



2016 CITY OF BILLINGS GROWTH POLICY

AUGUST, 2016



Prepared for the Community by:
City-County Planning Division
2825 3rd Ave. N. 4th Floor
Billings, MT 59101

Executive Summary	i
Acknowledgements.....	ii
Chapter 1 – The Planning Process	1
Chapter 2 – Growth Policy Statement and Guidelines.....	6
Chapter 3 – Billings – Then, Now, and Beyond	10
Chapter 4 – Community Goals.....	21
Chapter 5 – Growth Scenario Planning	35

List of Figures, Tables and Charts

Chapter 1

TABLE 1.1	COMPARISON OF GROWTH METRICS, 2010 – 2014.....	1
FIGURE 1.1	COMMUNITY GOALS AND THEIR INTERRELATIONSHIPS.....	3
CHART 1.1	SCENARIO COSTS AND REVENUES.....	4
CHART 1.2	RETURN ON INVESTMENT	5

Chapter 3

FIGURE 3.1	POPULATION INCREASE BASED ON SAMPLE GROWTH RATES	10
TABLE 3.1	CITY OF BILLINGS POPULATION CHANGE OVER THIRTEEN DECADES	11
TABLE 3.2	POPULATION AGE BY DECADE	11
MAP 3.1	LIMITS OF ANNEXATION, 2004.....	12
MAP 3.2	LIMITS OF ANNEXATION, 2016.....	13
CHART 3.1	LOTS CREATED BY SUBDIVISION, 2010 – 2015	13
CHART 3.2	CITY ZONING ACTIVITY, 2010 – 2015.....	14
TABLE 3.3	FUNDING SOURCE TOTALS IN CIP BY YEAR	17
TABLE 3.4	BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITY PLANNING DOCUMENTS	18

Chapter 5

TABLE 5.1	GROWTH INDICATOR COSTS PER SCENARIO	43
TABLE 5.2	AVERAGE TAX AND ASSESSMENT VALUES BY HOUSING DENSITY.....	44
TABLE 5.3	COMPARISON OF COSTS AND REVENUES PER SCENARIO.....	45
CHART 5.1	TOTAL SCENARIO COSTS AND REVENUES	45
CHART 5.2	SCENARIO COSTS AND REVENUES PER ACRE.....	45
CHART 5.3	RETURN ON INVESTMENT	46

Appendix A – Public Involvement

Appendix B – Implementation Tools and Timetable

Appendix C – Interjurisdictional Coordination

Appendix D – Subdivision Review Criteria and Process

**Appendix E – Scenario Planning Work Sheet and CommunityViz TM Indicator
Reports**

Since the last update to the City and County Growth Policy in 2008, the City of Billings has added more than 6,000 people and has expanded by 1.5 square miles. The change in population and land area places a greater demand on public services and infrastructure. As a reflection of these increases, the City budget also increased. In Fiscal Year 2010, the General Fund revenues were \$29,561,687 and in Fiscal Year 2016 General Fund revenues were \$33,454,515; an increase of \$3.9 million. Growth alone has public costs associated with it but the needs and preferences of the public may also increase costs as values and priorities change.

One of the main purposes of this Growth Policy is to determine current public values and priorities. A second purpose is to compare patterns of growth to examine if there are more cost effective ways to develop. The approach to this Growth Policy and the methods used were tailored to address the two main purposes.

Through an extensive public comment process and carefully modeled growth scenario planning, a vision for Billings in the next 20 years emerged. This vision is embodied in the Growth Policy Statement:

In the next 20 years, Billings will manage its growth by encouraging development within and adjacent to the existing City limits, but preference will be given to areas where City infrastructure exists or can be extended within a fiscally constrained budget and with consideration given to increased tax revenue from development. The City will prosper with strong neighborhoods with their own unique character that are clean, safe, and provide a choice of housing and transportation options.

This statement, along with the Growth Guidelines, provides the City Council and other decision makers with an insight into public values and priorities. ***The Guidelines are not regulatory, but meant to be considered when Council acts on land use and infrastructure decisions.*** This Growth Policy will be used consistently as land use applications are brought before Council for action.

Billings has emerged as a regionally important small City that provides a high quality of life, good business and employment opportunities, and excellent public services and amenities. The improvements to the City made over the past few decades have not been by accident. The City has adopted and implemented several plans related to parks, transportation, utilities, and land use that have provided the framework for progress. This Growth Policy is an important element in that framework and will help ensure Billings will remain a great City, now and beyond!



The planning process and methodologies used for the 2016 City of Billings Growth Policy were conceived and designed by Candi Millar, Planning and Community Services Department Director. She was ably assisted by the **Planning Division staff**:

- Wyeth Friday, **Planning Division Manager**
- Nicole Cromwell, **Zoning Coordinator; Supervisor, Code Enforcement Division**
- Dave Green, **Planner II**
- Scott Walker, **Transportation Planning Coordinator**
- Lora Mattox, **Transportation Planner**
- Karen Husman, **Planner I**
- Jeffery Butts, **Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator**
- Jeannette Vieg, **Planning Assistant**
- Tammy Deines, **Planning Clerk**
- Robbin Bartley, **Administrative Support I**

Geodata Services, Inc. of Missoula, Montana was invaluable for its help with the Scenario Planning piece, especially Ken Wall and Kyle Balke.

Support from other City Departments was most appreciated, including:

- Kevin Moore, **IT – GIS Specialist** and Ron Frisbie, **IT- GIS Coordinator**
- Barb McCrae, **IT – Application Development Manager**
- All the Department Directors that reviewed parts of the document
- Christina Volek, **City Administrator**

A substantial effort was given by the members of the Growth Policy Steering Committee who attended six meetings and provided great insight into public values and priorities:

- Anya Fiechtl, **High Plains Architects**
- Wyeth Friday, **Planning Division Manager**
- Keith Hart, **Keller Williams Realty**
- Melissa Henderson, **RiverStone Health**
- John How, **Kadrmass, Lee & Jackson**
- Dianne Lehm, **Big Sky Economic Development**
- Bruce MacIntyre, **Billings Chamber of Commerce**
- Scott Reiter, **School District 2**
- Michael Sanderson, **Sanderson Stewart**
- Amber Sunsted, **Billings Association of Realtors**
- Connie Wardell, **League of Women Voters**

Most importantly, the citizens of Billings who provided comments and attended the public meetings need to be recognized. Thanks to everyone for the support and direction given during this process.



Chapter 1 – The Planning Process

Community planning is a continuous process. Community values change, conditions change, and policies change requiring a community plan to be re-evaluated periodically. Montana law recommends re-examining a growth policy every five years and determining, based on a list of conditions “what will lead to a revision of the growth policy”, MCA 76-1-601 (3)(f)(ii). This policy, as the policy it replaces, recommends that the growth policy be revised when the following occurs:

- Major changes in existing conditions or projected trends
- Modifications in the legal requirements a Growth Policy must meet
- Significant changes in community direction or goals
- Citizens desire for changes to the Growth Policy

Since the 2008 City/County Growth Policy was adopted a lot has changed in Billings as the following comparison of metrics between 2010 and 2014 demonstrates:

TABLE 1.1. COMPARISON OF GROWTH METRICS 2010 AND 2014

	2010	2014
Population	104,170	106,979
Median Age	37.5	37.1
Housing Units	46,317	46,674
Median Household Income	\$46,433	\$49,265
City Area	41.9 sq. mi	42.9 sq. mi
Street Miles	532.7	565.7

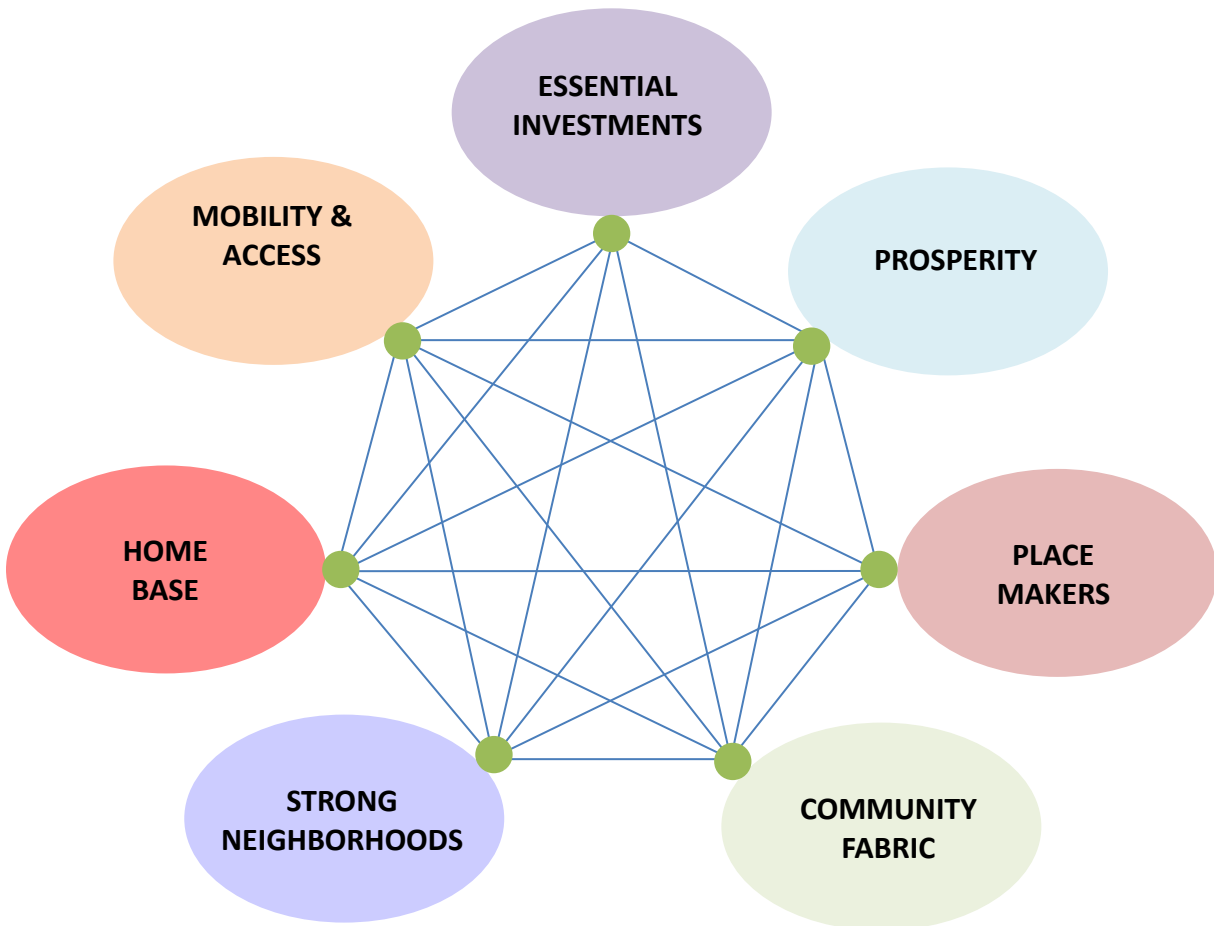
Updating the 2008 City of Billings/Yellowstone County Growth Policy was identified as a priority in the 2014 City Council Strategic Plan. The City Council recognized at that time that a policy was needed to achieve its goal of “comprehensive, cost-effective, and orderly growth.” Staff was directed to “prepare a comprehensive growth policy focused on existing service gaps in the City growth areas.” To achieve this directive, two questions needed to be answered:

- These were the questions posed to the public to begin the planning process in October, 2014. Over 1,200 comments were received from 35 public meetings. Comments were reviewed by staff and frequently-repeated key words were used to create a word cloud for the responses to each of the questions.



associations. For instance the value of outdoor spaces under the Community Fabric goal is also an essential value in Strong Neighborhoods and Place Makers.

FIG. 1.1. COMMUNITY GOALS AND THEIR INTERRELATIONSHIP



The public comments were also the basis for three other important elements of this Policy: objectives, toolboxes, and performance measurements. Goal objectives are targeted outcomes that provide definition to what the goal can achieve or how the goal can be achieved. Toolboxes suggest ways, means, and methodologies to accomplish the goal, and performance measurements are recommended metrics for determining if the goal is being achieved.

Referring back to the Council’s Strategic Plan goal of “comprehensive, cost-effective, orderly growth”, the planning process also evaluated seven different growth scenarios to estimate the relative cost and revenue of various growth patterns in three separate growth areas: North (around the proposed Inner

Belt Loop), West (west of Shiloh Road) and Infill (existing parcels within the City limits and adjacent properties). The scenarios were developed to accommodate approximately 50,000 more residents. The costs to provide selected services and facilities the public preferred were calculated for high, low, and mixed residential density scenarios in the North and West growth areas. The residential density used for the infill scenario was based on existing zoning. The revenue estimates were developed by extrapolating the average tax and assessment revenue from existing residential housing developments of comparable densities.

The scenario planning results were looked at three ways:

1. Total cost of selected services and facilities and total revenue from housing unit per scenario
2. Total anticipated annual revenue/total cost of selected services and facilities (Return on Investment)
3. Total anticipated annual revenue from residential development/acre

CHART 1.1. SCENARIO COSTS AND ANNUAL REVENUES

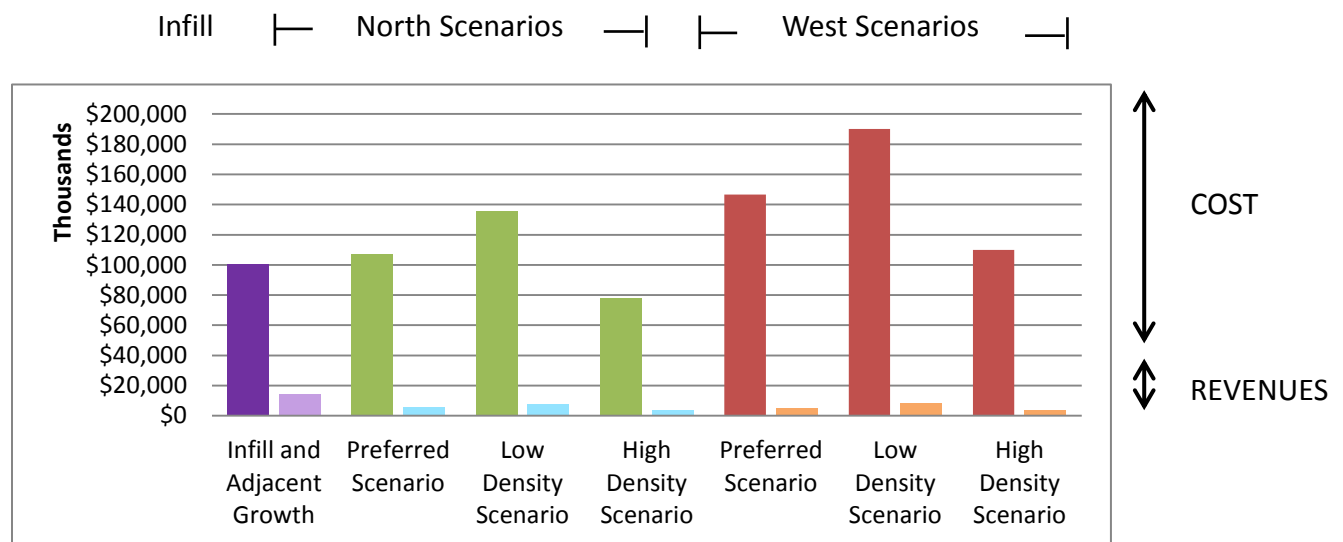
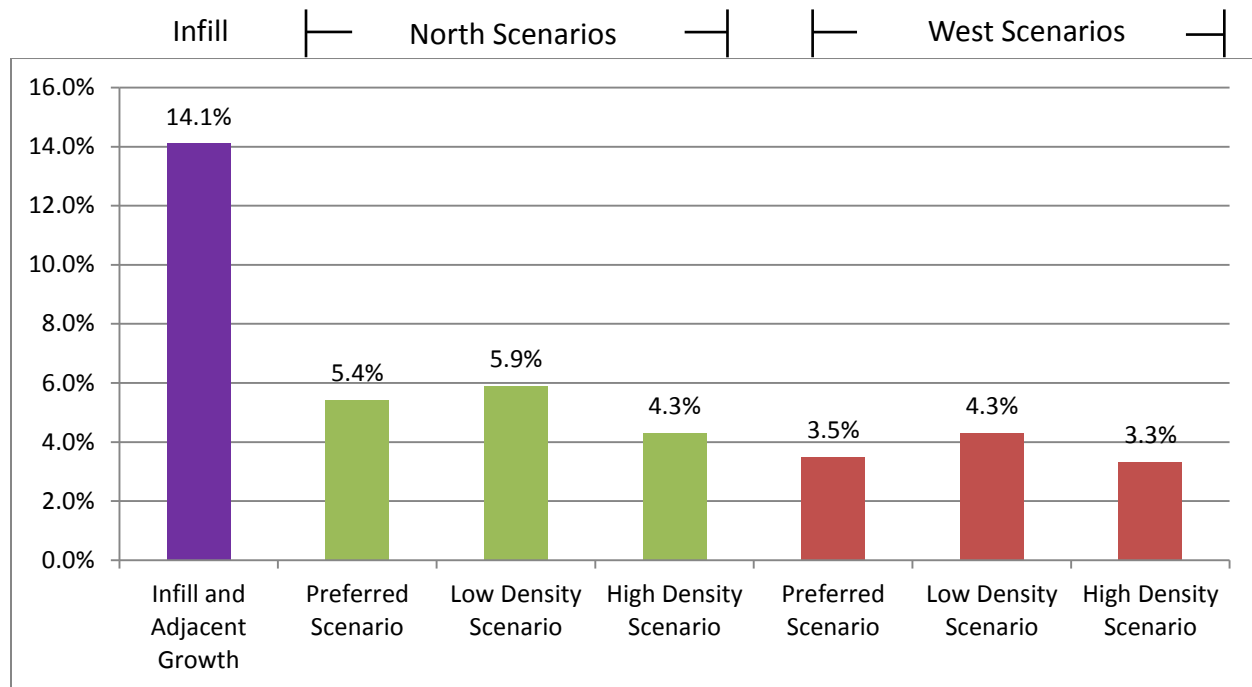


CHART 1.2.-ANNUAL RETURN ON INVESTMENT



The scenario planning data and the values expressed by the public support a general consensus that development of infill parcels and properties adjoining the existing City limits is preferred. Also substantiated by public comment and the scenario planning data, is that a mix of residential densities is also preferred. There are clear revenue advantages to the low density scenarios in terms of return on investments and total revenue per acre, mostly because the revenue generated by higher valued houses on larger lots is greater than any other scenario. However, the infill scenario returns the highest total revenue per acre largely because of the concentrated value on smaller lots and provides a mix of housing. The Scenario Planning demonstrates that the Infill and Adjacent Parcels growth pattern is most cost effective and has the highest rate of return. It should be noted that maintenance and replacement costs were not factored into the scenario planning. It stands to reason that infill development will require replacement and repair of existing infrastructure sooner than newer development in the north and west scenarios. This repair and replacement of existing infrastructure will be necessary regardless of the growth area as the majority of the City population still live in areas served by existing infrastructure and rely on this infrastructure.

