown. This area should be where the City would like to focus development until the Growth Policy is reviewed again (i.e. where growth should occur over the course of the next five years).
2. Analyze the UGB in terms of the extension feasibility of public services and infrastructure.
3. Encourage the coordination of agencies and organizations providing utilities, services and facilities.
4. Encourage the timely upgrade and/or expansion of municipal facilities (water, sewer, streets, etc.) to continue to provide quality service and to accommodate growth as desired.

GOAL#2:

Preserve open space, scenic vistas, farmland, natural beauty, critical environmental areas and historic places.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Discourage the development of land that includes existing and proposed parks, trails, wildlife habitats, fisheries, and other sensitive lands.
2. Encourage the thoughtful planning to improve and maintain entrances to the community.
3. Encourage the use of a noxious weed control plan for the control and elimination of noxious weeds.

GOAL #3:

Build a sustainable community.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Encourage the preservation of the environment for present and future generations.
2. Discourage approaches to economic development that would result in congestion, sprawl, environmental pollution, resource stress, and other environmental and social problems.
3. Encourage programs that use resources efficiently, including waste reduction, recycling, and pollution prevention.
4. Encourage infill development to avoid urban sprawl.
5. Mix land uses by encouraging the design of “walkable neighborhoods” that combine commercial and residential amenities and features.

GOAL #4:

Provide a variety of transportation and housing opportunities.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Develop both low and medium density residential areas with a variety of housing types.
2. Encourage the preservation of historical or culturally significant buildings or residences.
3. Encourage the preservation of the existing trail system in order to provide options of walking or biking.

GOAL #5:

Foster a distinctive, attractive community with a strong sense of place and high quality of life.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Develop necessary measures to prevent the effects of deterioration and blight within existing residential areas by encouraging the removal or improvement of all substandard structures, and the maintenance of vacant lots, fence lines, utility easements and road right-of-ways.
2. Encourage the preparation and adoption of building and housing codes.
3. Protect residential areas from the encroachment of incompatible or unrelated uses.
4. Encourage the building and maintenance of sidewalks and streets within the community.

GOAL #6:

Encourage economic development.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Abide by the recommendations set forth in the Downtown Master Plan regarding economic viability.

GOAL #7:

Implement public policy.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Encourage the analysis of the Growth Policy to implement rules and regulations to better serve the community.
2. Encourage public participation when developing policies through the review and revision of the Growth Policy.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

General:

1. Classify an Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) to encourage growth where development should be focused for the next five years. Collaborate with the County to include the 4½-mile surrounding boundary of the city limits.

Open Spaces, Natural Resources, and Recreation:

1. Establish a land-use zone classified as “Open Space” which will include existing and proposed parks, trails, wildlife habitats, fisheries, and other sensitive lands. Establish this zone to work with the already existing “Open Land” zone.
2. Collaborate with the Fergus County Weed District in order to enforce and control the spread of noxious weeds within the city and areas of development within the 4½-mile growth area.

Public Facilities and Services:

1. Continue to develop programs for improvement of water and sewer services, following previous studies to set priority projects. Pursue all grants possible.
2. Create a storm water plan that considers solutions to the problem of pollutants being washed into Big Spring Creek or other water bodies.

Housing and Transportation:

1. Plan for public transportation systems for the future. This will become a necessity as the population ages and requires the availability on bus or shuttle systems and pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods.
2. Review existing zoning regulations to assure that provisions are adequate for mixed-use projects, residential redevelopment of vacant second-story commercial buildings, and the location of income-appropriate housing near places of employment.

Community Appearance:

1. Update and enforce nuisance ordinances. This process should include the identification of certain aspects which are seen as undesirable to existing neighbors and homebuyers. Either provide incentives to clean-up property or devise a system to enforce the ordinances.
2. Make an effort to utilize the Downtown Master Plan recommendations concerning the community’s overall appearance.

3. Review and streamline regulations with respect to the reuse and revitalization of downtown buildings.

See Figure 10 for the Implementation Timetable to see these strategies prioritized.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC SERVICES STRATEGY

The last statistical analysis of Lewistown's infrastructure and public services was done by Applied Communications of Great Falls in September of 2000. In order to properly identify a strategy to move forward with improvements, it would be beneficial for the City to undergo a more current analysis of the available resources. This would allow the City to improve existing infrastructure and public services as well as plan for additional capacity as the community grows.

Development, Maintenance, and Replacement

The further development of the City's existing infrastructure and public services is contingent upon a more up-to-date study of the current conditions. This could either be done by planning staff or an organization that specializes in community and economic planning. At least one year should be given to allow for the development of this study. After this is completed, next steps could include securing grant writing services, researching and applying for state and federal grants, and/or exploring and utilizing local funding mechanisms.

Once the study is completed, a proper timeline can be created that examines the maintenance and replacement of the City's infrastructure and public services.

IMPLEMENTATION RESOURCES

(Sources: Natural Resource Conservation Service, Community Development Services of Montana)

Acquisition of open space will require the development of funding mechanisms to pay for these purchases. Organization of a **land trust**, such as the "Spring Creek Land Trust" would be an essential part of an open space acquisition and protection program.

A **conservation easement** is a voluntary agreement between a property owner and the holder of the easement concerning treatment of the property by current and future owners. Easements should be considered as a conservation tool to protect land and buildings. Easements may be appropriate tool for scenic, open-space, conservation, agricultural, façade, or for historic preservation purposes. Conservation easements can be either purchased or acquired by donation.