The primary purpose of the planning process is to formulate a *Growth Policy* for the selected time horizon, or 20 years. In the end, the *Policy* is derived from the comments, goals, objectives and data. The *Growth Policy* stands as a framework to evaluate future public and private development and investment. The *Policy* is further supported by a *Growth Policy Statement* (vision) and suggested *Growth Guidelines* that can be referred to when making decisions for land use applications and infrastructure projects.

Chapter 2 – Growth Policy Statement and Guidelines

The **Growth Policy Statement** and **Guidelines** provide elected officials and other decision-makers an understanding of the public's vision for future growth and development, and recommendations on how to achieve that vision within the City of Billings in the next 20 years. As stated in state statute, *"a growth policy is not a regulatory document and does not confer any authority to regulate that is not otherwise specifically authorized by law or regulations adopted pursuant to the law,"* MCA 76-1-605(2)(a). It does, however, provide guidance when developing future regulations, policies, and projects. Most specifically, subdivision and zoning regulations are required to *"be made in accordance with the growth policy,"* MCA 76-1-605(1)(c) and MCA 76-2-304(1)(a). State law also provides for the governing bodies *"to be guided by and give consideration"* to the growth policy on other matters including public infrastructure, utilities, and structures, MCA 76-1-605(1).

The Growth Policy Statement may be considered a vision of where and how the City will grow in the next 20 years. The Growth Guidelines describe more specifically what people value and desire as outcomes or objectives and these are categorized under seven headings that define general goals.

City of Billings Growth Policy Statement

In the next 20 years, Billings will manage its growth by encouraging development within and adjacent to the existing City limits, but preference will be given to areas where City infrastructure exists or can be extended within a fiscally constrained budget and with consideration given to increased tax revenue from development. The City will prosper with strong neighborhoods with their own unique character that are clean, safe, and provide a choice of housing and transportation options.

Growth Guidelines

Essential Investments (relating public and private expenditures to public values)

- The safety of all users and the connectivity of the transportation system are important criteria to consider in roadway designs and transportation plans
- Public transit and commercial air service are critical to ensure access to and around the City
- Planning and construction of safe and affordable interconnected sidewalks and trails are important to the economy and livability of Billings.
- Developed parks that provide recreation, special amenities (community gardens, dog parks, viewing areas), and active living opportunities are desirable for an attractive and healthy community
- Natural landscapes are important because they define the uniqueness of Billings and help protect the environment
- Landscaping of public rights-of-way and entryways makes Billings more visually appealing to residents and visitors
- Public health and safety and emergency service response are critical to the well-being of Billings' residents, businesses, and visitors
- Infill development and development near existing City infrastructure may be the most cost effective
- Accessible, friendly and cost-effective government are important public values

- The history and heritage of Billings are cornerstones of our community
- Neighborhoods that are safe and attractive and provide essential services are much desired
- Infrastructure and service investments that stabilize or improve property values, secure future utility costs, consider maintenance costs, and improve our environmental quality far into the future (i.e. energy efficient) are desirable
- It is important to factor in maintenance costs when programming public spaces and infrastructure
- Integrated, long range water planning that better utilizes existing resources and treatment options, and when necessary acquires new ones, is vital
- Regulatory compliant water and wastewater treatment plants that provide sufficient capacity will help sustain community growth
- A supportive school system that inspires, motivates, and prepares students for meaningful employment is important for ensuring a high quality, competitive community
- A cost/benefit study is important to make cost effective land use decisions

Place Making (Enhance, maintain, preserve, and improve existing public places)

- A multi-use community recreation facility is desirable
- Enhancement and maintenance of public spaces and buildings through City stewardship is integral to a vibrant community
- Park master plans and transportation plans are important to facilitate the preservation and improved public access to the Yellowstone River and the Rims
- Public and private partnerships are valuable for creating enhanced entryways into Billings
- Locally grown foods help sustain agriculture, provide healthy options, and support local businesses
- The history and heritage of Billings are cornerstones of our community
- Natural landscapes are important because they define the uniqueness of Billings and help protect the environment and beautify neighborhoods
- Encouraging the installation of art in public spaces enhances the places and showcases the talents and diversity of the community
- Enhancing public buildings and spaces to be more efficient in their uses of energy, money, and space is important to having a vibrant and livable City

Community Fabric (attractive, aesthetically pleasing, uniquely Billings)

- Developed landscape areas in commercial areas encourage more pedestrian activity and vibrant commercial activity
- Attractive streetscapes provide a pleasant and calming travel experience in urban and suburban neighborhoods
- Outdoor public spaces provide casual and relaxing gathering areas for people
- Planning and construction of interconnected sidewalks and trails are important to the livability of Billings
- Developed parks that provide recreation, special amenities, and active living opportunities are desirable for an attractive and healthy community
- Natural landscapes and parks are important because they define the uniqueness of Billings and help protect the environment
- Cost-effective landscaping of public rights-of-way and entryways makes Billings more visually appealing to residents and visitors

Strong Neighborhoods (livable, safe, sociable and resilient neighborhoods)

- Zoning regulations that allow a mixture of housing types provide housing options for all age groups and income levels
- Walkable neighborhoods that permit convenient destinations such as neighborhood services, open space, parks, schools and public gathering spaces foster health, good will and social interaction
- Safe and livable neighborhoods can be achieved through subdivision design that focuses on complete streets, pedestrian-scale street lights, street trees and walkable access to public spaces
- Neighborhoods that are safe and attractive and provide essential services are much desired
- Zoning and subdivision regulations that utilize Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategies result in safer neighborhoods
- Implementation of the Infill Policy is important to encourage development of underutilized properties
- Public safety and emergency service response are critical to the well-being of Billings' residents and businesses

Home Base (healthy, safe and diverse housing options)

- A mix of housing types that meet the needs of a diverse population is important
- The Housing Needs Assessment is an important tool to ensure Billings recognizes and meets the demands of future development
- Common to all types of housing choices is the desire to live in surroundings that are affordable, healthy and safe

- Planning and construction of interconnected sidewalks and trails are important to the economy and livability of Billings
- Public safety and emergency service response are critical to the well-being of Billings' residents
- Homes that are safe and sound support a healthy community
- Accessory dwellings units provide an important type of affordable housing options if compatible
- Energy efficient housing can reduce energy consumption

Mobility and Access (transportation choices in places where goods and services are accessible to all)

- Connecting people to places with transportation choices is vital to the well-being of Billings' residents, businesses and visitors
- Safe and accessible transportation systems benefit everyone's quality of life
- Affordable public transit is much desired
- Development oriented to transit routes will provide more transportation choices and is preferred
- "Safe Routes to Schools" promotes physical health and reduces vehicle trips, earning parents more time and less costs for transportation
- Planning and construction of interconnected sidewalks and trails are important to the economy and livability of Billings
- On-street bike facilities promote predictability for all users
- Expanded air service ensures that Billings remains a competitive and an accessible destination
- Technology can reduce congestion and facilitate emergency vehicle travel at railroad crossings

Prosperity (promoting equal opportunity and economic advancement)

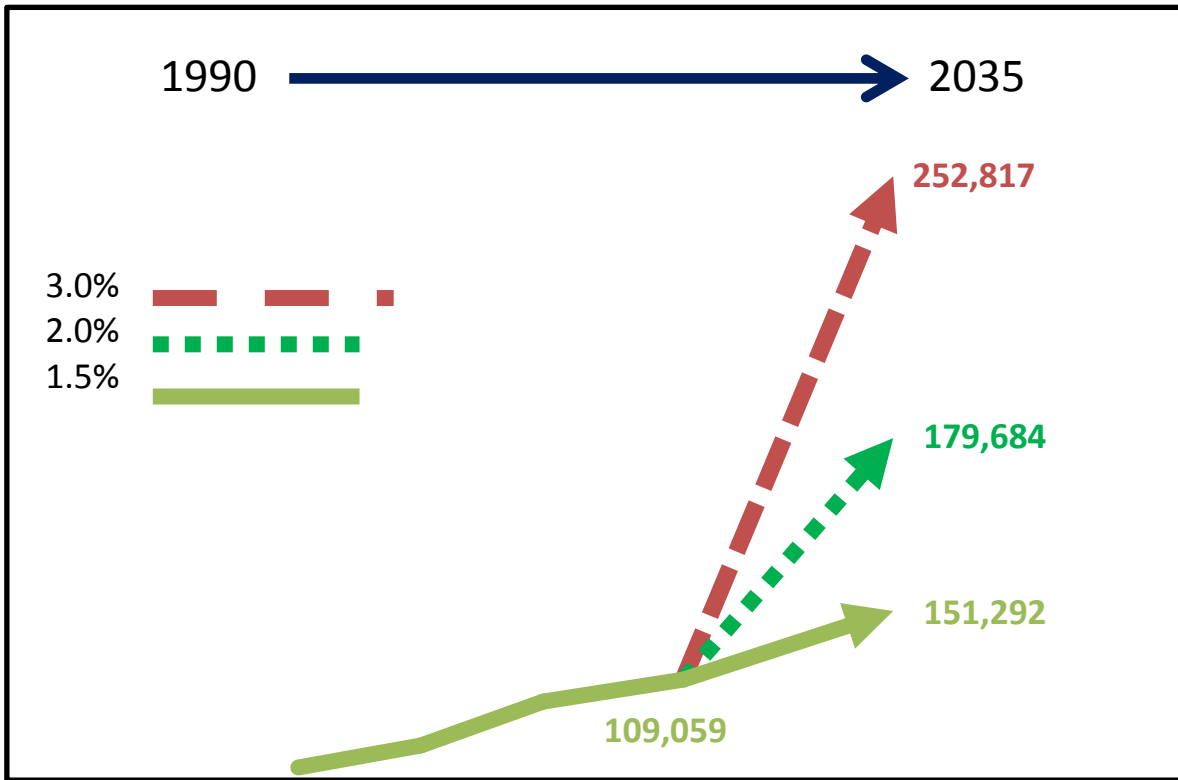
- Predictable, reasonable City taxes and assessments are important to Billings' taxpayers
- A diversity of available jobs can ensure a strong Billings' economy
- Successful businesses that provide local jobs benefit the community
- Community investments that attract and retain a strong, skilled and diverse workforce also attracts businesses
- Retaining and supporting existing businesses helps sustain a healthy economy
- Continued workforce training benefits the community and helps attract and retain businesses
- Strategically placed industrial parks will encourage a more diverse city economy, and will better help manage effluent and emission from industrial processes

CHAPTER 3 – Billings – Then, Now, and Beyond...

Demographics

Early in the public comment phase of the planning process, the public was shown a graph with three potential growth rates (Figure 3.1). One was based on past trends and two were examples of what a slight increase in the growth rate could mean in terms of population increase. None was meant as a projection.

FIGURE 3.1. POPULATION INCREASE BASED ON SAMPLE GROWTH RATES



The best population data comes from the Decennial Census compiled by the US Census Bureau. Population data for Billings from the last 13 decades is shown in Table 3.1. The 2015 estimate is also provided by the Bureau of Census, from the Annual Estimates of Resident Population, 2015 Population Estimates. The average annual growth rate since 1990 is 1.5 percent.

TABLE 3.1. CITY OF BILLINGS POPULATION CHANGE OVER THIRTEEN DECADES

Decade	City of Billings	Avg. Annual Growth Rate
1890	836	
1900	3,221	28.5%
1910	10,031	21.1%
1920	15,100	5.1%
1930	16,380	0.8%
1940	23,261	4.2%
1950	31,834	3.7%
1960	52,851	6.6%
1970	61,581	1.7%
1980	66,798	0.8%
1990	81,151	2.1%
2000	89,847	1.1%
2010	104,170	1.6%
2015	110,263	1.2%

The population of Billings is getting increasingly older, with the majority of the population between the ages of 25 and 65, as shown in Table 3.2. The average age increased by almost a year from 2000 to 2010. Since 1980, it has increased nearly 8 years from 29.3 years old to 37.5 years old.

TABLE 3.2. POPULATION AGE BY DECADE, 1980 – 2010

Age	1980		1990		2000		2010	
	Total Population	Percent of Total	Total Population	Percent of Total	Total Population	Percent of Total	Total Population	Percent of Total
Under 5	4,907	7.35%	6,021	7.42%	5,882	6.55%	7,293	7.00%
5 to 9	4,673	7.00%	5,804	7.15%	5,985	6.66%	6,457	6.20%
10 to 14	4,635	6.94%	5,848	7.21%	6,063	6.75%	6,070	5.83%
15 to 19	6,032	9.03%	5,501	9.78%	6,290	7.00%	6,325	6.07%
20 to 24	7,377	11.04%	5,345	6.59%	6,483	7.22%	7,654	7.35%
25 to 34	11,801	17.67%	14,096	17.37%	11,869	13.21%	15,318	14.70%
35 to 44	7,071	10.59%	12,433	15.32%	13,882	15.45%	12,025	11.54%
45 to 54	6,664	9.98%	8,145	10.04%	12,284	13.67%	14,799	14.21%
55 to 64	6,401	9.58%	6,973	8.59%	7,770	8.65%	12,623	12.12%
65 to 74	4,424	6.62%	6,319	7.79%	6,464	7.19%	7,508	7.21%
75+	2,813	4.21%	4,666	5.75%	6,875	7.65%	8,098	7.77%
Total	66,798	100%	81,151	71.55%	89,847	100%	104,170	100.00%
Median Age	29.3		33.7		36.8		37.5	

Population Predictions

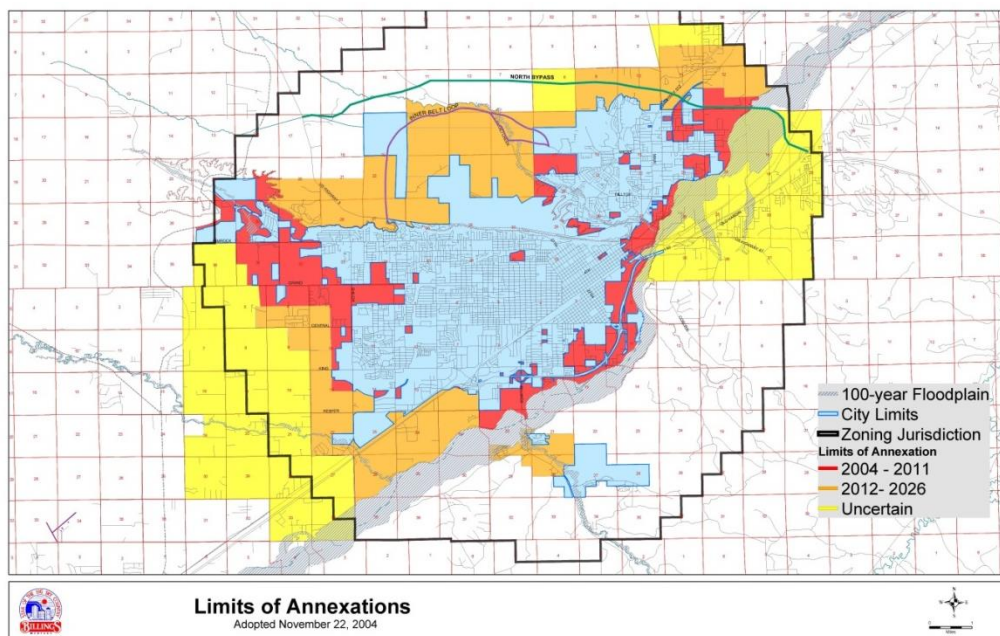
Historic trends are often used to make predictions on future growth rates, but how far back is appropriate? Considering the last four decades, a reasonable estimate would be 1.5 percent per year. At this rate, Billings would add approximately 42,233 people by 2035. However, trends are not necessarily destiny. Many events will happen that will likely change the predictions: resurgence in the Bakken oil play, another recession, recruitment of a major employer, loss of a major employer. Population projections based on trends should be used with caution. Given the stability of our economy, the quality of our schools, and the continuing improvement to our quality of life, a 1.5 percent annual increase is not an unreasonable prediction.

Land Use

Current Planning

The City of Billings has added 1.0 square mile since 2014 and is currently at 42.9 square miles. It is still the largest city in Montana. Roughly 33 percent of the city is zoned for commercial use, 12 percent for industrial use, and the remainder as residential. As property is annexed, it is zoned according to the City zoning designation closest to what it was zoned in the County. Most annexations have been residential. However, property owners that intend to develop soon after annexation rezone their property to suit at the same time as annexation. The City's Annexation Policy has done much to manage the expansion of the City since its adoption in 2004. Maps 3.1 and 3.2 show the change in city limits and limits of annexation from 2004 to 2016.