Municipalities can make use of various kinds of **debt financing** to meet their infrastructure needs. These include the following:

- **General Obligation Bonds** (7-7-4204, MCA) provides for municipalities to issue general obligation bonds (GO Bonds). GO bonds are backed by the full faith and credit of the city or town and must be approved by the voters in an election and are typically payable from ad valorem taxes (taxes based on the value of property) and expressed in mills.
- **Revenue Bonds** (7-7-4401, MCA) allows a city to issue revenue bonds to finance any project or activity authorized. Revenue bonds are retired through the payment of earnings including user fees incurred by a public enterprise. Revenue bonds have no claim on the city's table resources, unless specified (through a special guarantee, for

example). Bonds may be issued in the form of general obligation bonds, revenue bonds, or a combination.

Cities may use the creation of special districts to pay for a variety of costs. Under the authorization of **Special Improvement Districts** (7-12-4102, MCA), cities can finance improvements such as:

- To grade, pave, and undertake other street improvements;
- To acquire, construct, or reconstruct sidewalks, crosswalks, culverts, bridges, gutters, curbs, steps, parking and planting;
- To acquire, construct, or reconstruct waterworks, water mains and extensions of water mains, pipes, hydrants, hose connections for irrigating purposes; and
- For a variety of other infrastructure improvements.

More research would need to be done to realize the full potential of the designation of Special Improvement Districts.

Municipal governments are authorized to incorporate replacement and depreciation into **water and sewer user fees** under 7-13-4307, MCA.

The **Treasure State Endowment Program** (Montana Department of Commerce) is a state-funded program designed to assist communities in financing capital improvements to public facilities. TSEP can also make deferred loans to local governments for preliminary engineering study costs.

The **Montana State Revolving Loan Fund** (SRF) provides loans for water pollution control systems; wastewater pollution control systems; wastewater systems and non-point source control projects. Eligible applicants include counties, municipalities, other legally authorized public bodies, water/sewer districts and authorized tribal organizations. Planning funds are also available.

- **Allocation and Matching Requirements:** Funds are made available in the form of loans for 100% of project costs. There is no local matching requirement. Loans must be repaid over a period of 20 years or less.
- **Application Information:** Applications may be submitted at any time in a continuous cycle. Contact the Montana Department of Environmental Quality, Helena (406) 444-5322.

The **Renewable Resources Grant and Loan Program** provides loans and grants for water and wastewater projects including feasibility, construction, rehabilitation, and for other renewable resource related projects. Eligible applicants include local governments, water and sewer districts, irrigation districts, conservation districts, school districts, state agencies and private entities.

- **Allocation and Matching Requirements:** Up to \$100,000 is available for grants and up to \$200,000 for grant/loan combinations. Loans are limited by the ability of the borrower to repay. No local match is required, but local matching funds can improve a project's ranking.
- **Application Information:** Applications are due on May 15th of even numbered years. Contact the Montana Department of Natural Resources in Helena (406) 444-6668.

The **Water and Waste Water Disposal Loans and Grants** (U.S. Rural Economic and Community Development Agency) program provides grants and loans for the construction, repair, and expansion of water and wastewater systems.

- **Allocation and Matching Requirements:** Projects may receive up to 75% of total project costs in grants and no maximum for loans.
- **Application Information:** Applications may be submitted any time in a continuous cycle. Contact: REDC in Bozeman, (406) 585-2520.

The **Montana Intercap Program** (Montana Board of Investments) program is administered by the Montana Board of Investments and provides loans to local governments for a variety of public projects. Contact: The Montana Board of Investments at (406) 444-0001 or in writing at 555 Fuller Avenue, Helena, MT 59620.

Federal Emergency Management Agency Funds:

In the event of the emergencies that affect infrastructure, the federal government provides relief through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). FEMA dollars are for unanticipated needs that result from disasters and emergencies and are typically not included in a municipality's financial planning process. Contact the FEMA regional office in Denver, Colorado, (303) 235-4830.

Community Development Block Grants (Montana Department of Commerce) Program is a federally-funded competitive grant program designed to help communities of less than 50,000, and is aimed at benefiting low and moderate income persons. Grants are administered by the Montana Department of Commerce (MDOC) and awarded in three categories including economic development, housing and community revitalization, and public facilities. Eligible activities include (but are not limited to):

- Rehabilitation of substandard housing
- Supporting the construction of new permanent, long-term affordable housing for low and moderate-income families, when a local nonprofit organization sponsors the project
- Converting existing nonresidential structures for residential use
- Complementary community revitalization activities such as clean up campaigns, removal of dilapidated, vacant buildings, improving or constructing sidewalks, streets, street lighting, or neighborhood parks or playgrounds

For more information contact The Montana CDBG staff in Helena, (406) 444-2488.

The Economic Development Administration (EDA) provides funds for technical assistance and planning grants for projects which result in the creation of new employment. Planning grants usually average about \$25,000 and require a small cash match. Contact the EDA Office, Federal Building, Helena, MT (406) 449-5074.

The CDBG **Technical Assistance Matching Grants** program (Montana Department of Commerce), provides planning grants of up to \$10,000 for Affordable Housing, Capital Improvements Planning, Comprehensive Planning and Economic Development Planning. Contact: Montana Department of Commerce, Helena, MT (406) 444-2488.