MAP 3.1. LIMITS OF ANNEXATION, 2004



MAP 3.2. LIMITS OF ANNEXATION, 2016

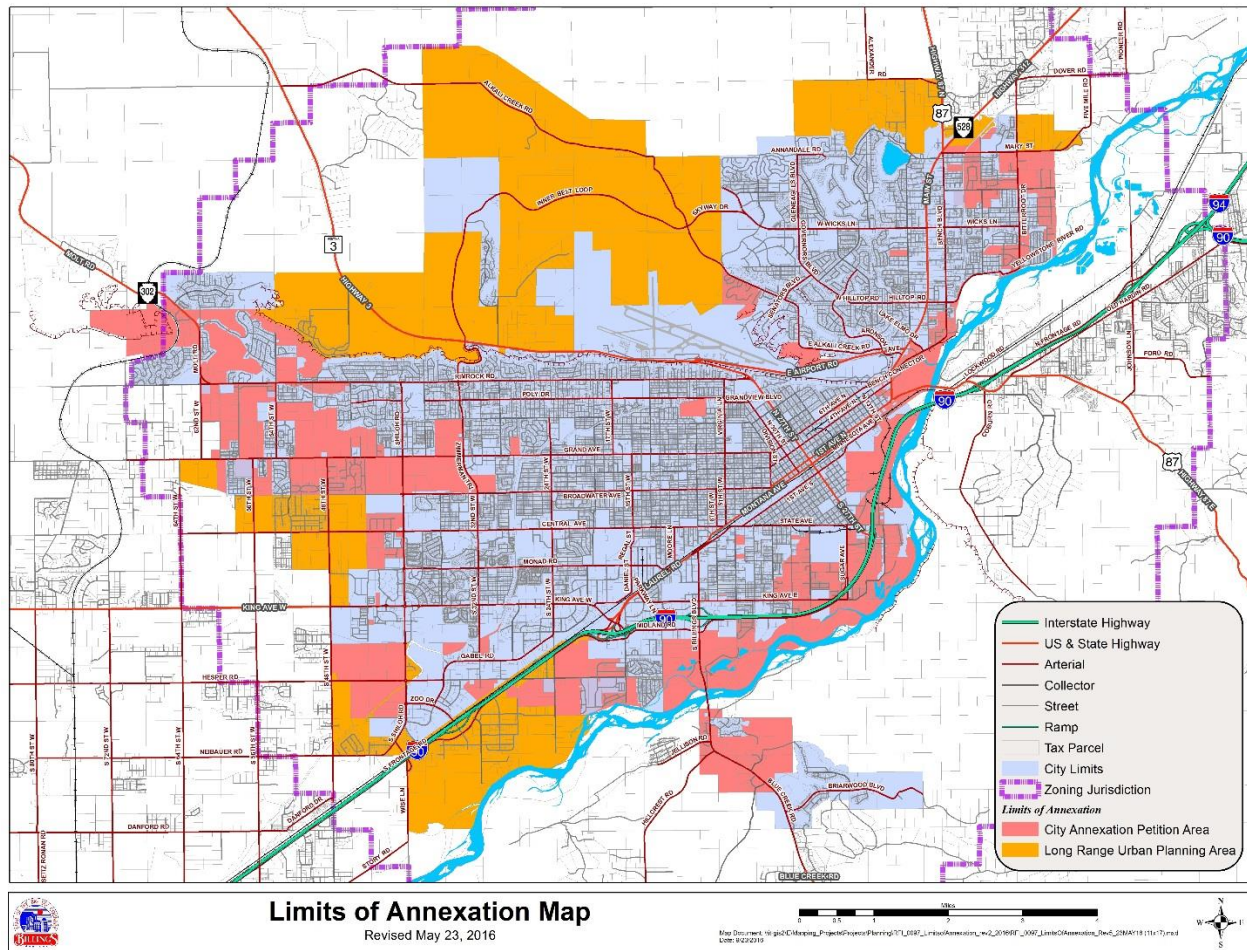
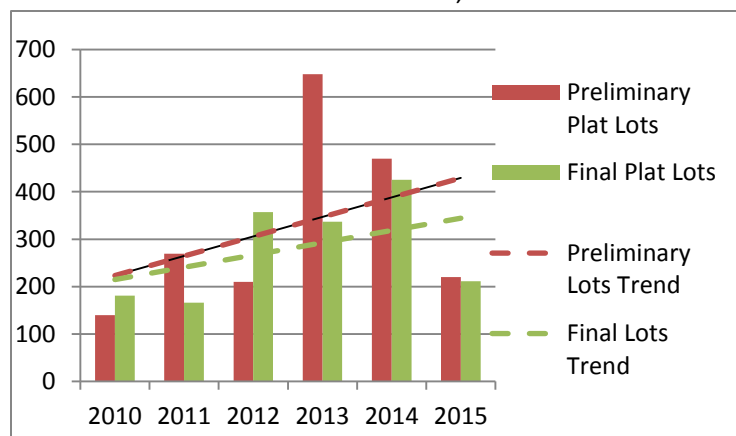


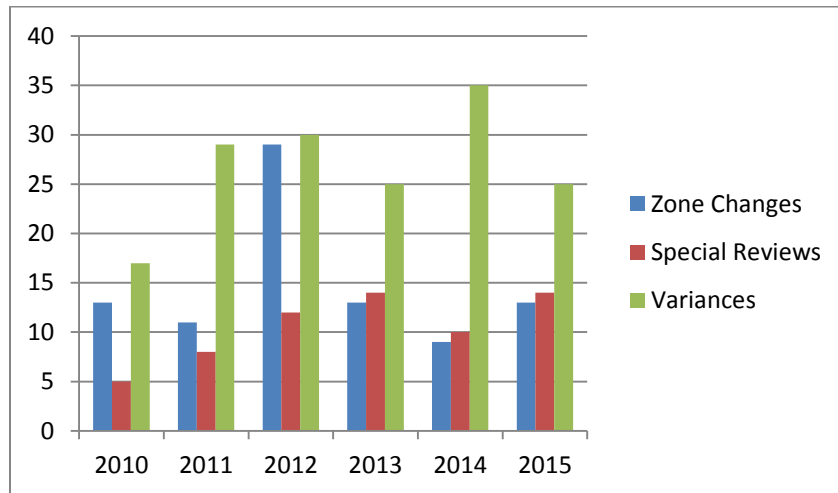
CHART 3.1. LOTS CREATED BY SUBDIVISION 2010 – 2015

Commensurate with growth are changes in zoning, special reviews, variances and subdivision activity. The number of lots created through subdivision steadily increased since 2010, but fell off sharply in 2015 as the chart below shows. A total of 1,677 lots were created since 2010.



With the exception of 2012, when there were 29 zone changes, zoning activity has remained fairly consistent. Chart 3.2 shows the number of Zone Changes, Special Reviews, and Variances processed in the City between 2010 and 2015.

CHART 3.2. CITY ZONING ACTIVITY 2010 – 2015



Housing

In 2010, Billings had an estimated 46,317 housing units. The number of units has increased significantly since then. Since 2010 the City Building Division issued permits for almost 3,000 new units, including 2,006 single family units and 258 duplex units. Building permits in the past 6 years were also issued for 465 multi-family structures containing at least 3 units apiece but many of them were 4 to 10 unit structures so the estimate of total units built is probably low.

The greater Billings area housing market continues to be strong in 2016 but is showing signs of adjustment. Pending sales in March, 2016, were 447 compared to pending sales at the same time in 2015 of 396. In 2006, before the recession, pending sales were 320. Other signs of a strong market include closed sales up by seven percent, and inventory was up 20 percent. Interest rates were down 2 percent.¹ There are, however, some negative aspects of the market that need to be recognized.

Activity in the Bakken Oil Field in North Dakota and Montana has slowed considerably due to a significant decrease in oil prices. In April 2015, the drilling rig count in North Dakota was 88. In 2016 the rig count dropped to 27 and no rigs were drilling in Montana in 2016. The regional coal industry has also been negatively affected recently. Montana coal production is down by one third from 2015² and Arch Coal has declared bankruptcy and laid off workers, and the coal-fired generators in Colstrip are being threatened by out-of-state clean energy interests.³ The effect on the local real estate market does not

¹ Howard Sumner, Howard Sumner Real Estate, Market Update at a Glance, March 2016.

² Billings Gazette, Montana Coal Production Down a Third, June 9, 2016

³ Billings Gazette, Washington Plans for Colstrip's Closure, but Stops Short of Ordering It, Mar 9, 2016

appear to be significant at this time but may result in fewer families and individuals associated with the oil and coal industries moving to Billings and purchasing homes.

A problem identified in the 2012 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice, concerns social equity and possible discriminatory housing practices.⁴ The study reported Billings as having a dual housing market; one for Whites and Asians and one for American Indians, Hispanics and African Americans. The concentration of minorities in some neighborhoods which coincides with areas of low income is characteristic of discrimination which *distorts* a free housing market. A free housing market may be distorted by practices such as racial steering, mortgage lending discrimination, discriminatory advertising, discriminatory rental policies, mortgage and insurance redlining or discriminatory appraisals.

Another problem facing the Billings' housing market is affordability for our most vulnerable populations:⁵

- Small family households (two to four members) with incomes from zero to 80 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI).
- Households with members aged at least 75 years of age with incomes from 30 percent to 80 percent AMI.

The following text is excerpted from the FY2015 – 2019 Consolidated Plan:

“The greatest housing need in Billings is the development and renovation of affordable housing for both owners and renters with incomes from zero to 80% AMI. Local housing options are limited due to cost burden, low vacancy rates and increased competition for available units.

According to the American Community Survey data, population growth appears to be keeping pace with the number of available housing units in Billings. However, more recent data point to a higher number of people experiencing homelessness and a considerably tight rental market with a vacancy rate of less than two percent. The largest qualifying income category for Community Development programs is the 50% to 80% category at 7,330 households. Excluding total households and households with incomes over 80%, the next largest cohort includes households with incomes between 50% and 80% AMEI (6,315). Small family households are the largest cohorts in all income categories (4,633) followed by those at least 75 years (3,387).

Most in demand are smaller affordable rental units, as the Housing Authority of Billings has identified over 1,200 households on the waiting list for rental units with one bedroom. The development of

⁴ Billings, Montana, Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice, 2012, Planning/Communications, River Forest, Illinois, April 2013. Commissioned by the City of Billings Community Development Division

⁵ FY2015 – 2019 City of Billings Five Year Consolidated Plan, Community Development Division, April 27, 2015. For reference, the 2015 HOME income limits for a two person household at 80% AMI is \$41,100 and for a four person household the limit is \$51,350.

smaller rental units would also meet the needs of the Millennials, who prefer to rent small units. It would also support the needs of the elderly, who may prefer to rent or purchase maintenance-assisted condominiums.”

Transportation

According to the 2015 statistics maintained by the City Public Works Department, Billings has 544.4 miles of streets and 124.2 miles of alleys. This is a 3.5 percent increase in total street and alley miles since 2008. In Billings, streets are classified by their function in the overall context of the highway transportation system. The functional classification system is established by the following hierarchy:

Freeways – serve high speed, long distance travel movements and provide limited access to adjacent lands. Interstate 90 is the only freeway designated route in Billings.

Principal and Minor Arterials – intended to serve higher volumes of traffic, particularly through-traffic at higher speeds. Examples of Principal Arterials include Shiloh Road, 24th Street West, N 27th Street, Main Street, Rimrock Road, Zimmerman Trail, Grand Avenue and King Avenue West. Examples of Minor Arterials include King Avenue East, State Street, North 30th, Aronson Avenue and Poly Drive.

Collectors – represent the intermediate class and collect traffic from the local street system and link travel to the arterial roadway system. Examples of collectors include Lake Elmo Drive, Parkhill Drive, Calhoun Lane, 19th Street West and 29th Street West.

Local Roads and Streets – these roadways carry locally generated traffic at relatively low speeds. Local streets provide connectivity through neighborhoods and are generally designed to discourage cut-through traffic.

A map showing the classification of the Billings street network is available on the City’s website: <http://ci.billings.mt.us/DocumentCenter/View/26253>. A full description of the functional classifications and the City street network is provided in the 2014 Billings Urban Area Long Range Transportation Plan.⁶

The City approves a Capital Improvement Plan, (CIP), each year for capital projects in excess of \$25,000 that are planned for a six fiscal year time frame. The plan identifies the project, years in which the expenditures will be made, the cost of the project per year, and the funding source(s). The last five CIPs list the following projects and the primary funding sources for road improvements and reconstruction. Table 3.3 below shows the amounts in each funding source that were listed in the year the CIP was approved by City Council.

⁶ 2014 Billings Urban Area Long Range Transportation Plan, prepared for City of Billings/Yellowstone County Metropolitan Planning Area by Kittelson & Associates, Inc. and DOWL HKM, Inc., August 2014.

TABLE 3.3. FUNDING SOURCE TOTALS IN CIP BY YEAR

Funding Source	FY2012	FY2013	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016
Storm Drain Bonds	\$0	\$9,000,000	\$4,000,000	\$10,253,750	\$0
Safe Routes to School	\$0	\$25,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
Community Development Block Grants	\$0	\$25,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
Sidewalk Bonds	\$0	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$400,000
Gas Tax	\$570,436	\$3,650,000	\$3,375,000	\$3,537,000	\$2,867,000
Storm Drain		\$2,202,500	\$817,250	\$2,802,500	\$1,325,000
Public Works Bond Utility Repair	0	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$0	\$0
Street Maintenance Fees	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Special Improvement Bonds	\$1,200,000	\$1,000,000	\$800,000	\$1,000,000	\$800,000
Street Lights	\$0	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$0	\$0
Developer Contributions	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$59,800	\$0
State & Federal	\$0	\$0	\$7,400,000	\$0	\$0
Tax Increment Financing	\$0	\$330,000	\$2,300,000	\$2,200,000	\$3,300,000
Community Transportation Enhancement Program (federal)	\$170,564	\$0	\$415,000	\$0	\$0
BSEDA	\$0	\$0	\$120,000	\$0	\$0
Arterial Fees	\$400,000	\$2,250,000	\$4,500,000	\$3,050,200	\$0
Unfunded		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,120,000
Total	\$2,341,000	\$17,687,833	\$23,937,250	\$23,103,250	\$12,812,000

Billings enjoys more than 37 miles of paved, off-street multi-use trails. The trail network includes trails through parks, such as Swords Park trail; trails within road rights-of-way, such as Zimmerman Trail and Shiloh Road, and trails within other City right-of-way, such as the Kiwanis Trail. These trails function both for commuters and recreationists. Eleven miles of soft surface trails through Riverfront, Two Moon, and Phipps Parks and around Lake Elmo provide recreational opportunities to pedestrians and bicyclists alike. There are also over 17 miles of on-street bicycle facilities such as bike lanes and sharrows around the City that are used primarily by commuters.

Trail usage has steadily increased in the past eight years and the City also has expanded its trail counting system to collect more data in both fixed and mobile locations across the community. Based on daily counts across the trail system, there were about 770,000 user trips in 2015, factoring for the most severe winter months (December through February) where usage is expected to be significantly reduced. The City produces a number of planning documents that report on the state of pedestrian and bicycle facilities that are updated periodically.

TABLE 3.4. BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITY PLANNING DOCUMENTS

Planning Document	Last Update	Scheduled Update
Billings Area Bikeway and Trail Master Plan	2011	2016
Complete Streets Progress Report	2013	2016
Long Range Transportation Plan	2014	2018

In 2011, the City Council adopted the first Complete Streets Policy. Contributors to the first Complete Streets Policy included members of the Healthy by Design Built Environment Workgroup; BikeNet (now Billings TrailNet), Downtown Billings Alliance, Montana Department of Transportation, MET Transit, City Engineering Division, City/County Planning Division and Big Sky Economic Development Authority. The 2011 Policy was repealed and a new policy was adopted by City Council on May 23, 2016. The 2016 Complete Streets Policy “intends to promote and encourage the development of a multi modal transportation system that will provide access to all users where practicable.” The policy provides definitions and outlines implementation procedures that provide a framework for planning and designing the City’s transportation network.

MET Transit, the City’s public transit provider, currently operates with 17 routes and has two primary transfer centers. MET operates 41 fleet vehicles all containing wheelchair lifts or ramps and two-slot bicycle racks. In 2016, MET intends to modify its current routes by eliminating some routes (2, 4, 6, and 8) and changing other routes and hours of service. The changes will add or enhance service to the two new middle schools as well as increase evening service to the Heights.

Economics

Billings is commonly referred to as a regional economic hub with a trade area of over a half million people⁷. There are approximately 6,200 businesses operating in Yellowstone County with a combined gross national product of about \$10,000 million in 2014.⁸ Yellowstone County enjoys a low unemployment rate of 3.0% (2016) compared to the statewide unemployment rate of 3.6%.⁹ Medical and education are the largest employers making up 22 percent of the total employment¹⁰. In 2012, the health care sector employed nearly 13,000 people, paying \$641 million in wages. Retail trade is also a large economic sector because of Billings’ regional status. Because Montana has no sales tax, Billings is a shopping destination for Wyoming, and North and South Dakota residents. One dollar out of seven dollars spent on retail purchases in Montana is being spent in Billings.¹¹

⁷ “Best Places to Launch a Small Business 2009 – Billings, MT, Fortune Magazine, October 13, 2009

⁸ Economic Pulse Billings Montana, ECONorthwest, October 20, 2015

⁹ Montana Department of Labor & Industry, “Current Labor Force Statistics, May, 2016”

¹⁰ US Census Bureau, Economy-wide key statistics: 2012, 2012 Economic Census of the United States

¹¹ Lutey, Tom (December 18, 2011, “Billings ahead of almost everywhere: Agriculture, retail, energy, health care driving economy: Missoulian.com

Natural Resources

The physical environment of Yellowstone County has strongly influenced the economic, social, and physical development of the County. The following subchapters on climate, vegetation, wildlife, soil, geology, and hydrology describe the physical environment of Yellowstone County. The purpose of this section is to provide enough information on the physical conditions that future land use controls can take into account the unique constraints and opportunities presented by the natural environment.

Climate

Yellowstone County enjoys a relatively mild climate and experiences few significant weather events during an average year. Extremely low temperatures, less than 0 degrees Fahrenheit, may prevail in the winter for short periods of time. High wind events are possible in the spring and summer and may include rare tornadic activity. Heavy rainfall is rare, but localized thunderstorms can deposit significant rainfall in a small area resulting in flashfloods. Flooding is a problem on the Yellowstone River and tributaries particularly when warmer temperatures rapidly melt snow and ice during spring break up.

Vegetation and Wildlife

The major vegetation type in the County is grassland which supports, in addition to domestic livestock, a healthy population of deer, antelope and several small mammal species. Critical to the survival of many native species are the riparian and prairie wetland habitats. In the semi-arid terrain, access to water, forage and cover these habitats provide increase their importance to wildlife. Weeds are a threat to all vegetation types, including cultivated crops. Yellowstone County has an aggressive weed management program that focuses on noxious weed containment and eradication. Most of the conflicts between humans and wildlife occur at the urban and wildland interface. This area is most susceptible to wildlife habitat destruction and noxious weed invasion due to soil disturbance from construction. The dry grassland and uncontrolled weed populations make many areas within the county susceptible to wildfires, especially in wildland urban interface areas.

Soil

The soil units in Yellowstone County are generally derived from nearby bedrock sources, or from transported alluvial sediments. Soils formed in place tend to contain high amounts of clay, silt and sand and low amounts of organic material. These soils are located on the higher terraces and hills north and south of the Yellowstone River valley. Many of these soils are suited only for rangeland but some support dryland cultivation. The transported soils found in the valley are more loam rich and highly suited to cultivation, especially when irrigated. The Yellowstone River valley in the vicinity of Billings and Huntley Project possesses some of the most productive soil in the State. These soils are designated as Prime Agricultural Soils by the Natural Resource Conservation Service.

Geology

Much of the geology of Yellowstone County is starkly visible when viewed from the sandstone rims north of downtown Billings. To the south, the view encompasses the broad Yellowstone River valley composed of several alluvial benches. Across the valley a wide terrace underlain by early Cretaceous and Jurassic sedimentary formations ramps gently upward towards the Pryor Mountains. These formations are composed predominantly of shale. Near Billings and north of the river valley, the eye is drawn to the prominent sandstone cliffs formed by the resistant Eagle Formation. The plains north of the Yellowstone River are broken by a series of northeast trending faults which expose interbedded shale and sandstone of the Judith River Formation. The geology of the County presents both obstacles and opportunities. Shallow bedrock and unstable slopes can pose difficulties for construction. However, near surface gravel and coal deposits have contributed to the area's economic development.

Hydrology

Clean water and reliable flows are critical for human consumption, agricultural production, wildlife and recreation uses. Yellowstone County is dependent on the main source of water, the Yellowstone River, for all these reasons. While there are numerous tributaries to the Yellowstone River, few carry water year round. Because of the scarcity of surface water, early settlers to the area constructed elaborate ditch systems to carry water from the Yellowstone River to the higher benches. Ditches continue to play an important role for groundwater recharge and agricultural production. Except in the alluvial deposits within the river valley, groundwater is scarce and usually found at depths too great to be economically developed. Within the valley, groundwater can be found at very shallow depths and susceptible to contamination from surface uses.