REVISION AND COOPERATION PROCESS

CONDITIONS FOR REVISION

As demographic and economic trends are constantly changing, it is imperative to review the Growth Policy periodically. Ideas that worked in the past may not work for the community's present or future needs. The Growth Policy is to be reviewed and revised if necessary upon the instance that any of the following conditions are met:

1. Growth policy review will occur at a maximum five-year interval under current conditions.
2. The population of Lewistown (as defined by the Montana Department of Commerce) is greater than or equal to 10,000 citizens.
3. Population growth exceeds 5% of the 2005 population (6,099) in any 12-month period (which equates to 304 people).
4. A large-scale development proposal is approved within the town or adjacent rural area.
5. Sewer treatment capacity is exceeded by current flows or water service area is exceeded by new development proposals.
6. Any major impacts to the natural environment or city infrastructure occur.
7. The City experiences a major change in government form or service.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Source: Montana Dept. of Commerce, Community Development Division, Handbook

It is the intention of the Growth Policy that public participation be utilized during the City's planning process whenever possible. According to Montana's Growth Policy Resource Book:

To be successful, community planning must provide adequate opportunities for citizens to participate. Community planning should be a democratic and public process in which every interested citizen has an opportunity to express their views on community goals, needs, problems, and opportunities. A community should have a strategy to continually involve the public, and the community must comply with Montana's statutory requirements for public participation (2006).

Local officials are well aware that formal public hearings are sometimes a very ineffective means of getting people involved or encouraging meaningful dialogue or discussion. A common problem with the conventional public hearing format is that the citizens who are most agitated about an issue or proposal will be very vocal and dominate the public comment period. Those with more moderate views are then less inclined to speak up in such an emotionally charged

environment. For this reason, informal meetings that encourage person-to-person dialogue such as open houses are becoming increasingly popular.

Typically, an **open house** involves providing a meeting area where visual displays related to an issue can be put up for public viewing. Staff and members of the planning board can be posed by the displays to explain the information. Forms can be provided for people to make written comments or the persons stationed at the displays can take down comments. Open houses can be scheduled at times when it would be convenient for people to stop by after work if they have other commitments. Open houses can also be held prior to a public hearing or a facilitated community forum using a group process so that people can get more information before any public discussion begins.

REVISION PROCESS

In order to properly evaluate the Growth Policy within the next five years, the following revision steps have been developed. The tasks are meant to be general guidelines and are not meant to restrict the revision process.

- ✓ Research funding and grants to hire an outside community development organization to compile a current and up-to-date data analysis for the City of Lewistown.
- ✓ Appoint a citizen advisory group (CAG). Make sure the CAG is an accurate cross-section of local interest by including representatives from:
 - o Chamber of Commerce
 - o City-County Planning Board
 - o Fire Districts
 - o A homebuilders' organization
 - o A pro-planning advocacy group
 - o A property owners group
 - o A sportsman's association
 - o Realtors
 - o Unincorporated communities in the country
- ✓ Begin holding private meetings to educate the CAG about the current statistics, demographic, and economic conditions and trends in Lewistown based on the findings from the data analysis. Divide the CAG into focus groups of interest; making sure each subgroup has adequate representation for opposing viewpoints. Each group should have at least two Co-Chairs to lead discussion and organize meetings.
- ✓ A "Lewistown Citizens Survey" is created by the CAG and are distributed throughout the community. Results are collected and used to develop the "Goals and Objectives" section.
- ✓ Each Focus Group prepares visual displays regarding the findings. Assistance can be provided from the Planning Staff and/or an outside technical assistance organization that specializes in Community Planning and Development.
- ✓ A series of open houses are schedule at various times and places. Visual displays are put up for public viewing, and members of the Focus Groups attend the open houses to

explain the information, answer questions, and record comments. Forms are provided at each station to allow for written public comment. City Officials, Planning Staff, and members of the City-County Planning Board should also be present to participate in the public input process.

- ✓ Drafts of the new Growth Policy are sent out to each member of the CAG. Thirty-days are given to read and review the document. The CAG meets to discuss any finalized revisions. The Planning Staff compiles a finalized 2011 Growth Policy.
- ✓ The 2011 Growth Policy is sent to the City-County Planning Board and Commissioners. Thirty days are given to read the document. A meeting is held to decide upon the adoption of the new policy. This needs to be decided prior to October 1, 2011.

GOVERNING BODY COOPERATION STRATEGY

The City of Lewistown and Fergus County wish to cooperate with other entities to find solutions to common problems. Through cooperation, the local government and others can advance the goals of the Growth Policy by addressing large-scale issues in a collaborative and effective manner.

In relation to the Growth Policy and any subsequent revisions and updates, the local governments will cooperate and coordinate as follows:

- Local government officials and staff will be provided an opportunity to review and comment on all proposed amendments to the Lewistown Growth Policy. Such opportunity for review and comment shall be of at least 30 days duration.
- Local government and staff will provide an opportunity to review and comment on the implementation tools for the Lewistown Growth Policy. Such tools shall include subdivision and zoning regulations and may include other tools identified as having a material effect on land uses.
- The City and County will strive to ensure the adequate provisions of transportation services in a fashion that will provide for consistent rights-of-way and street section standards, encourage efficiency in transportation alternatives, and address other items of common interest.
- The City-County Planning Board and the County Planning Board will participate in periodic planning roundtables.
- The City will work with the County to coordinate land use policies within the planning area.
- The City will work with the County on identified items of common interest, including open space protection, water quality and supply, and other items. Joint funding will be pursued as allowed by state law.