Chapter 4 – Community Goals

Goal



ESSENTIAL INVESTMENTS – prioritize public and private investment in areas, policies, programs and projects that achieve the community vision as described in the Growth Policy Statement:

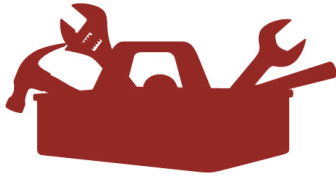
“In the next 20 years, Billings will manage its growth by encouraging development within and adjacent to the existing city limits, but preference will be given to areas where city infrastructure exists or can be extended within a fiscally constrained budget and with consideration given to increased tax revenue from development. The city will prosper with strong neighborhoods with their own unique character that are clean, safe, and provide a choice of housing and transportation options.”

Essential Investments are where and how the public and private sectors should spend their time and resources. These policies, programs or projects are considered extremely important to achieve the community vision. For budgeting public funds, the objectives may be considered priorities. These objectives may also guide private investments in our community.

Objectives

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locations for investments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Infill and contiguous County properties ▪ Downtown ▪ Urban Renewal Districts ▪ Interstate Interchanges ▪ Major Arterials ▪ Inner Belt Loop ▪ West End • Public Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public safety ▪ Schools ▪ Planning ▪ Parks and Recreation ▪ Snow removal ▪ Street maintenance ▪ Trail maintenance • Infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Integrated water systems ▪ Waste water treatment ▪ Communications ▪ Street lights | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Animal control ▪ Traffic control ▪ Architectural control ▪ Growth management ▪ Water conservation ▪ Energy conservation ▪ Preservation of sensitive natural environments • Businesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Neighborhood commercial and public services ▪ Improved air service ▪ Recycling programs ▪ Local businesses ▪ Local foods • Amenities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dog Parks ▪ Recreation Center/Sports Facility ▪ Branch Libraries ▪ Convention Center ▪ Museums |
|---|--|

Toolbox



- ❖ Priority based budgeting
- ❖ Fees and assessments
- ❖ Municipal and tax increment finance bonds
- ❖ Grants
- ❖ Mill levies
- ❖ Local option tax
- ❖ City Charter amendments
- ❖ Public/private partnerships
- ❖ Special districts
- ❖ Regulatory changes

Performance Indicators

- Annual tax increment growth in Urban Renewal Districts
- Annual change in the area added to the City
- Number of neighborhood and park master plans prepared annually
- Miles of streets and trails maintained annually
- Quality of waste water discharge at the treatment plant measured annually
- Annual number of vehicle crashes
- Annual change in the average dwelling units per acre within the City limits
- Acres of land zoned for neighborhood commercial services measured annually
- Number of annual business licenses (Business Determination Tax) issued and renewed
- Number of dog parks developed annually



Goal



PLACE MAKERS – Enhance existing public places, create new ones, preserve natural and historic places, and maintain our agricultural landscape to define the community for its residents and improve the quality of life for everyone who lives or visits here.

The Billings area should continue to make places that we all enjoy by preserving and improving public space as well as the natural and historic landscape to bring the community together where people are comfortable and share activities. These places are ones that you go back to, share with visitors and recall when someone asks you to describe your community.

Objectives

Enhanced public spaces

- Parks
- Public property
- Interstate interchanges
- Street corridors

Public Services

- Recreation center/sports facility
- Branch libraries
- Museums

Protection and Preservation

- Historic preservation controls
- Integrated landscape and storm water controls
- Preservation of view sheds
- Preservation of natural areas
- Preservation of historic places

Amenities

- Yellowstone River access
- Rimrock views and access
- Preserved agricultural lands



Toolbox



- ❖ Landscaping regulations
- ❖ Site development regulations
- ❖ Zoning regulations
- ❖ Subdivision regulations
- ❖ Agricultural land acquisition program
- ❖ Farm to table program to supply local food
- ❖ Public/private partnerships to develop community facilities
- ❖ City-wide Public Arts Committee program
- ❖ Develop City-owned spaces downtown
- ❖ Local/State coordination for community entryway right-of-way improvements
- ❖ Billings Area Bikeway and Trail Master Plan updates
- ❖ City-Wide Parks Master Plan
- ❖ Rims to Valley Bike/Ped Feasibility Study implementation
- ❖ Highway 3 Corridor Study implementation
- ❖ Prepare and implement park master plans
- ❖ Funding Sources
 - County-Wide Library Levy
 - Transportation Planning Program
 - County-Wide Planning Levy
 - City-wide and Downtown Park District
 - Business Improvement District
 - Tax Increment Finance District

Performance Indicators

- Number of acres of agricultural land preserved every five years
- Number of street trees planted in the public right of way annually
- Number of park master plans adopted and implemented (funded) every five years
- Number of public art installations added city-wide annually
- Miles of trails added annually
- Gallons of storm water retained annually using landscaping (use project design calculations)
- Number of community events held in public spaces community-wide annually
- Access, trail, historic place improvements along Highway 3 built every five years
- Two branch libraries opened
- Recreation Center opened
- Annual number of visitors to City parks

Goal



COMMUNITY FABRIC - is what makes the City of Billings unique, attractive, a desirable place to live and aesthetically pleasing to residents and visitors. Community fabric can make Billings a draw to others looking for a place to call home.

A strong community promotes the City's appeal to residents, businesses and visitors. Elements of community fabric include access to outdoor activities, enjoyment of urban greenspace and participation in a rich cultural heritage.

Objectives

Attractive entryways

- Require trees and landscaping
- City beautification
- New landscaping code
- Design standards

Neighborhood parks

- Require developers to improve parks
- Variety of parks
- Small neighborhood parks
- More natural areas

Green space in commercial areas

- More places to enjoy trees
- More green space in commercial development
- Green space and landscaping in Downtown
- More attractive freeway frontage

Vibrant Downtown

- Pocket parks downtown
- Shopping and dining Choices
- Green buildings
- Fun centers / science centers
- Museums
- Walking mall in Downtown

Outdoor public spaces

- Downtown square
- Dog parks
- Community gardens
- River access

Recreation/cultural opportunities

- Marathon loop
- Bike trails
- Make use of river frontage
- Paths between neighborhoods
- Walkable paths through the city

Historic preservation

- Protect rims
- Protect river
- Historic buildings

Toolbox



- ❖ Landscape/Zoning regulations
- ❖ Infill policy implementation
- ❖ Updated Engineering Site Development code
- ❖ Connectivity of streets and pedestrian facilities
- ❖ Integrated storm water management
- ❖ Cultural Partner Funding
- ❖ City forestry program
- ❖ Prepare city wide park program
- ❖ Local Historic Districts
- ❖ Grassroots community groups

Performance Indicators

- Number of park master plans adopted and implemented (funded) every five years
- Acreage urban heat islands (infrared imagery) reduced
- Number of cultural and recreational events Downtown
- Miles of trails added annually
- Number of street trees planted in public right of way annually
- Number of Downtown parks or parklets constructed



Goal



STRONG NEIGHBORHOODS – Create and enhance strong neighborhoods that are clean and safe with streets and public places that provide convenient access for our most vulnerable citizens – our children and grandparents. A strong neighborhood is a place where we will be comfortable no matter our age, income or heritage and provides gathering spaces to encourage everyday interaction between residents.

Billings is a city of neighborhoods. A neighborhood can be as small as one block of houses between two intersections or as large as a 400 homes in a distinctive subdivision. How our neighborhoods are designed and built sets a course for its livability, safety, sociability and resilience.

Objectives

Safe, accessible and comfortable places for people to walk and gather • Neighborhood green space, play spaces and parks • Neighborhood events • Street trees • Complete sidewalks • Street and pedestrian lighting • Neighborhood Watch programs Access to everyday conveniences within walking distance • Complete neighborhoods • Small neighborhood businesses for services	Housing choices for all ages and families • Mixed housing types Interconnected network of sidewalks and trails that are safe at all times • Complete sidewalks • Pedestrian lighting Connect Neighborhoods • Public transit • Sidewalks and trails Attractive and safe neighborhood streets • Low-speed design • On-street parking • Street trees
--	---

Toolbox



- ❖ Complete Streets Policy
- ❖ Zoning regulations
- ❖ Site development regulations
- ❖ Subdivision regulations
- ❖ Landscape regulations
- ❖ General Obligation Bonds
- ❖ Neighborhood Grant Program
- ❖ Special Improvement Districts (city-wide)
- ❖ Neighborhood Task Forces
- ❖ Grassroots organizations

Performance Indicators

- Crime rate
- Carbon emissions monitoring
- Community Health Impact Assessment
- Conflicts/crashes between vehicles and bicycles and pedestrians
- Happiness quotient 😊
- Vehicle crashes
- Housing + Transportation Index TM
- WalkScore TM



Goal



HOME BASE – Enable a home environment for all residents that is healthy, safe and affordable, and offers a choice of housing options.

Residents of Billings prefer a choice of housing that is healthy, safe, and affordable. The resident's age and household diversity create needs that are no longer served by only the traditional single family home. For many residents, lifestyle dictates the type of housing preferred. Busy households without children or households with aging residents may opt for smaller, more compact homes, even apartments. Larger households with children might prefer single family homes on small to large lots. Common to all types of housing choices is the desire to live in surroundings that are affordable, healthy and safe.

Objectives

- Housing Options
- Affordability
- Safety
- Convenience
- Healthy
- Energy Efficient



Toolbox



- ❖ Housing Needs Assessment
- ❖ Subdivision regulations
- ❖ Accessory dwelling units
- ❖ Affordable housing incentives/requirements
- ❖ Infill Policy
- ❖ Public/private partnerships
- ❖ Neighborhood Planner/Coordinator
- ❖ Housing rehabilitation program
- ❖ First Time Home Buyer program
- ❖ Land Bank
- ❖ Foreclosure and acquisition program
- ❖ Affordable housing project

Performance Indicators

- Number of new residential building permits by Neighborhood Task Force area
- Housing + Transportation Index TM
- Crime rate
- Number of Nuisance Code violations by Neighborhood Task Force area



Goal

MOBILITY AND ACCESS - The transportation system is designed to be safer and more efficient for all users.

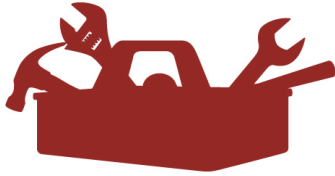


A transportation network allows people to make transportation mode choices that work best for them and helps reduce traffic congestion, protect air quality and promote public health. Mobility and access means projects, policies and programs to ensure transportation choices in places where goods and services are accessible to all residents.

Objectives

Connectivity • People to places • North, south, east and west • Vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians • Neighborhoods and subdivisions • Essential services • Bus routes • Transportation options • Public safety • Safe Routes to School Accessible • Essential services • Public transportation • ADA compliant • Safe Safety • Predictable use of facilities • Bike lanes • Separated shared-use facilities • Boulevard sidewalks • Safe Routes to School • Speed control/traffic calming	Transit and Air • Frequent headways and convenient routes • Extended hours • Technology (mobile apps for bus tracking) • Airport shuttle • Economically stable • Smaller/energy efficient fleet • Expanded air service Rail and Freight • Safe railroad crossings (both vehicle and pedestrian) • Passenger rail • Reduced congestion • Improved traffic flow • Designated truck routes
---	---

Toolbox



- ❖ Complete Streets Policy
- ❖ Complete Streets Progress Report
- ❖ Long Range Transportation Plan
- ❖ Transportation Planning Studies
- ❖ Billings Bikeway and Trail Master Plan
- ❖ Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Strategies
- ❖ Federal, state and local grants
- ❖ Permanent, local non-motorized funding
- ❖ Targeted traffic enforcement
- ❖ Data
- ❖ Zoning regulations
- ❖ Subdivision regulations
- ❖ Site development regulations
- ❖ Inter-agency cooperation (planning/projects)
- ❖ Private/public partnerships
- ❖ Connected node ratio
- ❖ MET mill levy

Performance Indicators

- Crash rates
- Ridership/modal splits
- Travel times
- Community health indicators
- Emergency response times
- Air quality
- WalkScore™
- Housing + Transportation Index™
- Livability index



Goal



PROSPERITY – enable “a diverse, welcoming community where people prosper and business succeeds.”

VISION STATEMENT, CITY OF BILLINGS FY 2015-2019 CITY COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN

As Billings grows, its population becomes more diverse in terms of age, race, ethnicity, and culture. Every individual has the right to enjoy a quality of life that is free from discrimination and provides equal opportunity for social and economic advancement. As the Vision Statement in the Council’s Strategic Plan states, Billings strives to welcome this diversity and create a community that encourages individual and commercial success. Government’s role is to ensure charges, fees, taxes and assessments are affordable and reasonably related to the services it provides. Both the public and private sector can contribute to the prosperity of the City by attracting and retaining businesses that pay competitive wages.

Objectives

City taxes and assessments

- Affordable
- Equitable

Job creation

- Professional jobs
- Competent workforce
- Living wages
- Business development

Tax and assessment reform

- Local tax authority
- Equalization (revenue neutral)



Toolbox



- ❖ Impact fees
- ❖ Tax incentives
- ❖ Workforce training and recruitment
- ❖ Gasoline tax
- ❖ Local Option tax
- ❖ Tiered assessments (based on location)

Performance Indicators

- Annual net job growth
- Annual change in average wages with and without benefits
- Annual change in median home prices
- Annual change in median household income
- Annual amount of tax revenue received from local authority tax



Chapter 5 – Growth Scenario Planning

Process

Growth scenario planning was undertaken to demonstrate, in general, the costs and benefits of different growth patterns. The initial step was to identify areas of growth. The preferred growth areas were easily determined from the public's response on where growth should occur. While the overwhelming response was for infill development, or development within the existing city limits, there was also a strong preference for the area around the proposed Inner Belt Loop and west Billings Heights and area west of Billings. These areas were chosen to examine the cost implication of future growth. The next step was to apply different development patterns to these areas to evaluate if one pattern was more cost-effective than another. The three patterns evaluated were predominantly high density residential development, predominantly low residential density development, and a mix of densities. From the public comments, a mix of densities providing a variety of housing choice is preferred. The scenarios with a mix of densities are referred to as "public preferred." The area determined for infill development considered only one growth pattern that is defined by densities permitted by the City's existing zoning regulations.

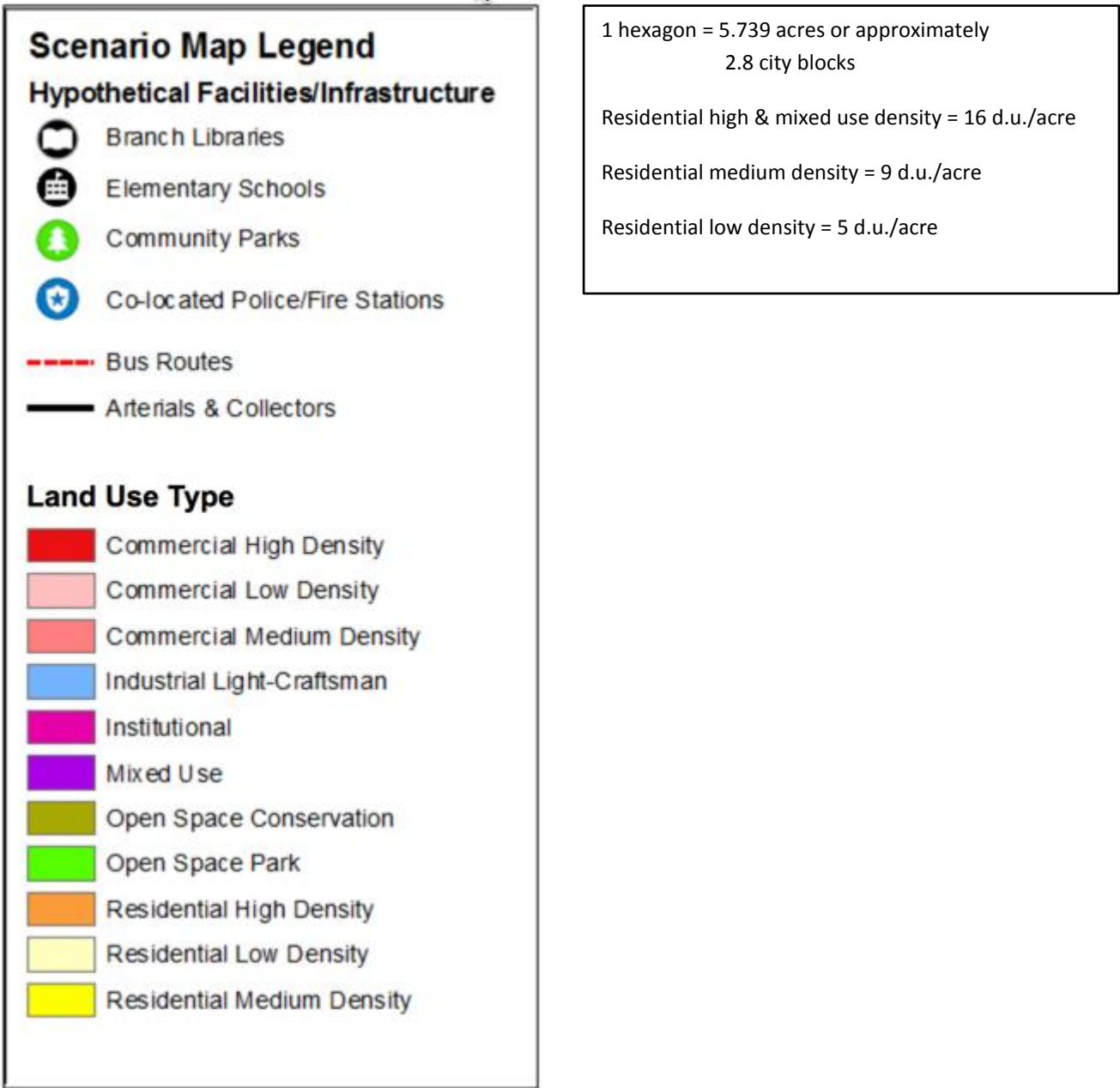
Before the placement of land uses which define the scenarios could occur, the growth areas were mapped for suitability. Areas that constrained growth because of steep slopes, in public ownership, or in a floodplain were removed for consideration. This step allowed for a more realistic placement of land uses and the road network.

After the growth areas and growth scenarios were determined, indicators were selected to approximate the costs of providing preferred services, facilities and infrastructure to the scenarios. The indicators are based on how the public responded to "How should Billings grow?" While this list could be extensive, it was narrowed down to seven key indicators: Branch Libraries, Walkability, Community Parks, Public Safety, Public Transit, and Arterial and Collector Roads. The software, CommunityViz™, was used to help analyze the costs and revenues for each scenario based on these indicators and also provided results of a number of fixed indicators which are provided in Appendix F.