The preceding list of cooperation strategies is not intended to be inclusive. It is intended to illustrate several opportunities for collaboration between local government entities. Additional opportunities for cooperation should be pursued as they may become available.

PUBLIC HEARINGS PROCEDURE

Subdivisions are strongly connected to the comprehensive planning process and may significantly advance or detract from the attainment of publicly identified goals. Because of this strong influence, all subdivisions (and subdivision regulations) must be reviewed to ensure their compliance with the Growth Policy.

Subdivisions must be reviewed against six criteria established by state law. See Title 76, Chapter 3 of the Montana Code Annotated for further discussion of these criteria. These standards that must be reviewed are the effects that the proposed subdivision will have on:

- Agriculture
- Agricultural water use facilities
- Natural environment
- Wildlife and wildlife habitat
- Local services
- Public health and safety

A person proposing a subdivision is generally required to collect and provide the necessary information in conjunction with an application for subdivision review. However, it is also possible for the local government to gather and review data for a larger area and therefore removes the need for a private party to do so.

A fundamental component of the subdivision review process is the opportunity for members of the public and interested groups to offer comments on the proposal. This opportunity is formally provided by the public hearing process where persons for, against, or merely seeking information about the proposal may speak to appointed or elected officials who must approve or deny the project. The required public hearing on a subdivision proposal may be held before either the Planning Board or the local government. The individual body to hold the public hearing is set by ordinance. In the event that the Planning Board does not hold the public hearing, they will hold a public meeting to review the project and offer a recommendation to the local government regarding the proposed subdivision's compliance with the Lewistown Growth Policy. Regardless of which body holds the hearing, a similar procedure is required.

SUBDIVISION REVIEW

Generally, the format for a subdivision public hearing is as follows:

1. The public hearing is advertised as required by state law and the Lewistown and Fergus County Subdivision Regulations.
2. The public hearing is conducted at the time and place advertised.
3. The project is announced by the commission chairman or the President of the Board.
4. The Planning Director gives the report of the Review Committee, including an analysis of compliance with the Lewistown Growth Policy standards, and a recommendation of approval, denial, or approval with conditions.

5. After the staff report, the applicant and applicant's representative(s) present their analysis of the six previously mentioned criteria.
6. The Commission or Planning Board asks questions of the staff or applicant after presentations are concluded.
7. The public hearing is opened with persons able to speak for, against, or to seek additional information about the project from applicant or staff. If many people are present or multiple projects are reviewed, a time limit will be established for each speaker. The public is encouraged to provide a factual basis for their support or opposition to a subdivision.
8. After all people have had the opportunity to speak, the public hearing is closed and the Commission or Planning Board members discuss the project independently from the public.
9. The Commission or Planning Board evaluates the application materials, the staff report, public testimony, and the requirements of subdivision law and regulations. The Commission or Planning Board may inquire of staff, applicants, or the public for clarification or additional information to complete their evaluation.
10. A majority vote of a defined quorum is typically adequate to render a decision.
11. If the Planning Board has conducted the public hearing, it forwards a recommendation to the Commission, who makes its decision based on the public record established during the public hearing.
12. If the Commission has conducted the public hearing, it makes its decision on the record established during the public hearing.
13. When the Commission has rendered its decision, it causes findings of fact to be prepared to establish the official record and decision.
14. An approval or denial of a subdivision may be appealed to District Court after a final decision has been rendered. Appeals are subject to the requirements of state law.

REQUIREMENTS OF A MONTANA COMMUNITY GROWTH PLAN

The 1999 Montana Legislature passed a planning law (76-1-601, MCA) that requires the passage of a growth policy that meets certain minimum requirements. The Legislature adopted this change in order to create an incentive for local governments to deal with growth management issues as they happen.

These requirements and the corresponding page which each can be found on are as follows:

- ✓ Community Goals and Objectives (page 27)
- ✓ Maps and text that describe the existing characteristics and features of the jurisdictional area (including projected trends). Include information on:
 - ✓ Land uses (page 12)
 - ✓ Population (page 6)
 - ✓ Housing needs (page 9)
 - ✓ Economic conditions (page 7)
 - ✓ Local services (page 25)
 - ✓ Public facilities (page 21)
 - ✓ Natural resources (page 19)
- ✓ A description of the policies, regulations, and other tools to be implemented in order to achieve the goals and objectives of the growth policy (page 29).

- ✓ A strategy for development, maintenance, and replacement of public infrastructure (pages 21, 29, and 30).
- ✓ An implementation strategy timetable (appendix).
- ✓ A list of conditions that will lead to a revision of the growth policy at least once every five years and revising the policy if necessary (page 33).
- ✓ An explanation of how the governing body will coordinate and cooperate with other jurisdictions (page 35).
- ✓ An explanation of how the governing body will evaluate and make decisions regarding proposed subdivisions (page 36).
- ✓ A statement explaining how public hearings regarding proposed subdivisions will be conducted (page 36).

REFERENCES

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U.S. News and World Report, 2005.

APPENDIX

FIGURE 1
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000.

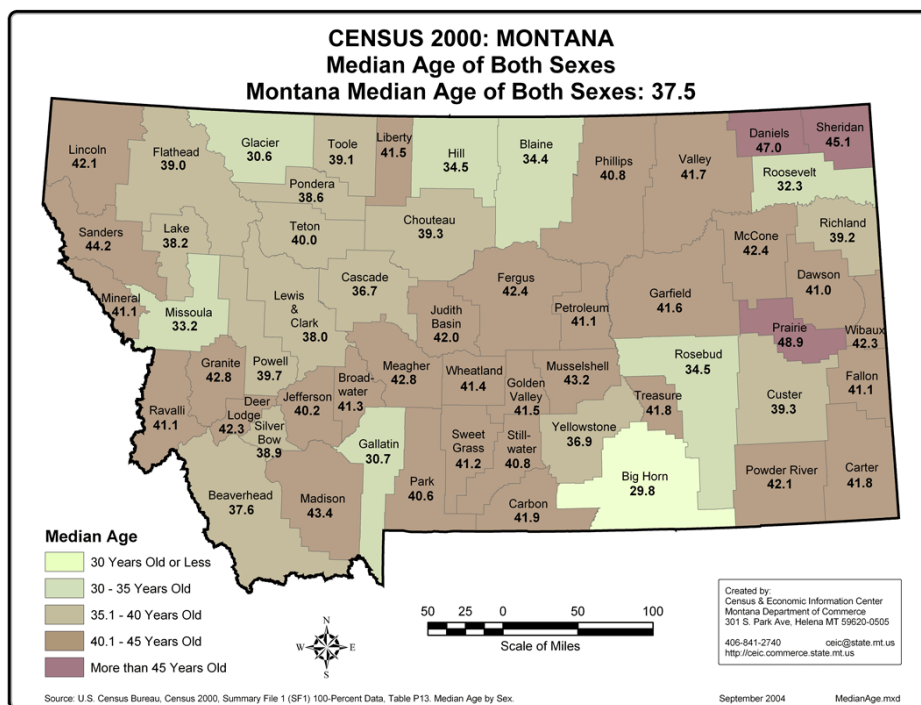


FIGURE 2
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

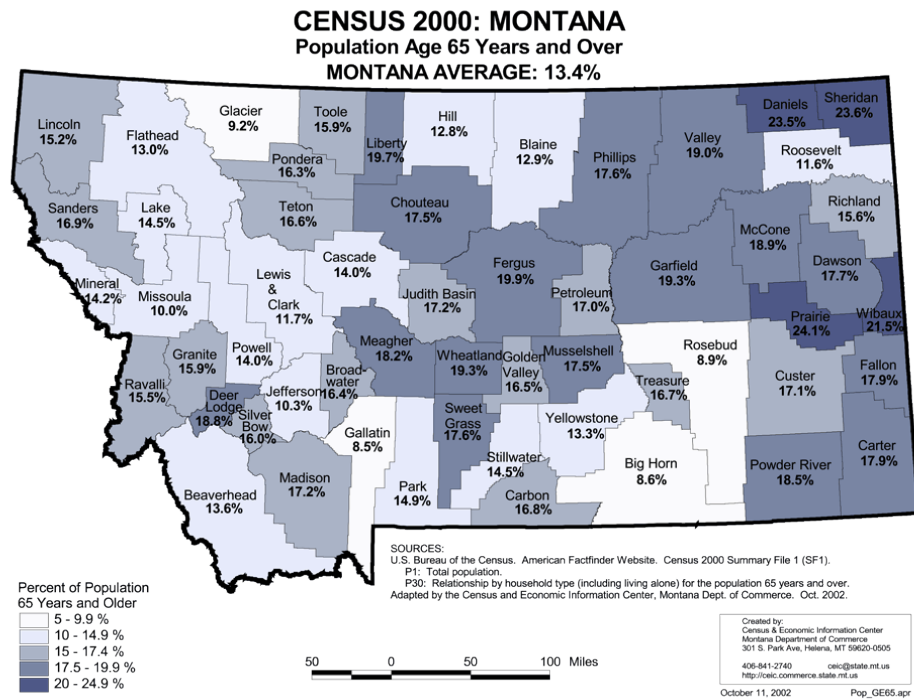


FIGURE 3
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2004

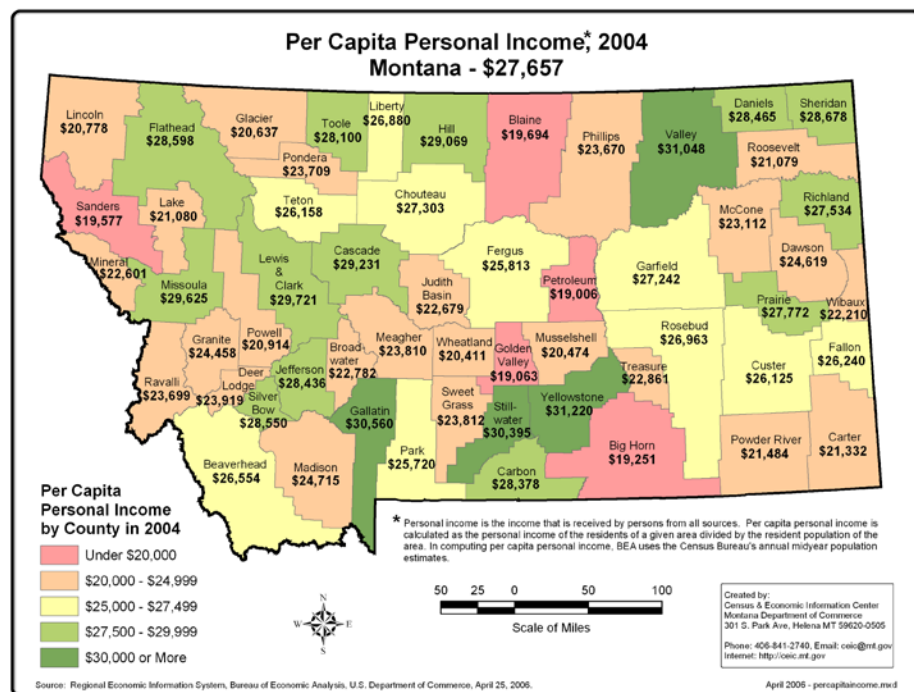