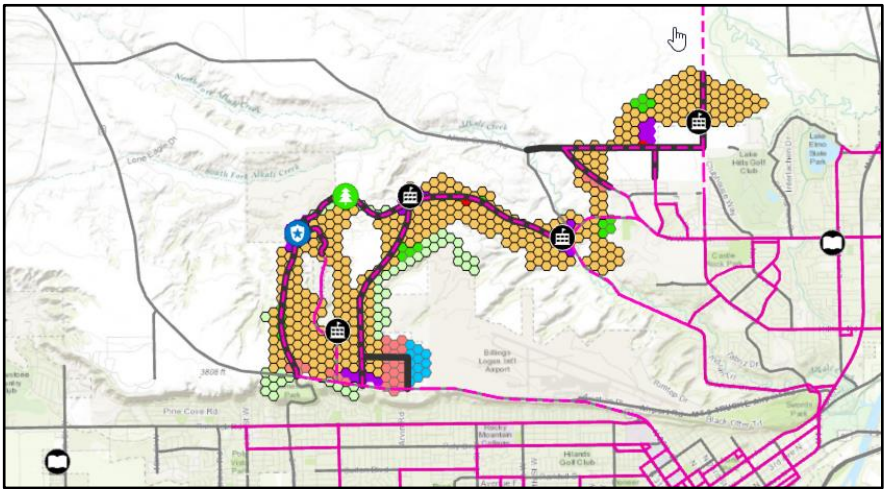
In order to calculate the extent the growth scenarios were already served by existing services and facilities, these were mapped in accordance to accepted standards for those services. For instance, the National Recreation and Parks Association guidelines suggest each resident should be within a three miles from a Community Park. Three-mile radii from existing Community parks were mapped to determine the existing coverage. Most of these standards are based on proximity of the service, facility or infrastructure to dwelling units. The standards for growth indicators are listed in the Indicator Description section in this chapter. If gaps existed in the service coverage areas, hypothetical facilities, services or infrastructure were placed in order to ensure full coverage.

The number or length of the hypothetical indicators was then calculated and a cost was assigned. The total costs were calculated for each scenario and the total revenues from taxes and assessments were estimated. These calculations and estimates are also described in the Indicator Description section of this chapter. From these results, total development costs, total revenue generated, total development costs per acre, total revenue generated per acre, and return on investment were calculated.

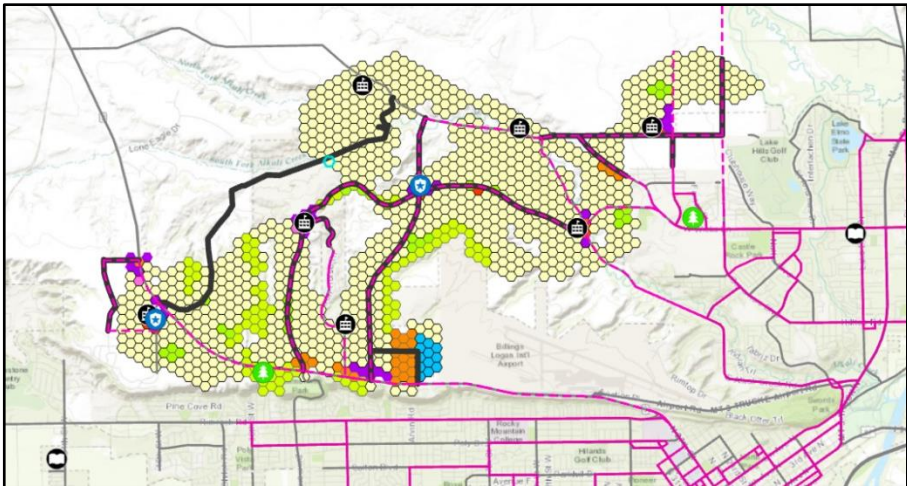
The final scenarios showing the added hypothetical transportation network, bus routes, and other facilities used as indicators are shown in the following series of images.



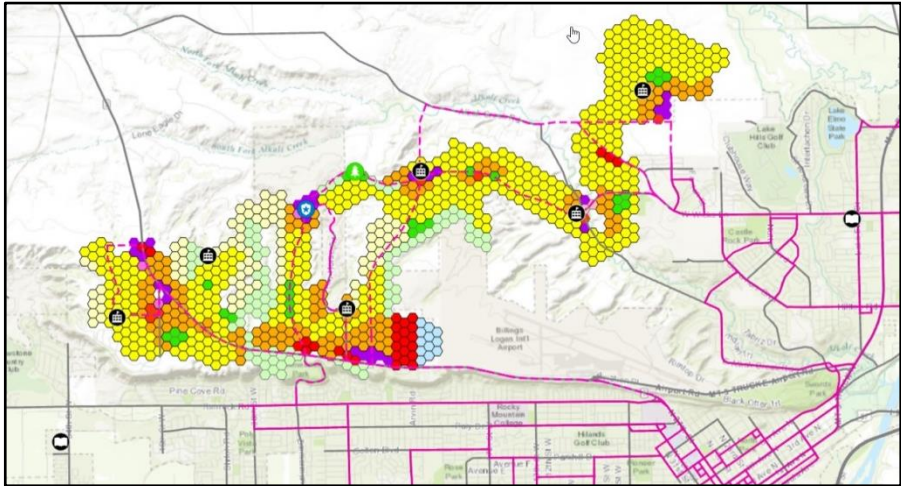
NORTH HIGH DENSITY SCENARIO (NHD)



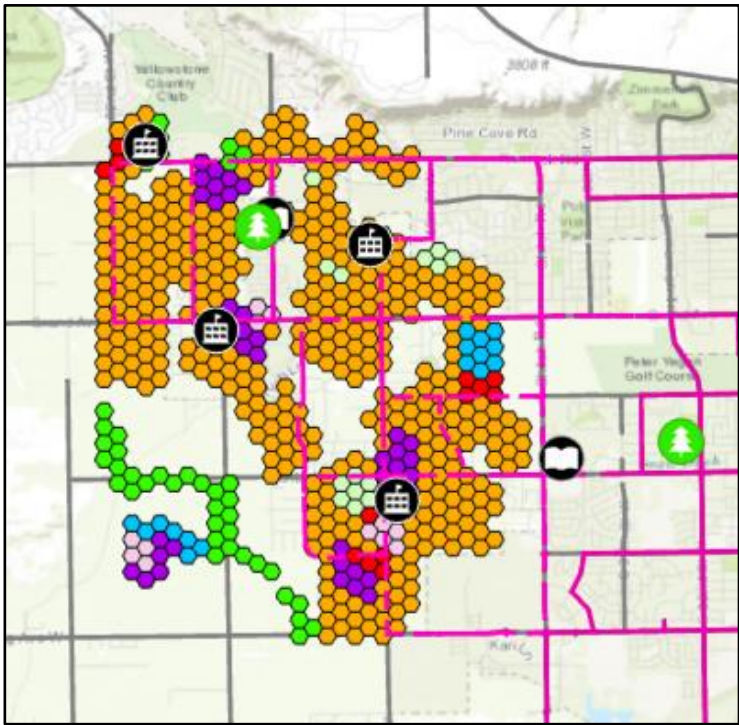
NORTH LOW DENSITY SCENARIO (NLD)



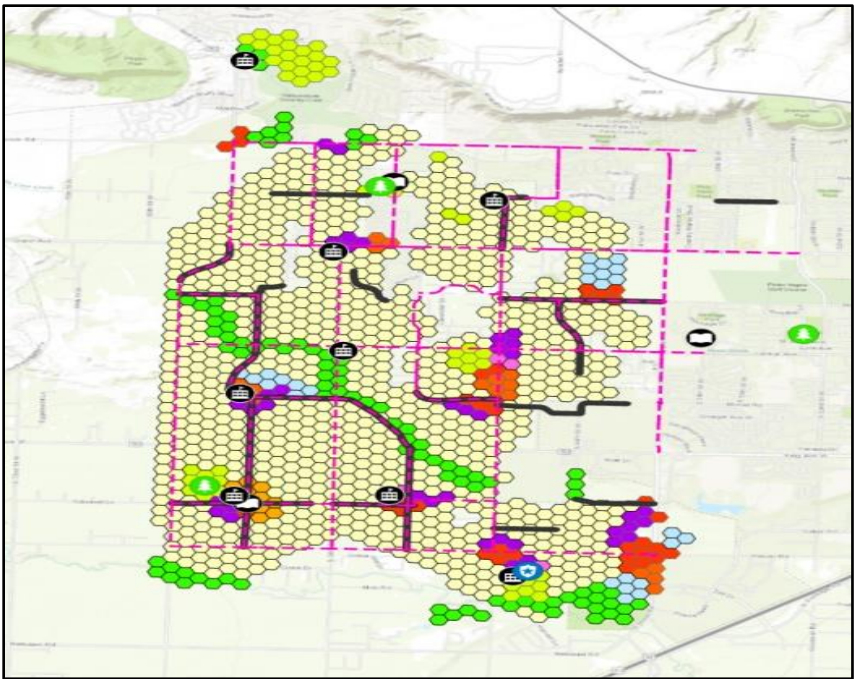
NORTH PUBLIC PREFERRED SCENARIO (NPP)



WEST HIGH DENSITY SCENARIO (WHD)



WEST LOW DENSITY SCENARIO (WLD)



Growth Indicator Descriptions

Branch Libraries

The estimate for the number of branch libraries needed to meet the needs of the population in 2035 is based on two factors: 1) the average square feet per capita for urban public libraries in Montana, which has held steady for many years at .65, and 2) the distance from the branch library locations that should be constructed to meet existing resident's needs. The projected population of Billings in year 2035 is 151,404 based on a 1.5% growth rate, resulting in a recommended total square footage of 98,413. The Billings Public Library is 66,000 square feet. The minimum size for a branch library is 15,000 s.f. which would accommodate adult and children's collections, computers, and a multi-purpose meeting room. The formula used to calculate the number of branch libraries needed in 2035 is: $(98,413 \text{ s.f.} - 66,000 \text{ s.f.}) / 15,000 \text{ s.f.} = 2.1$. For practical purposes two branch libraries was used as a minimum for each scenario. The cost was based on the 2014 construction cost for the Billings Public Library at \$200 per square foot excluding land acquisition costs. The assumption was made that two branch libraries are needed within the existing city limits. These locations are fixed. If growth occurs more than four miles from these locations, as in the case of the North Scenarios, a third branch library was located.

Walkability

Elementary schools were used to represent the walkability of a neighborhood. If an elementary school is located within 20 minutes (1 mile) of every residential unit, the neighborhood is considered walkable. This situation currently exists within Billings. The placement of hypothetical elementary schools within the scenarios ensured 20 minute coverage for every residential unit. The construction cost is calculated at \$185 per square foot based on an architects' estimate excluding land acquisition costs.

Community Parks

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) offers a classification for municipal parks based on size and use. Billings, generally speaking, maintains Subdivision, Community and Regional parks. Subdivision parks are acquired through the subdivision process and serve the immediate development. Regional parks, because of their size have been acquired through private donations or arrangements with other public agencies and attract users from the community and beyond. Community parks are generally acquired by the City for use by the community. The cost of acquisition and improvement is paid for through city funds. Community parks are used as indicators of parkland needs for the growth scenarios. The location of the hypothetical community parks are based on distance to a residential unit. Using the NRPA guidelines of a three-mile radius, community parks were located to ensure every residence was within at least three miles. The cost of acquisition was not calculated but the improvement costs, based on 2015 prices are estimated to be approximately \$112,370 per acre. Based on the NRPA guidelines, community parks should be approximately 30 acres in size.

Public Safety

Billings' residents value their safety both at home and on the road. The distance from existing fire and police stations is used as an indicator of personal safety. A five-minute response time is considered reasonable according to the Billings Fire Chief, Paul Dextras. The existing city area is within this

response time coverage as is much of the outlying area. However, there are gaps in this coverage area that would require a new station to ensure the same level of service throughout the community. Future facilities will be built as co-located Fire and Police facilities similar to Fire Station 7 on 54th Street West. The approximate cost of a new facility, \$1,714,414, is based on the cost to construct Fire Station 7 but does not include the land acquisition costs. Where gaps in the five-minute response time coverage were identified, a hypothetical facility was placed at a location deemed appropriate by the Fire Chief (i.e. not in residential areas and with good access to arterial roads). Most scenarios required at least one additional co-located Fire and Police station, while the North Low Density Scenario required two additional locations.

Public Transit

Public transit is desired in Billings and is considered an important service to provide to new growth areas. MET transit currently operates 17 fixed routes. The cost of hypothetical bus routes serving the scenarios were used as indicators of growth impacts. The hypothetical bus routes were located along existing and hypothetical arterial and collector roads at about the same level of coverage as the existing city limits. The 2015 cost of operating a bus for one mile was multiplied by the number of route miles for each scenario. The operating cost for one mile in 2015 was \$31,293.

Arterial Roads

Roads within the growth areas are currently in the County and are built to county standards. They generally lack shoulders and have no curb and gutter or sidewalks. Arterial roads in the City are wider and include curb, gutter, sidewalk and usually landscaping and a multi-purpose path. As the City expands into the County, the County arterials will eventually need to be brought up to City standards. In some locations where arterials do not exist, new roads will need to be constructed. The locations of arterials, including roads that need to be upgraded and constructed, were obtained from the 2014 Billings Urban Area Long Range Transportation Plan. Additionally, if existing or proposed arterials were not shown in this plan but are needed to serve the scenarios, hypothetical arterials were added. The cost to reconstruct or construct arterial roads is approximately \$5,000,000 per mile. The miles of hypothetical arterials that need to be reconstructed or constructed was multiplied by the cost per mile to arrive at the arterial cost of roads for each scenario.

Collector Roads

Similar to arterial roads, some collector roads exist in the County and some need to be constructed in order to serve the growth areas. Local roads through subdivisions were not considered because these routes would be entirely constructed at the time of development. The location of collectors was also derived from the Long Range Transportation Plan, except where none existed or are proposed. In those cases, routes were added to ensure a reasonable transportation network in each of the scenarios. The cost of constructing or reconstructing a collector is approximately \$1,000,000 per mile. This cost was multiplied by the number of miles of hypothetical collectors to arrive at the total cost of collectors for each scenario.

Development Costs

The total development cost of all growth indicators were summed to compare how much it would cost the public to ensure services and facilities are provided to each of the scenarios. Table 5.1 shows the cost of the indicators and the total cost for each scenario.

TABLE 5.1. GROWTH INDICATOR COSTS PER SCENARIO

	INFILL	NORTH GROWTH AREA			WEST GROWTH AREA		
SCENARIO	Infill and Adjacent Growth	Preferred Scenario	Low Density Scenario	High Density Scenario	Preferred Scenario	Low Density Scenario	High Density Scenario
Estimate Population to Accommodate	50,000	48,574	48,141	48,960	48,928	48,390	49,112
Acres of New Community Parks	130	30	60	30	100	100	70
Development Cost per acre	\$112,370	\$112,370	\$112,370	\$112,370	\$112,370	\$112,370	\$112,370
TOTAL PARK COSTS	\$14,608,100	\$3,371,100	\$6,742,200	\$3,371,100	\$11,237,000	\$11,237,000	\$7,865,900
Number of New Elementary Schools @ 30K s.f.	5	6	8	4	5	6	4
Elementary School Costs (30K*\$185)*#	\$27,750,000	\$33,300,000	\$44,400,000	\$22,200,000	\$27,750,000	\$33,300,000	\$22,200,000
New Fire/Police Stations	0	1	2	1	1	1	0
Facility Costs	\$1,714,414	\$1,714,414	\$1,714,414	\$1,714,414	\$1,714,414	\$1,714,414	\$1,714,414
TOTAL STATION COSTS	\$0	\$1,714,414	\$3,428,828	\$1,714,414	\$1,714,414	\$1,714,414	\$0
Miles of New Bus Routes	35.32	24.98	31.26	22.55	29.19	40.29	22.22
Transit Operation Costs per mile	\$31,293	\$31,293	\$31,293	\$31,293	\$31,293	\$31,293	\$31,293
TOTAL TRANSIT COSTS	\$1,105,269	\$781,699	\$978,219	\$705,657	\$913,443	\$1,260,795	\$695,330
New Branch Libraries	2	2	3	2	2	3	2
Branch Library Costs	\$3,250,000	\$3,250,000	\$3,250,000	\$3,250,000	\$3,250,000	\$3,250,000	\$3,250,000
TOTAL LIBRARY COSTS	\$6,500,000	\$6,500,000	\$9,750,000	\$6,500,000	\$6,500,000	\$9,750,000	\$6,500,000
Miles of Arterial Construction/Re construction	9.1	11.0	12.6	7.8	17.6	24.0	13.7
Cost per mile	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000
Miles of Collector Construction/Re construction	5.0	6.4	7.2	4.6	10.6	13.0	4.2
Cost per mile	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
TOTAL ROAD COSTS	\$50,540,000	\$61,400,000	\$70,200,000	\$43,600,000	\$98,590,000	\$132,910,000	\$72,580,000
TOTAL COSTS FOR SCENARIO	\$100,503,369	\$107,067,213	\$135,499,247	\$78,091,171	\$146,704,857	\$190,172,209	\$109,841,230

Revenues Generated by Unit and Per Acre

Growth comes with a cost; residents and visitors desire city services, amenities, and infrastructure which need to be maintained and eventually replaced. In order to determine if there is a growth pattern, i.e. housing density, that is more effective at paying for those costs, the potential revenues generated by each growth pattern were evaluated. Revenue, in terms of City taxes and assessments, was calculated for each growth pattern by extrapolating revenue generated from similar existing growth patterns. The average annual tax and assessment revenue generated from recently created subdivisions of high, low and medium densities was applied to similar housing types in each scenario. For purposes of this calculation, the return from high density housing in Josephine Crossing and Lenhardt Square Subdivisions were used; for low density housing, Ironwood and Yellowstone Ridge were used; for medium density housing, Trails West, Cottonwood Grove and Grand Peaks Subdivisions were used.

The amount of land needed to accommodate the three growth patterns; high, medium and low, varies significantly. The land area is an important factor when comparing the total development costs for each scenario. Residential development that is more spread out and further from service centers and infrastructure, costs more than development that is more compact, as shown in Table 5.1. The relationship is similar to the revenues generated. More revenue is generated for higher density units on a per acre basis than for lower density units on a per acre basis. This is because there is more tax generated in a smaller area. Table 5.2 below shows the results of the taxes generated on a per unit basis and a per acre basis for each growth pattern or housing density.

TABLE 5.2. AVERAGE TAX AND ASSESSMENT VALUES BY HOUSING DENSITY.