FIGURE 4

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2004

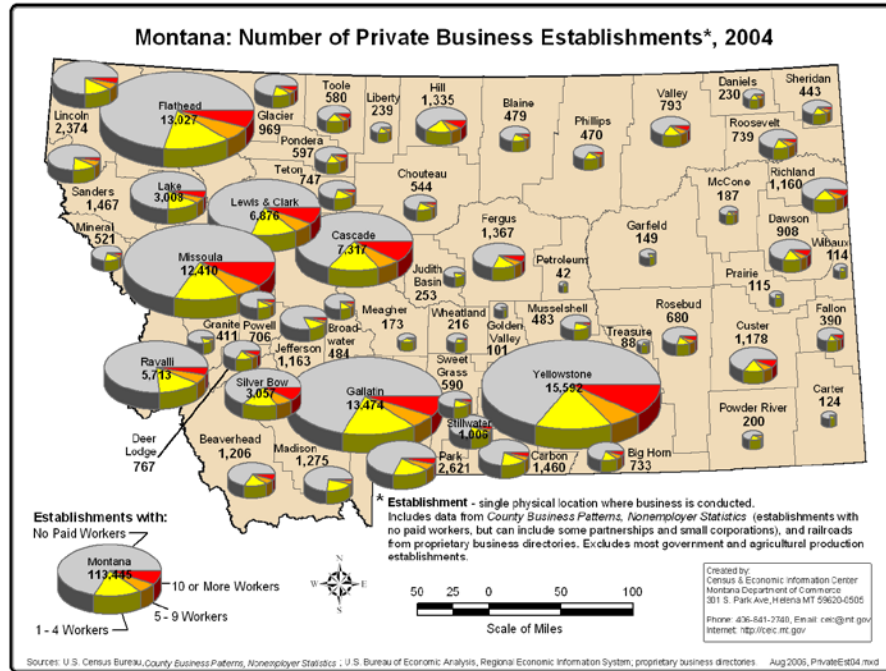


FIGURE 5

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

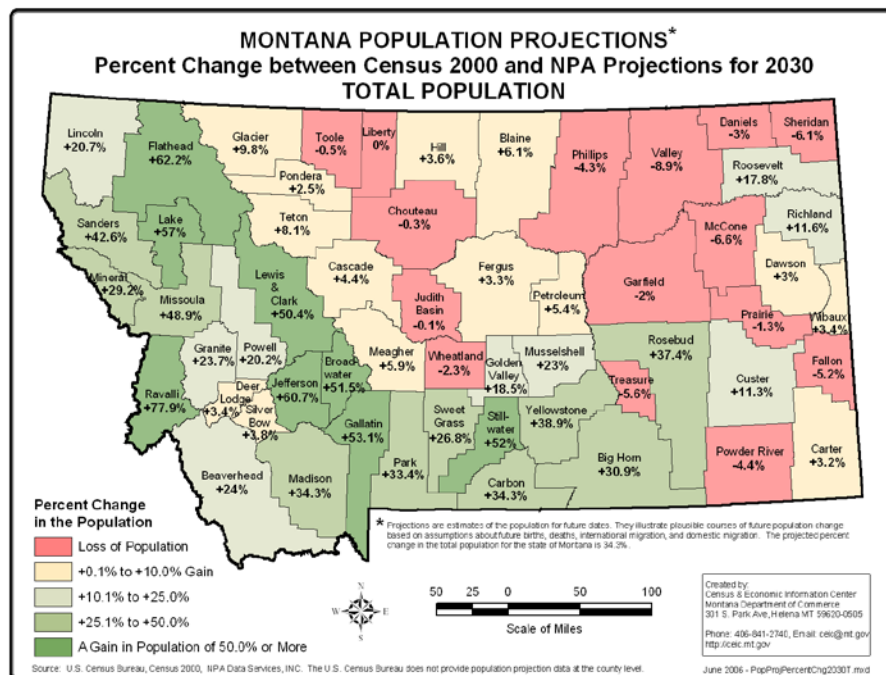


FIGURE 6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

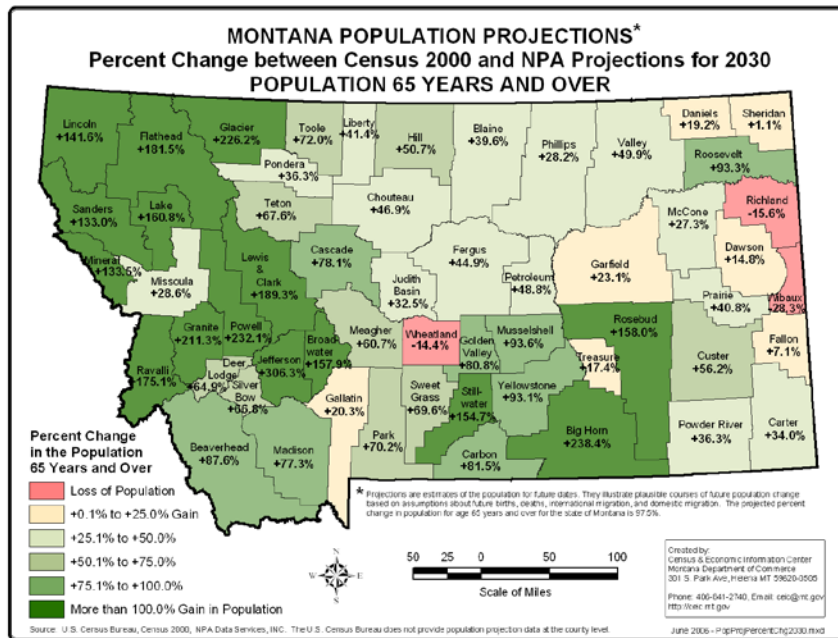


FIGURE 7

Source: 1971 Comprehensive Plan, Clark Coleman & Rupeiks, Inc

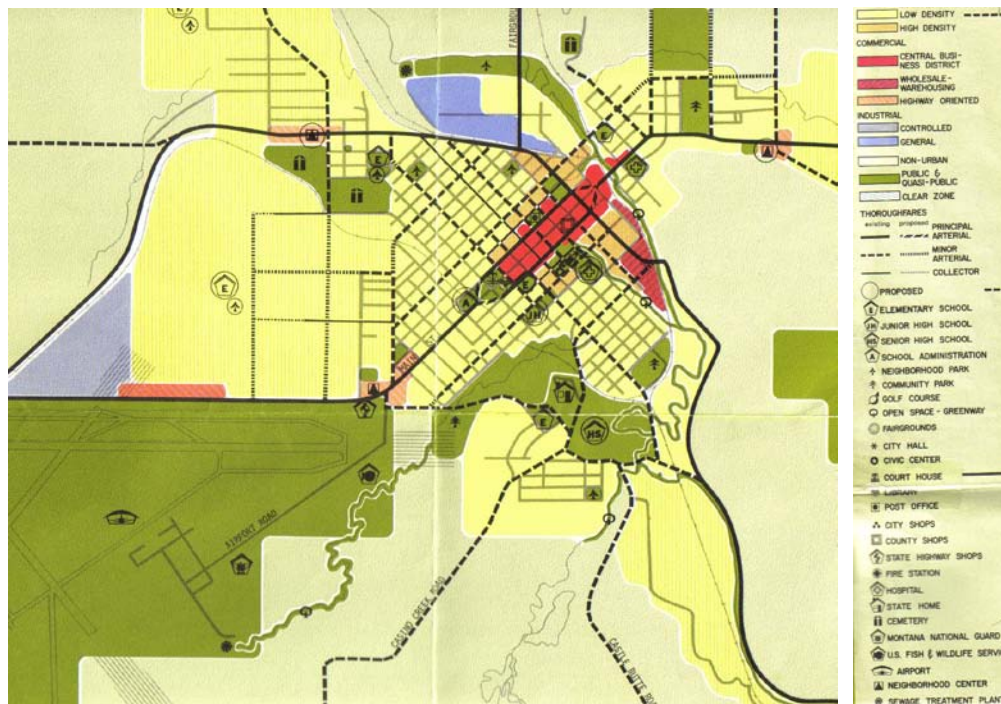
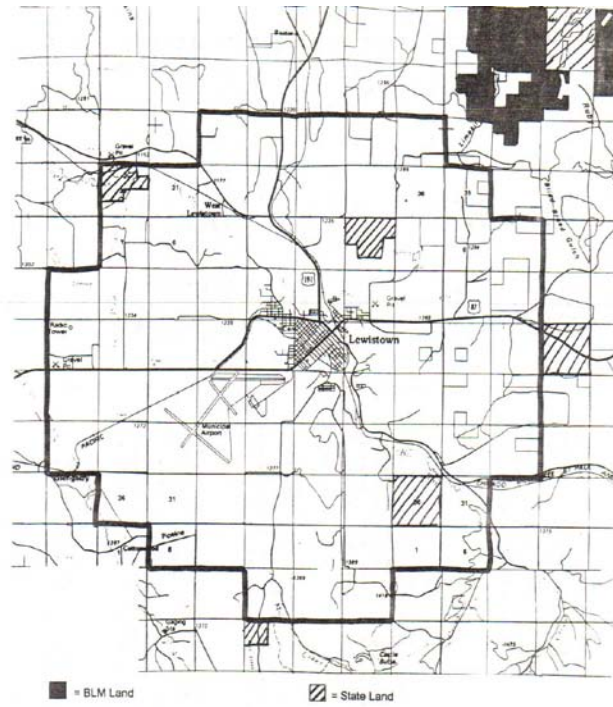