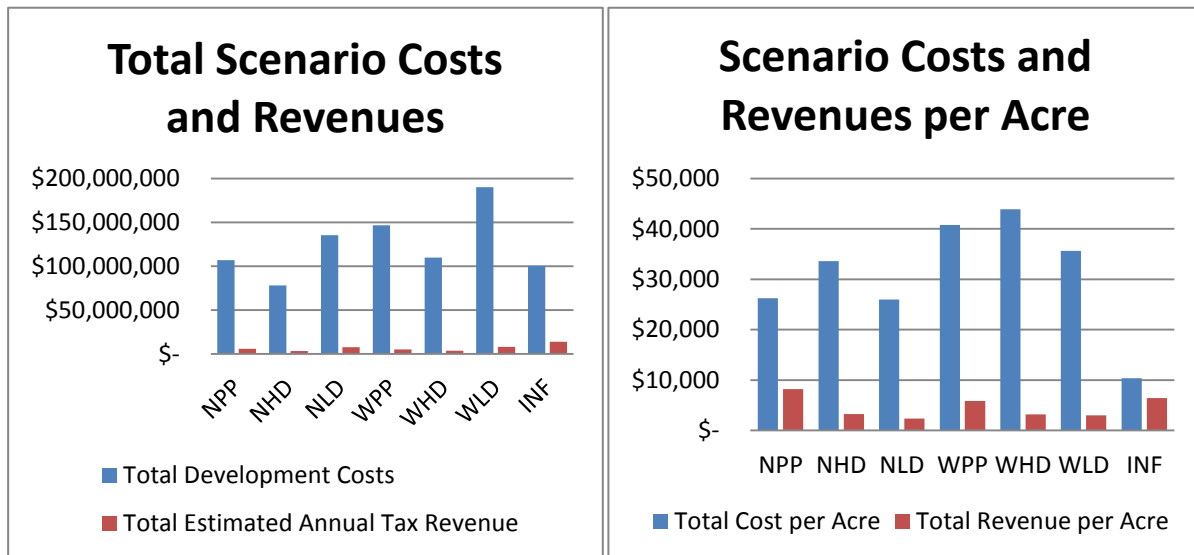
		High Density	Medium Density	Low Density
Sampled Subdivisions	Total units	178	219	59
	Total acreage	13.06	55.28	37.2
Average tax + assessment/unit		\$419	\$731	\$1,461.26
Total revenue generated in subdivision		\$45,893	\$158,181	\$87,422
Total revenue in subdivision/acre		\$3,514	\$2,861	\$2,350

The average tax + assessment value per unit calculated from the sampled subdivision was multiplied by the number of the housing units by density in each scenario. The revenue generated on a per acre basis was divided by the number of acres occupied by that density for each scenario. The results are shown in Table 5.3 and Charts 5.1 and 5.2.

TABLE 5.3. COMPARISON OF COST AND REVENUES PER SCENARIO.

	Total Development Costs	Total Estimated Annual Tax Revenue	Total Cost per Acre	Total Revenue per Acre
North Public Preferred	\$ 140,314,390	\$ 5,831,510	\$ 34,436	\$ 8,183
North High Density	\$ 114,548,989	\$ 3,393,900	\$ 49,283	\$ 3,280
North Low Density	\$ 193,189,585	\$ 7,949,106	\$ 37,073	\$ 2,350
West Public Preferred	\$ 178,743,468	\$ 5,134,254	\$ 49,674	\$ 5,873
West High Density	\$ 125,800,259	\$ 3,653,680	\$ 50,276	\$ 3,184
West Low Density	\$ 198,481,205	\$ 8,125,472	\$ 37,228	\$ 3,023
Infill and Adjacent Parcels	\$ 100,503,369	\$ 14,171,362	\$ 23,893	\$ 6,430

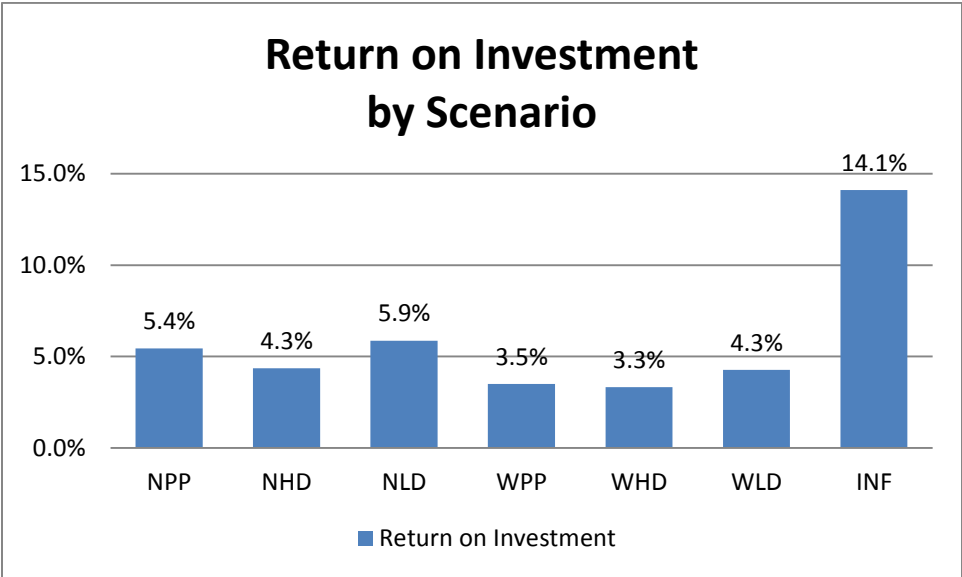
CHARTS 5.1 AND 5.2. COMPARISON OF COST AND REVENUE PER SCENARIO.



Return of Investment

Another way to look at the cost and benefit of each scenario is to consider the return on investment. In other words, what is the percentage of costs recouped by one year of revenue? The result is presented as the Return on Investment which calculates the annual revenues divided by the development costs and presented as a percentage. The higher the percentage, the better rate of return. Chart 5.3 shows the Return on Investment for each scenario.

CHART 5.3. RETURN ON INVESTMENT BY SCENARIO



Appendices

Public input is paramount in producing a growth policy that reflects the community's goals and values. Past planning efforts have demonstrated that holding a few public meetings after work hours rarely attracts a meaningful number of people. Rather than expecting the public to attend randomly scheduled meetings, it was decided early in the process to take the information to them. Since so many citizens are members of civic organizations, working groups and neighborhood committees it was more effective to schedule presentations and solicit input during their regularly scheduled meeting times.

The initial round of presentations began in October, 2014. Between then and February, 2015, 30 “scoping” meetings were held in addition to one public hearing, three steering committee meeting, one City Council meeting, one County Commissioner meeting, and one Planning Board meeting. The first presentation provided an overview of existing conditions in Billings, constraints and opportunities for growth, and asked the participants to answer the questions:

- How should we grow?
- Where should we grow?

Postcards were provided to the participants and collected after each meeting. The response was very good. A total of 312 cards were submitted. While some cards had a simple, one line response to each question; most cards had multiple ideas embedded in the response. Staff transcribed each card and separated the various ideas into distinct comments. A total of individual 1,200 comments were obtained from those responses.

The Planning Division staff took considerable time reviewing the comments and categorizing them into general themes. The themes that emerged from this exercise formed the basis of the community goals and the individual comments formulated the essence of the growth guidelines. Both the community goals and guidelines are discussed within the main body of this document and the list of comments is provided at the end of this section.

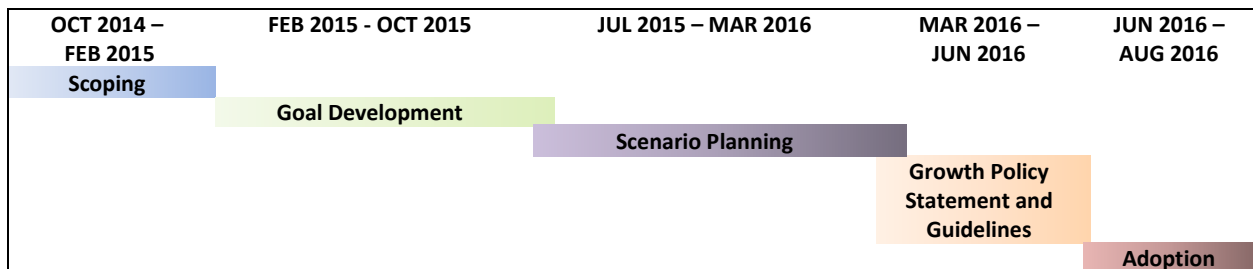
In the next round of meetings, only eight of the groups were revisited as well as the steering committee, Planning Board, County Commissioners and City Council. This was considered the Goal Development Phase of the process where the results of categorizing the public comment into themes and later goals were presented. At these meetings, people were asked to review the results and comment on whether they made sense? Was something missing? Could it be presented differently? The most substantial comment pointed out that another category could be added: Prosperity. This was later done and the comments relating to this goal were re-categorized. This process took another eight months at which time the goal descriptions, toolboxes and performance measures were also developed.

The time between July, 2015 and March, 2016 was used primarily to develop and analyze the growth scenarios and referred to as the Scenario Planning Phase. The development and analysis of the growth scenarios was largely done in-house with the assistance of Geodata Services, Inc. from Missoula, Montana. However, a very critical piece of this phase, creating the preferred scenarios, was performed

with the input of the steering committee and the Planning Board. Seven scenarios were eventually developed based on three growth patterns: infill, high density, low density, and public preferred. The high, low and preferred growth patterns were applied to the area north of the Billings Airport around the proposed Inner Belt Loop alignment, and west of the existing City limits out to 64th St. West between Rimrock Road and Neibauer Road. The infill scenario identified vacant and potentially re-developable parcels in the City and adjacent to the City. A full explanation of the scenario planning process is provided in the body of this document. The results of the Scenario Planning Phase were presented to the City Council, the steering committee, and the Planning Board. A third public meeting was also held in March, 2016 to explain the process and get input on the results. As a result of these meetings, some changes to the placement of selected ‘growth indicators’ were modified and the scenarios were rerun to reflect those changes.

The final public meeting was held in May, 2016. The purpose of this meeting was to present the proposed Growth Policy Statement and Growth Guidelines. These elements are the most important part of this Growth Policy in that they provide decision-makers information to consider when making future land use decisions. The public comments gathered at this meeting were incorporated into the proposed Growth Policy Statement and Growth Guidelines and presented to the steering committee, Planning Board and City Council.

As required by state law, the Planning Board held a public hearing on the Draft 2016 City of Billings Growth Policy – BillingsBeyond, and forwarded, by resolution, a recommendation of approval. The City Council passed the Resolution of Intent to Adopt the Growth Policy on July 11, and The Growth Policy adopted, by resolution 16-10575, on August 8, 2016.



Introduction

The tools available to implement a Growth Policy are limited by legal authority, by administrative cost, and to some degree, political acceptance. Implementation tools may be enforced through regulations, adopted as policy by governing bodies or emplaced voluntarily by landowners. They may be mandated by state law or authorized by City Code or County Ordinances. Some tools are simply policies, without the force and effect of law, while others are purely educational. There is a wide variety of tools currently used in the City of Billings. The first part of this section briefly describes the existing and recommended implementation tools available to the City to achieve the Goals and Objectives of this Growth Policy. The last section describes a reasonable timetable for update and revision to the 2016 Growth Policy.

Implementation Tools

This section provides general information on a range of planning tools that can be used to implement a growth policy. It includes brief definitions or descriptions for each tool. Some tools are already in use in Billings and others are suggested for further consideration. This list is not intended to be comprehensive of all planning tools available to local jurisdictions.

The implementation tools are organized into the following descriptive categories: Regulatory, Planning and Programming, Financial, Educational, and Cooperative. **Regulatory tools** are enforced by regulations and are authorized by state statute. Governing bodies adopt **Planning and Programming** tools to demonstrate a commitment to a particular direction or course of action, and can be employed with discretion. **Financial tools** require a financial commitment to appropriate funds for specific projects. **Educational tools** include a broad range of items used to inform governing bodies, policy makers, and the public on key planning and community development issues. **Cooperative tools** describe partnerships between departments and agencies to develop joint policies or action plans. These may serve as the basis for creating, reviewing, and revising policies and regulations. Cooperative tools are generally enforced or administered at the discretion of cooperating agencies.

Regulatory Tools

Subdivision Regulations

Counties and incorporated municipalities must adopt subdivision regulations that comply with the Montana Subdivision and Platting Act (76-3-101 *et seq.*, MCA). Subdivision regulations control the creation of new parcels by imposing design and infrastructure standards and by establishing procedures for local governmental and public review. Regulating the division of land ensures that development can be adequately served without adversely impacting public services and natural resources.

The City of Billings has adopted subdivision regulations. Appendix D provides more detailed information on the relationship between subdivision regulations and this Growth Policy. Subdivision regulations are among the most effective tools available for implementation of a growth policy and land use changes.

Design Standards

Design standards are typically part of subdivision regulations or incorporated into the municipal code to preserve community character, protect property values, and ensure public safety. The Montana Subdivision and Platting Act authorizes the adoption of design standards, and self-chartered municipalities may include them in their municipal code.

Design standards can significantly affect the appearance and functionality of a development. For these reasons, they are often employed to address a variety of issues including land use, aesthetics, transportation, and public service. Flexible design standards may help reduce costs to the developer. Development costs can also increase if design standards are complex and rigid. Both the City and the County have adopted the Entryway/Interchange zoning regulations, which require a higher level of landscaping and building design in the Entryway/Interchange zoning districts. Additional design standards have been adopted by the City for the Zoo Drive-Shiloh Road Corridor as zoning ‘overlay districts’. These districts are at major entryways into the community and are intended to be developed in an attractive and appealing manner.

Zoning Regulations

Zoning is another commonly used tool for implementing land use policy. The historical rationale for zoning was to separate incompatible land uses. Zoning ordinances generally address type of use, intensity of use, and space and bulk requirements. Development and design standards for such things as signage, parking, landscaping, noise, lighting, buildings, and site layout can also be addressed through zoning regulations. A zoning map and the descriptive text of districts are the two critical components of zoning regulations. Municipal or County zoning must comply with the Growth Policy and its amendments.

The Billings-Yellowstone County Unified Zoning Regulations govern zoning in the City and County. Most of the County is not zoned. Billings, Laurel, and Broadview all maintain their own zoning within their corporate boundaries. Laurel has extraterritorial zoning jurisdiction that extends approximately one mile outside of the city limits. Yellowstone County has a zoning jurisdiction that extends out from the Billings city limits approximately 4-1/2 miles. The majority of the zoned property within Yellowstone County is located in and around the Billings and Laurel urban areas. Additionally, there are a number of citizen-initiated zoning districts located throughout the County as described in the Land Use Element chapter.

The City of Billings Zoning Ordinance #1099, originally adopted on July 15, 1930, governs zoning within the municipal limits of the City of Billings. In addition to the more traditional form of zoning, jurisdictions may explore other zoning approaches that can be used to regulate development of property. Some of these alternatives are described below.

Performance Zoning

Performance zoning is an alternative to traditional “Euclidian” zoning because it uses measurable standards to regulate the impact a land use may have on its surroundings instead of separating uses by zoning districts. Performance zoning for residential uses can be used to protect natural resources and provide flexibility in the development design. Common performance thresholds established through performance zoning include minimum amount open space, maximum density, and maximum percent of impervious surface.

Performance zoning has also been used to address commercial and industrial uses by requiring more intense uses to meet higher standards for site and building design. For example, the City has adopted the Medical Corridor Permit Zoning District. In this district, a proposal is evaluated for compliance with absolute standards and a point system is used to determine compliance against a set of relative standards. All projects have to meet the absolute standards; then, the more intense the use, the greater the number of relative standards must be met.

Interim Zoning

Interim zoning may be employed by the City or County as an emergency measure to protect the public health, safety and under the County’s authority, morals (76-2-306, MCA). A jurisdiction may use interim zoning to prohibit uses that may conflict with a “contemplated zoning proposal” which the governing body is considering. The City can implement interim zoning initially for only six months, with an extension up to one year. Interim zoning has been used by the City of Billings to implement the Entryway/Interchange zoning regulations until permanent regulations could be adopted and more recently to implement buffering standards for sexually oriented businesses.

Transfer of Development Rights

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) uses zoning to allow owners of land in areas called “sending districts” to sever the development rights from their property and sell, or otherwise legally transfer those rights to owners of property located in specified “receiving districts”, where higher intensity of development is preferred. There are several components essential to a TDR program: a designated protection/preservation area (sending zone), a designated growth area (receiving zone), development rights that can be severed from the land, and a procedure for transferring development rights between properties. TDR procedures have not been established in Yellowstone County.

Building Permits

The City Building Division administers building codes for the City of Billings only. The Building Codes that are adopted by the State, including building, plumbing, mechanical, and electrical, are also required to be adopted by the City. The Code provides the City with minimum standards to safeguard life and property by regulating building construction. They also serve to create an enjoyable and aesthetically pleasing place to live while preserving property values. A building permit is required for almost any type of construction on private property. Several Departments are involved in the review process, including Fire, Engineering, Planning and Community Services and Public Utilities to ensure compliance with their associated codes.

Floodplain Regulations

The purpose of floodplain regulations is to protect the watercourses and their flood storage areas, as well as the public health, safety, and welfare. Montana state law requires local governments to adopt and enforce floodplain management regulations. The City and the County administer separate floodplain regulations.

Planning and Programming Tools

Long-Range Planning

Critical implementation tools for this Growth Policy are more detailed neighborhood or area plans, and plans to address a particular issue such as transportation, parks and recreation, economic development, infrastructure or housing. This Growth Policy establishes a framework for future plans by specifying public values through Growth Statement and Guidelines and the Goals and Objectives. With the adoption of this Growth Policy, plans may be developed that provide a higher level of detail and include content specific to an area or issue. Since 2003, five neighborhood plans within the City have been written and adopted as part of this Growth Policy.

In addition to the development of new plans, existing plans which presently have a role in decision making may need to be revised and updated. These include the 2014 Urban Area Transportation Plan, 2013 Billings Bicycle and Trail Master Plan, Parks2020, and several neighborhood plans. Updates to these plans could be simple additions or modifications or may require a new approach to become more consistent with the Growth Policy Goals and Objectives.

Annexation Policy

A city expands its boundaries and its jurisdictional authority through the process of annexation. State statute authorizes six separate methods for annexation. Adjacent land may be annexed as described in Parts 42 through 44 of Title 7, Chapter 2, Montana Code Annotated (MCA). Property

that is wholly surrounded by a city may be annexed under Part 45 with the exception of land used for agricultural, mining, smelting, refining, transportation, industrial or manufacturing purposes, golf course, cemeteries, or outdoor entertainment uses. Private property owners can petition for annexation as described in Part 46. When property owners petition for annexation, the City of Billings' Annexation Policy requires them to enter into an annexation agreement and comply with the other conditions under which annexation will occur. The Annexation Policy is used to help plan for expansion and provision of municipal services. In 2004, a 'Limits of Annexation' map was added to the policy indicating which areas surrounding the City limits could be reasonably supported for annexation if requested by the property owner. This map was developed based on expected and potential capital improvements the City has planned and is updated annually in coordination with the City's Capital Improvements Plan.

Urban Planning Area

The Urban Planning Area is an area surrounding the City of Billings established for the purpose of planning for its future growth within a 10-year horizon. The UPA was initially created in 1967 under Article 20-300, BMCC, and has historically been the City's growth boundary. The UPA policy states that no City services shall be provided outside of the UPA; however, to quote a 1980 study, "the UPA is not designed to limit growth, merely limit the amount of land that is consumed and reduce the cost of services needed when this growth occurs." Expansion of the UPA requires the completion of an Urban Planning Study so that the City can determine the impacts of annexing and serving the property. City departments review UPS documents for conformance with operating policies, capital improvement plans, the Growth Policy, and other plans. A property must be within the Urban Planning area before it can be annexed into the City limits.

Urban Renewal Districts

Title 7, Chapter 15, Part 42 of MCA, otherwise known as the Urban Renewal Law, gives municipalities the authority to redevelop and rehabilitate "blighted" areas. State law specifies requirements for preparing Urban Renewal Plans and also authorizes the expenditure of funds on Urban Renewal Districts, including tax increment funds. Urban Renewal Plans have been most recently prepared in 2006 for the 'East Billings Urban Renewal District' located east of downtown to MetraPark, and in 2008 for the 'South Billings Boulevard Urban Renewal Area' located near the South Billings Boulevard interchange.

Departmental Work Plans

Every City department develops annual work plans to assist them in their budgeting process. Work plans establish a list of priority projects that the department can implement within the year, in addition to their regular work duties. For some departments, such as the Planning and Community Services and Parks, Recreation and Public Lands Departments, the annual work plan is

reviewed and approved by their citizen advisory boards. Work plans are also programming tools that establish the timeframes for completion of priority tasks and projects.

Financial Tools

Capital Improvements Programs

The City of Billings adopts an annual Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) which identifies all capital projects that are in excess of \$25,000 and equipment needs in excess of \$5,000. The projects and equipment needs are then prioritized and budgeted over a five year period. The City undertakes a comprehensive review of the Capital Improvements Plan every two years. The importance of a CIP for land use planning is the critical connection between where and when infrastructure is provided and what the desired land use pattern is for a community or neighborhood. Proposals included in the CIP are reviewed for compliance with adopted land use and transportation planning policies.

Fee Incentives

Some City and County departments are authorized to charge fees for their services and facility maintenance. The most common fees are for solid waste service, storm drainage, water and sewer service. The location of development can be influenced by tying the location to a fee increase or decrease. Municipalities, particularly, have the ability to develop a utility fee structure that can be used as an incentive for directing growth.

Purchase of Development Rights

A Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program involves the outright purchase of development rights from a private property owner by local or state governments to preserve resource land. Funding for PDRs can come from sources such as bond initiatives, grants, and public matching funds programs. The difference between PDRs and land acquisition is that a property owner in a PDR program can continue to use this land in ways that are consistent with the objectives of the PDR program. PDR procedures have not been developed in Yellowstone County.

Land Acquisition

Land acquisition programs involve a jurisdiction or organization purchasing land usually for some public benefit. Some communities and organizations have used this tool to purchase land to be used for affordable housing development; others have used it to purchase property for its open space or agricultural value.

Impact Fees

An impact fee is a charge on new development assessed by a governmental entity at the time of the development approval process to pay for the construction or expansion of off-site capital improvements that are necessitated by and benefit the new development. In 2005, the state

legislature passed enabling legislation known as the “Montana Impact Fee Act” (7-6-1601, et seq., MCA) to allow local governments to establish impact fees provided certain requirements are met. In general, the collection and expenditure of impacts fees must be reasonably related to and reasonably attributed to the development’s share of the cost of infrastructure improvements made necessary by the new development.

Educational Tools

Inventories and Planning Studies

Land use policies and decisions can be better informed if supported by studies and inventories. Typically, these studies help identify and rank critical social, environmental, historic and cultural resources. Studies and inventories can also provide the rational nexus required for exactions and other dedications. The information obtained from these studies must be well organized, accurate and easy to understand. Maps and databases developed using Geographic Information Systems can satisfy these criteria.

Health Impact Assessments (HIA)

The built environment can have substantial effects on the health of the community. By using a new tool known as the Health Impact Assessment, or HIA, one can research the potential health effects of an anticipated policy, program or project and offer recommendations to increase positive health outcomes and minimize potential adverse health effects. HIAs are similar in some ways to Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs), which are mandated processes that focus on potential environmental outcomes of a proposed project, such as changes in air and water quality. However, unlike EIAs, HIAs are currently voluntary assessments that can be used to focus on possible community health outcomes of a proposal and subsequently highlight proactive measures to improve individual or community health. For example, an HIA may identify that a project or policy may inadvertently cause physical inactivity and lead to obesity, or that it may negatively impact air quality which may increase asthma occurrences, or even that it may promote inefficiencies in design that may lead to increased injuries. In these cases, the HIA would then recommend project alterations in order to help resolve these detrimental health impacts before they occur. HIAs are being increasingly used to proactively promote social equity and improve the health of many growing communities.

Cooperative Tools

Interjurisdictional Coordination and Partnerships

The City and County must coordinate their efforts on several levels to provide safe and dependable services to the public. The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is an important mechanism for ensuring that transportation projects are coordinated between the City and the County. Both jurisdictions have representation in the MPO and jurisdictional interests are further represented by members from the joint City-County Planning Board. The Planning Board is composed of City and County residents and is advisory to both the City Council and the County Commissioners. The Billings Fire Department also cooperates with the County and other Fire District to provide services outside the City. Many quasi-governmental boards also have cooperative agreements with the City and County such as the Billings Downtown Partnership and Big Sky Economic Development Authority. It is through these partnerships that the interest of all jurisdictions are discussed and addressed.

Interagency Coordination

Some federal, state and local government land management agencies share similar responsibilities for the same resources. In some cases, these agencies are not well informed of other agencies' proposed plans or tasks. This lack of communication can result in ineffective policies or inconsistent regulations if agencies do not coordinate their planning and implementation efforts. Opportunities for interagency coordination are particularly possible in land and water conservation areas because the resources overlap agency jurisdictions.

Timetable for Implementation and Updates

The planning horizon for this Growth Policy is 20 years; however, it is unreasonable to assume it will be relevant in 2035. State law requires that a growth policy be reviewed at least once every 5 years and revised as necessary (76-1-601 (3)(f)(iii), MCA). It is recommended that the Yellowstone County Board of Planning review this policy in 2021 and direct staff to make necessary revisions or perform a complete update.

Because this document is not prescriptive and does not include a list of strategies, projects, or policies to be implemented, no timetable is given for implementation. Instead, a list of implementation tools is provided in each of the Goal categories. These tools are to be considered when the City initiates certain actions that are listed as an Objective or Growth Guideline.

State law requires that this Growth Policy include a statement on how the governing bodies will coordinate and cooperate with other jurisdictions in matters related to the growth policy (76-1-601 (2)(f), MCA). Coordination of planning matters between Yellowstone County and the City of Billings is facilitated primarily through the Yellowstone County Planning Board. The jurisdiction of this board is the entire County, including the City of Billings and Town of Broadview but not including the City of Laurel planning jurisdiction. This countywide jurisdiction enables the Planning Board to coordinate policies with the County Commissioners and the City Council.

Coordinated Planning in Yellowstone County

The history of coordinated planning in Yellowstone County goes back approximately 60 years. Based on records kept in the Planning Department, there has been some form of a joint planning board since the early 1940s. The most recent Planning Board structure was authorized through an Interlocal Agreement adopted in 1984 and amended in 1990 and again in 1995. The Interlocal Agreement establishes the administrative and financing responsibilities of each jurisdiction, the relationship of the Planning Board to the governing bodies and the relationship of the Planning Board and Planning Department Director and staff.

There are 15 members on the County Planning Board: seven are appointed by the County Commissioners, five are appointed by the Mayor of Billings, and one member is appointed by the County Commissioners from the governing board of the Yellowstone County Conservation District, and two members are ex-officio non-voting representative of School District No. 2 and the County Superintendent of Schools. Board members serve 2-year terms. The duties and responsibilities of the Planning Board are described in the By-Laws, last amended in 2012. In addition to other duties, the Board is responsible for developing a Growth Policy for the Board's jurisdiction.

In 1991, the City of Billings, Town of Broadview, and Yellowstone County adopted the first countywide comprehensive plan: The 1990 Yellowstone County Comprehensive Plan. Until then, the City and County developed separate planning documents. The Comprehensive Plan established goals and objectives and addressed separate City and County issues, as well as joint issues that involved both the City and County. In 2003, the Comprehensive Plan was updated, and renamed the 2003 Yellowstone County and City of Billings Growth Policy. The Growth Policy for the City and County was updated again in 2008.

The Yellowstone County Planning Board, as the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization, is also charged with the responsibility for transportation planning for the Billings Urban Area. To accomplish this, the Board prepares a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) each year that contains a description of projects to undertake during the upcoming program year. It also contains appropriate funding information, staffing information, and a schedule for each project. The UPWP is supplemented by a five-year Transportation Improvements Plan (TIP). The TIP is a fiscal planning program for federally assisted

highway and transit improvements for the Billings urban area. Approximately every ten years, the MPO is responsible for drafting a Transportation Plan that assesses the transportation needs of the Billings Urban Area and recommends actions to address those needs. The most recent Transportation Plan was adopted in 2014.

The City and County conduct transportation planning together for the Billings urban area. Two committees, the Policy Coordinating Committee (PCC) and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), were created through a Memorandum of Agreement signed by the City, County, County Planning Board, and the Montana Department of Transportation. The PCC is responsible for directing transportation policy for the study area and the TAC provides technical advice to the PCC.

In addition to the 1990 Comprehensive Plan, the 2008 Growth Policy and the 2014 Long Range Transportation Plan, there have been a number of other plans, primarily transportation related, adopted by both the City and County to address common issues. This Growth Policy supersedes previous Growth Policies but only for the City of Billings jurisdiction.

Ongoing City and County Planning Coordination

There are a number of other coordinated efforts to address common issues, primarily for the Billings urban area. As a joint City-County office, the Planning and Community Services Department administers all planning programs for both jurisdictions. Additional city-county coordination on planning issues includes the following:

- Subdivision proposals adjacent to the City limits are reviewed by both City and County agencies. Subdivision proposals are also reviewed by state agencies when applicable for such issues as impacts on wildlife and wildlife habitat, wildfire hazards, transportation, as well as other issues.
- The City and County have a joint Health Department that is responsible for public and environmental health programs in both jurisdictions. RiverStone Health's water quality and sanitation programs have strong links to land use and transportation planning in Yellowstone County.
- The City of Billings, City of Laurel, Yellowstone County, and the Crow Indian Tribe entered into an Interlocal Agreement for historic preservation. This agreement created the Yellowstone Historic Preservation Board and Certified Local Government. This board reviews and implements various policies for historic, archeological, and cultural preservation issues throughout Yellowstone County. Each governmental agency has representation on this board.
- The Yellowstone County Air Quality Board serves both the City and County through a Memorandum of Agreement to address local air quality issues.
- The City Fire Department has a contractual agreement with the Billing Urban Fire Service Area (BUFSA) to provide fire suppression and first response services. The Department also contracts equipment and labor to the Montana Department of Natural Resources for wildfire suppression in times of need. The Department also has mutual aid agreements with the three oil refineries, Lockwood Fire Department, Billings Logan International Airport Aircraft Rescue Firefighting, and

the Laurel Volunteer Fire Department as well as all of the surrounding volunteer fire departments.

- Subdivision, zoning, floodplain administration, permitting, and enforcement programs rely on strong collaborative efforts with other departments in the city and county, as well as with state and federal agencies.
- The City, County and State share Geographic Information System Resources pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding. Based on this agreement, the Montana Department of Revenue shares property ownership and tax information with the Yellowstone County Information Systems Department. In return, the County maintains the City and County parcel coverage with the assistance of the City of Billings.

Strategy for Future Cooperation

The City and the County will continue to improve their cooperative relationships by maintaining a joint City-County Planning Board and continuing the existing cooperative agreements. The Planning Board and existing coordinating organizations will strive to implement this Growth Policy equitably, openly, and for the benefit of all City residents.

Every county, city and town is required to adopt and enforce subdivision regulations that provide for the orderly development of their jurisdictional areas, (76-3-501, MCA). The Montana Subdivision and Platting Act (Title 76, Chapter 3, MCA) specifies the purpose and minimum requirements of the subdivision regulations. It is incumbent on the local governing body to adopt regulations consistent with this law and to review subdivision applications in accordance with the criteria provided in 76-3-608(3)(a):

1. The impact on agriculture
2. The impact on agricultural water user's facilities
3. The impact on local services
4. The impact on the natural environment
5. The impact on wildlife and wildlife habitat
6. The impact on public health and safety

This chapter presents both definitions of the review criteria and describes how these criteria are to be used to review subdivisions.

Primary Review Criteria

A growth policy is required to include a statement explaining how the governing bodies will define agriculture, agricultural water user facilities, local services, the natural environment, wildlife and wildlife habitat, and public health and safety and describe how these items will be used in the evaluation and decisions of a subdivision proposal (76-1-601(3)(h), MCA). The following section provides detailed definitions of the primary review criteria and how the criteria will be applied in subdivision review.

Each subdivision proposal shall be evaluated based on its effect on certain factors expressed in this Growth Policy and implemented through the City and County Subdivision Regulations. The evaluation factors specify what effects should be considered at the time of subdivision review. The degree to which these effects play a role in subdivision approval and denial will be dependent on 1) whether the effects are allowed by existing laws and regulations, and 2) whether the effects can be reasonably mitigated.

Agriculture

Definition

Agriculture means the use of land for growing, raising, or marketing of plants or animals to produce food, feed, and fiber commodities. Examples of agricultural activities include, but are not limited to, cultivation and tillage of the soil; dairying; growing and harvesting of agricultural or horticultural commodities; and the raising of livestock, bees, fur-bearing animals, or poultry. Agriculture does not include gardening for personal use, keeping of house pets, kenneling, or landscaping for aesthetic purposes. The definition of agricultural land also includes land

considered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service to have a soil of agricultural importance and lands devoted to a soil conservation or rangeland management program.

Evaluation Factors

1. The amount of agricultural land removed from production shall be considered.
2. The amount of agricultural land with soil considered prime or having statewide or local importance by the Natural Resources and Conservation Service shall be considered.
3. Subdivision review shall consider the potential conflicts between the proposed subdivision and adjacent agricultural operations, including:
 - a. Interference with the movement of livestock or farm machinery
 - b. Maintenance of fences
 - c. Proliferation of weeds
 - d. Harassment of livestock by pets
 - e. Odors
 - f. Visual quality
4. It shall be determined whether the proposal is located within the Urban Planning Area or in the “Limits of Annexation” as defined by the City’s Annexation Policy.

Agricultural Water User Facilities

Definition

Agricultural water user facilities shall mean those facilities which provide water for agricultural land or provide water for the production of agricultural products. These facilities include, but are not limited to ditches, canals, pipes, head gates, tanks, drains, reservoirs, ponds and developed springs used for agricultural purposes.

Evaluation Factors

1. The location and proximity of an agricultural water user facility shall be considered.
2. Potential conflicts between facility users and subdivision residents shall be evaluated.
3. The rights of all water right owners and users of the facility shall be considered.

Local Services

Definition

Local services means any and all services provided to the public by local government entities or public utilities such as transportation systems, including non-motorized facilities, parking, law enforcement, fire protection, drainage structures, water supply, sanitary sewage disposal, solid waste disposal, recreation, parks, libraries, or schools.

Evaluation Factors

1. Subdivision review shall consider the goals and objectives of existing plans.
2. Subdivision review shall consider increased demand on services and need to expand services as a result of the proposal. Lack of adequate service capacity and capability of a

local service may be grounds for denial if the situation cannot be mitigated by the applicant.

3. The cost of providing services shall be evaluated by determining the per capita or per lot cost of services and current and anticipated tax and fee revenue.

Natural Environment

Definition

The natural environment means the physical, chemical, and biological factors that exist within or influence a geographic area or community. These factors include, but are not limited to, geology, soils, topography, climate, surface water, groundwater, floodplain, vegetation, and objects or places of cultural, historic, or aesthetic significance.

Evaluation Factors

1. Review of the subdivision shall consider the degree of impact to the following environmental features:
 - a. Riparian or wetland areas
 - b. Vegetation cover or type
 - c. Noxious weeds
 - d. Important or sensitive natural habitats
 - e. Surface and groundwater quality
 - f. Stream bank stability
 - g. Erodible soils
 - h. Cultural and historic landmarks
2. The amount of appropriate open space preserved for natural resource conservation shall be considered.
3. Results of water and sanitary facility inspection for all lots shall be considered.
4. Subdivision review shall also evaluate the amount of cuts and fill on slopes as a result of road or building construction.

Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat

Definition

Wildlife means animals that are not domesticated or tamed. Wildlife habitat means an area containing the complex of environmental conditions essential to wildlife for feeding and forage, cover, migration, breeding, rearing, nesting, or buffers from those areas. It also includes areas essential to the conservation of species protected by the Endangered Species Act or of special interest or concern to the State of Montana.

Evaluation Factors

1. The presence and potential destruction of wildlife and wildlife habitat shall be considered in subdivision review.
2. Subdivision review shall consider the potential for human-wildlife conflicts or unhealthy encounters.

3. The amount of wildlife-friendly amenities, such as preserved open space, enhanced habitat or wildlife protection devices shall be considered in subdivision review.

Public Health and Safety

Definition

Allowable standards established by Federal, State and local policies, codes, and regulations shall be the primary means for defining the limits of acceptable public health and safety. Any variance from these standards shall be reasonably mitigated and approved by the governing body.

Evaluation Factors

1. The subdivision review shall consider all potential hazards to residents of the subdivision from high voltage lines, high-pressure gas lines, highways, railroads or railroad crossing and nearby industrial or mining activity.
2. Any creation of public health or safety hazards by the subdivision, such as traffic or fire conditions, contamination or depletion of groundwater supplies, accelerated storm water runoff, widening or existing floodplain or flood hazard area, or existence within the Wildland-Urban Interface, must be considered in subdivision review.

Public Hearing Process

As part of the major subdivision preliminary plat review process, a public hearing is required. The requirement for a public hearing is not applicable to the first minor subdivision of a tract of record. State law requires the governing body or its authorized agent to conduct the public hearing. Both the Board of County Commissioners and the City Council have relinquished that task to the County Planning Board. An outline of the public hearing process adopted by the Planning Board can be found in the By-Laws of Yellowstone County Board of Planning, as amended. The following hearing process is reproduced in its entirety from Section 5 of the By-Laws.

SECTION 5 PUBLIC HEARINGS

The Board shall cause to be published a Notice of Public Hearing containing the date, time, location, and purpose pursuant to statutory requirements in a newspaper of general circulation for each hearing held by the Board.

A. Public Hearings for Subdivisions

1. When a preliminary plat application is set for a public hearing pursuant to a public notice, the matter shall be heard even though no one in favor or in opposition to the application appears at the hearing, unless the Board has received a written request from the sub divider, twenty-four (24) hours prior to the public hearing, to continue such hearing at a later time due to good and sufficient reason, or to withdraw or to postpone the application for reason approved by the Board.