FIGURE 8

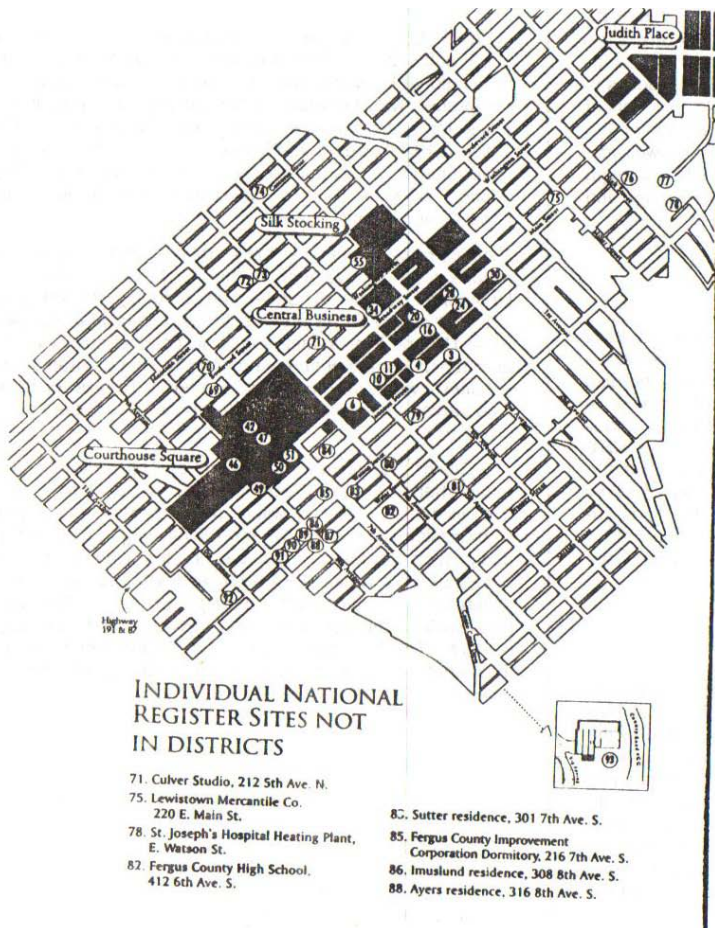
Source: Applied Communications, 2000



Notes: 1) Base Map = Bureau of Land Management, "Surface Management Status", 1988
 2) 4 ¼ Boundary = approximation based on township lines and current City limits. Does not include airport or other city property outside of city limits.

FIGURE 9

Source: Applied Communications, 2000



STONE BUILDINGS

3. Blacksmith shop, 301 W. Janeaux St.
4. First post office, 109 4th Ave. S.
6. Abel Brothers, 511 W. Main St.
10. Diamond Block, 417 W. Main St.
11. H. H. Lang Block, 413 W. Main St.
16. Judith Hardware, 307 W. Main St.
20. Power Mercantile, 302 W. Main St.
24. Second post office, 211 W. Main St.
28. Warr Building, 210 W. Main St.
30. Grocer, 117 W. Main St.
34. Masonic Temple, 322 W. Broadway St.
42. Hobensack (or Fergus) residence, 712 W. Broadway St.
46. Art Center, 108 8th Ave. N.
47. Fergus County Courthouse and Jail, 712 W. Main St.
49. Laux residence (May apartments), 803 W. Main St.
50. William M. Blackford residence, 713 W. Main St.
51. Carnegie Library, 701 W. Main St.
52. Symmes residence, 220 W. Boulevard St.
55. John D. Waite residence, 316 3rd Ave. N.
69. John L. Bright residence, 707 W. Boulevard St.
70. John L. Bright barn, 702 W. Boulevard St.
72. St. James Parish Hall, 502 W. Montana St.
73. St. James Episcopal Church, 502 W. Montana St.
74. Stone residence, 324 W. Corcoran St.
76. Plovanic residence, 115 S. High St.
77. St. Joseph's Hospital, S. High St.
79. First Presbyterian Church, 215 5th Ave. S.
80. Stone residence, 523 W. Watson St.
81. Schroeder Hospital, 502 5th Ave. S.
84. Stone residence, 618 W. Janeaux St.
87. Huntton residence, 722 W. Water St.
89. Stone residence, 805 W. Watson St.
90. Stone residence, 809 W. Watson St.
91. Stone residence, 813 W. Watson St.
92. Stone residence, 1015 W. Watson St.
93. Mill House, 4 1/2 miles southeast of Lewistown on Upper Spring Creek (County Road 466)

FIGURE 10

2006 Lewistown Growth Policy				
IMPLEMENTATION TIME TABLE*				
Strategy	2006- 2007	2007- 2008	2008- 2009	2010- 2011
Implement a land use study and establish an Urban Growth Boundary	X			
Establish an Open-Space zone that extends past the city limits		X		
Develop a noxious-weed control plan in accordance with the County		X		
Develop programs to improve water and sewer services	X			
Create a Storm Water Plan		X		
Evaluate the need for public transportation or additional pedestrian zones				X
Review existing zoning regulations			X	
Update and devise strategies to enforce nuisance ordinances			X	
Utilize the Downtown Master Plan's policies and suggestions			X	
Review regulations concerning downtown revitalization				X

*See page 33 for a list of conditions that would require the Growth Policy to be reviewed before 2011.