2. Each person who speaks at the public hearing shall stand and furnish his/her name and address to the Board and shall thereby become a part of the record.
 3. Each preliminary plat application shall be heard in the following order:
 - a. A Planning Department staff member shall summarize pertinent data and present or amplify the recommendations of staff and department heads.
 - b. The applicant, or his representative, shall present the application to the Board, and summarize the proposed subdivision and, if applicable, the following criteria of public interests:
 - i. Effects on Agriculture
 - ii. Effects on Local Services.
 - iii. Effects on Natural Environment.
 - iv. Effects on Wildlife Habitat and Wildlife.
 - v. Effects on Public Health and Safety.
 - vi. Effects on Agricultural Users Facilities.
 - c. Persons in favor or opposed to the application shall be heard or written comments received up and until the time of the close of the public hearing.
- B. Other Public Hearings
1. All other public hearings shall be conducted in accordance with the following procedure unless the Board determines by a majority vote to follow some different procedure:
 - a. The Board shall first hear a report on the subject item from the Planning Department staff, which report may include a recommendation as to the action to be taken by the Board.
 - b. The Board shall then hear and/or receive written or oral statements from the public in the following order:
 - i. Proponents of the proposal.
 - ii. Opponents of the proposal.
 - iii. Members of the public who, being neither proponents nor opponents of the proposal wish to make a general statement or comment regarding the same.
 - iv. The Board shall then hear any brief rebuttal to previous comments, testimony, or statements.
 - v. The Board shall then hear any brief final comments, statements, or recommendations, if any, from the Planning Department staff.
 - vi. Any person wishing to speak a second time may do so only during the proper course of the proceedings, only after all persons wishing to speak have been heard, and only with the permission of the President or the approval of the majority of the Board members.
 2. Prior to hearing and/or receiving oral statements, comments, or testimony from the public, the Board may, by majority vote, impose reasonable and prudent limitations on the time allotted for each person's oral statement, comments, or testimony.

3. The Board or any member thereof, may at any time question any person about his/her statements, comments, or testimony.
 4. After hearing any and all statements, comments, and testimony as above provided, the President shall close the public testimony portion of the hearing. After closure, and after such discussion as may be appropriate, the Board may vote upon a recommendation for the item under consideration.
 5. Subject to any time constraints imposed by law, the Board may, at any stage of a public hearing or proceeding, continue the same to a later date in order to allow or facilitate full public participation, to obtain additional information, to properly consider or deliberate any matter, or for any other lawful reason. In the case of such continuance, the time and place of all further proceedings in regard thereto shall be immediately fixed and announced to the Planning Department staff and the public, in which case no further legal notice of the hearing need be given.
- C. Informal Hearings
- The Board, by majority vote, may follow some other procedures for the conduct of hearings.

Appendix E – Scenario Planning Worksheet and CommunityViz™ Indicator Reports

Scenario Planning Worksheet									
Name	Base Scenario	NPP	NHD	NLD	WPP	WHD	WLD	INF	
Proposed Libraries Development Costs		0 \$ 6,500,000	\$ 6,500,000	\$ 9,750,000	\$ 6,500,000	\$ 6,500,000	\$ 9,750,000	\$ 6,500,000	
Proposed Schools Development Costs		0 \$ 33,300,000	\$ 22,200,000	\$ 44,400,000	\$ 27,750,000	\$ 22,200,000	\$ 33,300,000	\$ 27,750,000	
Proposed Community Parks Development Costs		0 \$ 3,371,100	\$ 3,371,100	\$ 6,742,200	\$ 11,237,000	\$ 7,865,900	\$ 11,237,000	\$ 14,608,100	
Proposed Police and Fire Station Development Costs		0 \$ 1,714,414	\$ 1,714,414	\$ 3,428,828	\$ 1,714,414	\$ -	\$ 1,714,414	\$ -	
Proposed Bus Routes Development Costs		0 \$ 781,699	\$ 705,657	\$ 978,219	\$ 913,443	\$ 695,330	\$ 1,260,795	\$ 1,105,269	
Proposed Arterial Roads Development Costs		0 \$ -						\$ -	
Proposed Collector Roads Development Costs2		0 \$ 61,400,000	\$ 43,600,000	\$ 70,200,000	\$ 98,590,000	\$ 72,580,000	\$ 132,910,000	\$ 50,540,000	
Proposed Community Parks Costs		0							
Total Development Costs		0	107,067,213	78,091,171	135,499,247	146,704,857	109,841,230	190,172,209	100,503,369
Total Estimated Annual Tax Revenue		0	5,831,510	3,393,900	7,949,106	5,134,254	3,653,680	8,125,472	14,171,362
Total Cost per Acre			26,276	33,598	26,002	40,770	43,898	35,669	10,393
Total Revenue per Acre			8,183	3,280	2,350	5,873	3,184	3,023	6,430
Return on Investment			0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HexCountHD	0	148	378	0	234	395	9	93	
HexCountLD	0	87	0	881	0	0	882	733	
HexCountMD	0	448	0	0	354	0	0	684	
HexCountMixed	0	27	27	27	39	41	38	175	
ROI	NaN	0.113605404	0.070341334	0.179016383	0.138702261	0.123271658	0.257959017	0.218521683	
		88.6%	93.0%	82.1%	86.1%	87.7%	74.2%	78.1%	
Rank		2	1	5	4	3	7	6	
*1 hex = 16 high or mixed density units/9 med. density units/5 low density units									
HexCountHD du	16	2368	6048	0	3744	6320	144	1488	
HexCountLD du	5	435	0	4405	0	0	4410	3665	
HexCountMD du	9	4032	0	0	3186	0	0	6156	
HexCountMixed du	16	432	432	432	624	656	608	2800	
*1 hex = 5.739 acres	5.739								
HexCountHD acres		849.37	2169.34	0.00	1342.93	2266.91	51.65	533.73	
HexCountLD acres		499.29	0.00	5056.06	0.00	0.00	5061.80	4206.69	
HexCountMD acres		2571.07	0.00	0.00	2031.61	0.00	0.00	3925.48	
HexCountMixed acres		154.95	154.95	154.95	223.82	235.30	218.08	1004.33	
Total Acreage		4,075	2,324	5,211	3,598	2,502	5,332	9,670	

Appendix E – Scenario Planning Worksheet and CommunityViz™ Indicator Reports

Scenario Planning Worksheet								
Name	Base Scenario	NPP	NHD	NLD	WPP	WHD	WLD	INF
Total Cost/Acre/Growth Pattern								
High Density (including mixed use)		\$ 106,606	\$ 33,598	\$ 874,454	\$ 93,637	\$ 43,898	\$ 705,039	\$ 65,345
Low Density		\$ 214,438	\$ -	\$ 26,799	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 37,570	\$ 23,891
Medium Density		\$ 41,643	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 72,211	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 25,603
Total cost per acre		362,687	33,598	901,253	165,848	43,898	742,609	114,839
Rank		3	6	1	4	7	2	5
Total Revenue/Growth Pattern	Rev/ac							
High Density (including mixed use)	\$ 3,514	\$ 2,984,693	\$ 7,623,068	\$ -	\$ 4,719,042	\$ 7,965,904	\$ 181,502	\$ 1,875,517
Low Density	\$ 2,350	\$ 1,173,339	\$ -	\$ 11,881,739	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 11,895,225	\$ 9,885,714
Medium Density	\$ 2,861	\$ 7,355,837	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,812,425	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 11,230,787
Total Revenue		11,513,869	7,623,068	11,881,739	10,531,467	7,965,904	12,076,727	22,992,018
Total Revenue/Acre/Growth Pattern								
High Density (including mixed use)	\$ 2,972	\$ 3,280	\$ -	\$ 3,012	\$ 3,184	\$ 673	\$ 1,219	
Low Density	\$ 2,350	\$ -	\$ 2,350	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,350	\$ 2,350	
Medium Density	\$ 2,861	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,861	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,861	
Total Revenue/Acre		8,183	3,280	2,350	5,873	3,184	3,023	6,430
Rank		1	4	7	3	5	6	2
Total Revenue/Unit/Growth Pattern								
High Density (including mixed use)	\$ 419	\$ 1,173,200	\$ 2,715,120	\$ 181,008	\$ 1,830,192	\$ 2,922,944	\$ 315,088	\$ 1,796,672
Low Density	\$ 1,461	\$ 635,535	\$ -	\$ 6,435,705	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6,443,010	\$ 5,354,565
Medium Density	\$ 731	\$ 2,947,392	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,328,966	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,500,036
Total		4,756,127	2,715,120	6,616,713	4,159,158	2,922,944	6,758,098	11,651,273
Rank		4	7	3	5	6	2	1

CommunityViz™ Indicators

Assumption	Default	NPP	NHD	NLD	WPP	WHD	WLD	INF	Units
CI Assumption - Annual Household Energy Use	95	95	95	95	95	95	95	95	million BTU / household / year
CI Assumption - Auto Emissions - CO	226.34	226.34	226.34	226.34	226.34	226.34	226.34	226.34	grams / gallon
CI Assumption - Auto Emissions - CO2	19.56	19.56	19.56	19.56	19.56	19.56	19.56	19.56	lbs / gallon
CI Assumption - Auto Emissions - Hydrocarbons	25.94	25.94	25.94	25.94	25.94	25.94	25.94	25.94	grams / gallon
CI Assumption - Auto Emissions - NOx	16.69	16.69	16.69	16.69	16.69	16.69	16.69	16.69	grams / gallon
CI Assumption - Average Vehicle Trip Length	9.72	9.72	9.72	9.72	9.72	9.72	9.72	9.72	miles
CI Assumption - Daily Household Water Use	282	282	282	282	282	282	282	282	gallons / household / day
CI Assumption - Household Vehicle Trips per Day	5.66	5.66	5.66	5.66	5.66	5.66	5.66	5.66	household vehicle trips / day
CI Assumption - Passenger Car Fuel Efficiency	22.6	22.6	22.6	22.6	22.6	22.6	22.6	22.6	miles / gallon
CI Assumption - Percent Employed	58.41	58.41	58.41	58.41	58.41	58.41	58.41	58.41	percent of population
CI Assumption - Percent School-aged Children	17.4	17.4	17.4	17.4	17.4	17.4	17.4	17.4	percent of population
CI Assumption - Persons per Household	2.61	2.61	2.61	2.61	2.61	2.61	2.61	2.61	persons / household

RESOLUTION 16-02

RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING ADOPTION OF THE 2016 CITY OF BILLINGS GROWTH POLICY – “BILLINGSBEYOND – A GROWTH POLICY FOR BILLINGS” TO THE BILLINGS CITY COUNCIL AT ITS REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING ON JULY 11, 2016.

WHEREAS, the Yellowstone County Board of Planning desires the Billings City Council to adopt the 2016 City of Billings Growth Policy – “BillingsBeyond – A Growth Policy for Billings”; and

WHEREAS, on the 28th day of June, 2016, a public hearing was held by the Yellowstone County Board of Planning for the purpose of receiving public comments on the proposed City of Billings Growth Policy; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Montana Codes Annotated Section 76-1-601, the Yellowstone County Board of Planning may prepare and propose a Growth Policy for any part of its entire jurisdictional area; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Montana Codes Annotated Section 76-1-603, the Yellowstone County Board of Planning must recommend, by resolution, the proposed Growth Policy and any proposed ordinances and resolutions for implementing to the governing bodies;

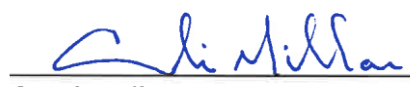
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED THAT THE YELLOWSTONE COUNTY BOARD OF PLANNING recommends the Billings City Council adopt the proposed 2016 City of Billings Growth Policy – “BillingsBeyond – A Growth Policy for Billings”.

DONE BY ORDER of the Yellowstone County Board of Planning this 28th day of June, 2016.

YELLOWSTONE COUNTY BOARD OF PLANNING


Darrell Tunnicliff, President

ATTEST:


Candi Millar, Executive Secretary

RESOLUTION NO. 16- 10575

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE CITY OF BILLINGS 2016 GROWTH POLICY

WHEREAS, pursuant to Title 76, Chapter 1, PART 6, Montana Code Annotated, the Billings City Council desires to adopt a Growth Policy covering the City of Billings and any future annexed land within Yellowstone County Board of Planning jurisdiction;

WHEREAS, the Growth Policy contains those elements listed in subsection (3) §76-1-601, MCA;

WHEREAS, on the 28th day of June, 2016, a public hearing was held by the Yellowstone County Board of Planning for the purpose of receiving public comments on the proposed Growth Policy;

WHEREAS, The Yellowstone County Board of Planning by Resolution 16-02, recommends the Billings City Council adopt the proposed Growth Policy, and;

WHEREAS, The City Council by Resolution 16-10572, intended to adopt the proposed Growth Policy;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED,

The Billings City Council approves this Resolution to Adopt the 2016 City of Billings Growth Policy and in doing so, also adopts the Growth Statement and Guidelines for the City of Billings, Montana:

City of Billings Growth Policy Statement

In the next 20 years, Billings will manage its growth by encouraging development within and adjacent to the existing City limits, but preference will be given to areas where City infrastructure exists or can be extended within a fiscally constrained budget and with consideration given to increased tax revenue from development. The City will prosper with strong neighborhoods with their own unique character that are clean, safe, and provide a choice of housing and transportation options.

Growth Guidelines

Essential Investments (relating public and private expenditures to public values)

- The safety of all users and the connectivity of the transportation system are important criteria to consider in roadway designs and transportation plans
- Public transit and commercial air service are critical to ensure access to and around the City
- Planning and construction of safe and affordable interconnected sidewalks and trails are important to the economy and livability of Billings.
- Developed parks that provide recreation, special amenities (community gardens, dog parks, viewing areas), and active living opportunities are desirable for an attractive and healthy community
- Natural landscapes are important because they define the uniqueness of Billings and help protect the environment
- Landscaping of public rights-of-way and entryways makes Billings more visually appealing to residents and visitors
- Public health and safety and emergency service response are critical to the well-being of Billings' residents, businesses, and visitors

- Infill development and development near existing City infrastructure may be the most cost effective
- Accessible, friendly and cost-effective government are important public values
- The history and heritage of Billings are cornerstones of our community
- Neighborhoods that are safe and attractive and provide essential services are much desired
- Infrastructure and service investments that stabilize or improve property values, secure future utility costs, consider maintenance costs, and improve our environmental quality far into the future (i.e. energy efficient) are desirable
- It is important to factor in maintenance costs when programming public spaces and infrastructure
- Integrated, long range water planning that better utilizes existing resources and treatment options, and when necessary acquires new ones, is vital.
- Regulatory compliant water and wastewater treatment plants that provide sufficient capacity will help sustain community growth
- A supportive school system that inspires, motivates, and prepares students for meaningful employment is important for ensuring a high quality, competitive community
- A cost/benefit study is important to make cost effective land use decisions

Place Making (Enhance, maintain, preserve, and improve existing public places)

- A multi-use community recreation facility is desirable
- Enhancement and maintenance of public spaces and buildings through City stewardship is integral to a vibrant community
- Park master plans and transportation plans are important to facilitate the preservation and improved public access to the Yellowstone River and the Rims
- Public and private partnerships are valuable for creating enhanced entryways into Billings
- Locally grown foods help sustain agriculture, provide healthy options, and support local businesses
- The history and heritage of Billings are cornerstones of our community
- Natural landscapes are important because they define the uniqueness of Billings and help protect the environment and beautify neighborhoods
- Encouraging the installation of art in public spaces enhances the places and showcases the talents and diversity of the community
- Enhancing public buildings and spaces to be more efficient in their uses of energy, money, and space is important to having a vibrant and livable City

Community Fabric (attractive, aesthetically pleasing, uniquely Billings)

- Developed landscape areas in commercial areas encourage more pedestrian activity and vibrant commercial activity
- Attractive streetscapes provide a pleasant and calming travel experience in urban and suburban neighborhoods
- Outdoor public spaces provide casual and relaxing gathering areas for people

- Planning and construction of interconnected sidewalks and trails are important to the livability of Billings
- Developed parks that provide recreation, special amenities, and active living opportunities are desirable for an attractive and healthy community
- Natural landscapes and parks are important because they define the uniqueness of Billings and help protect the environment
- Cost-effective landscaping of public rights-of-way and entryways makes Billings more visually appealing to residents and visitors

Strong Neighborhoods (livable, safe, sociable and resilient neighborhoods)

- Zoning regulations that allow a mixture of housing types provide housing options for all age groups and income levels
- Walkable neighborhoods that permit convenient destinations such as neighborhood services, open space, parks, schools and public gathering spaces foster health, good will and social interaction
- Safe and livable neighborhoods can be achieved through subdivision design that focuses on complete streets, pedestrian-scale street lights, street trees and walkable access to public spaces
- Neighborhoods that are safe and attractive and provide essential services are much desired
- Zoning and subdivision regulations that utilize Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategies result in safer neighborhoods
- Implementation of the Infill Policy is important to encourage development of underutilized properties
- Public safety and emergency service response are critical to the well-being of Billings' residents and businesses

Home Base (healthy, safe and diverse housing options)

- A mix of housing types that meet the needs of a diverse population is important
- The Housing Needs Assessment is an important tool to ensure Billings recognizes and meets the demands of future development
- Common to all types of housing choices is the desire to live in surroundings that are affordable, healthy and safe
- Planning and construction of interconnected sidewalks and trails are important to the economy and livability of Billings
- Public safety and emergency service response are critical to the well-being of Billings' residents
- Homes that are safe and sound support a healthy community
- Accessory dwellings units provide an important type of affordable housing options if compatible
- Energy efficient housing can reduce energy consumption

Mobility and Access (transportation choices in places where goods and services are accessible to all)

- Connecting people to places with transportation choices is vital to the well-being of Billings' residents, businesses and visitors
- Safe and accessible transportation systems benefit everyone's quality of life
- Affordable public transit is much desired
- Development oriented to transit routes will provide more transportation choices and is preferred
- "Safe Routes to Schools" promotes physical health and reduces vehicle trips, earning parents more time and less costs for transportation
- Planning and construction of interconnected sidewalks and trails are important to the economy and livability of Billings
- On-street bike facilities promote predictability for all users
- Expanded air service ensures that Billings remains a competitive and an accessible destination
- Technology can reduce congestion and facilitate emergency vehicle travel at railroad crossings

Prosperity (promoting equal opportunity and economic advancement)

- Predictable, reasonable City taxes and assessments are important to Billings' taxpayers
- A diversity of available jobs can ensure a strong Billings' economy
- Successful businesses that provide local jobs benefit the community
- Community investments that attract and retain a strong, skilled and diverse workforce also attracts businesses
- Retaining and supporting existing businesses helps sustain a healthy economy
- Continued workforce training benefits the community and helps attract and retain businesses
- Strategically placed industrial parks will encourage a more diverse city economy, and will better help manage effluent and emission from industrial processes

APPROVED AND PASSED by the City Council of the City of Billings this 8th day of August, 2016.

THE CITY OF BILLINGS:

BY: Thomas W. Hanel
THOMAS W. HANEL, MAYOR

ATTEST:
BY: Denise R. Bohlman
DENISE R. BOHLMAN, CITY CLERK

