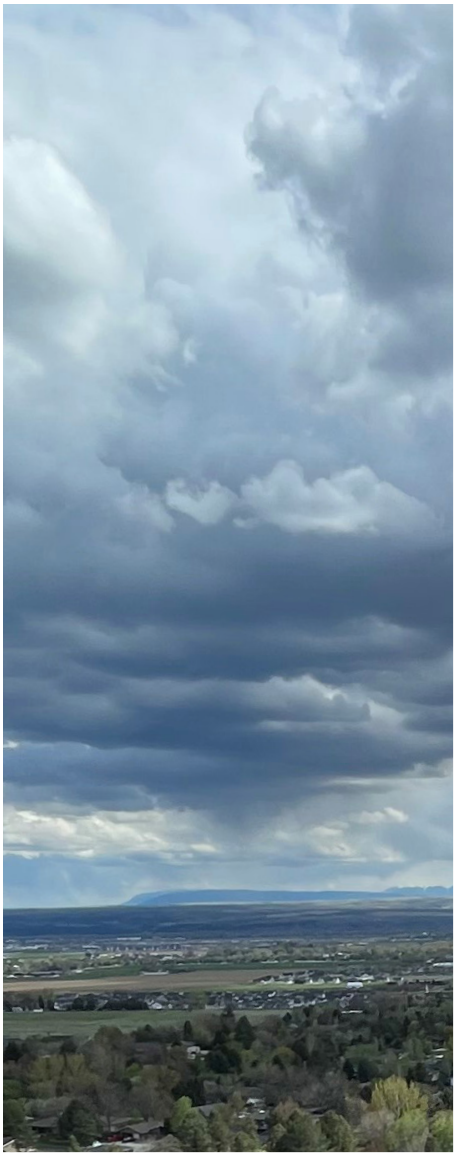

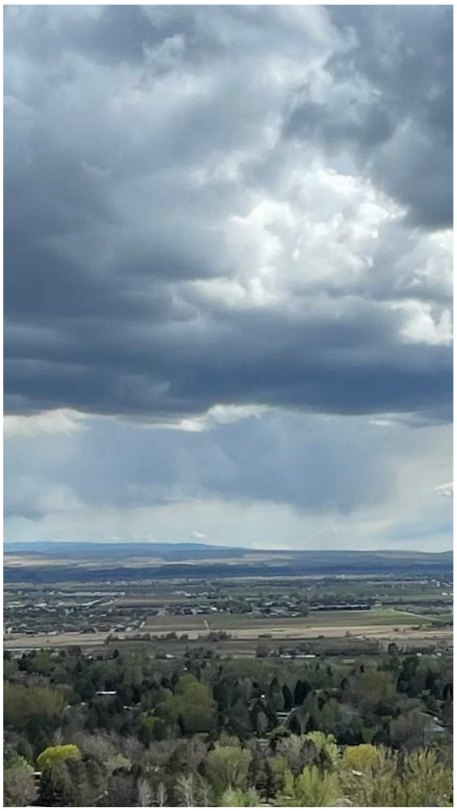

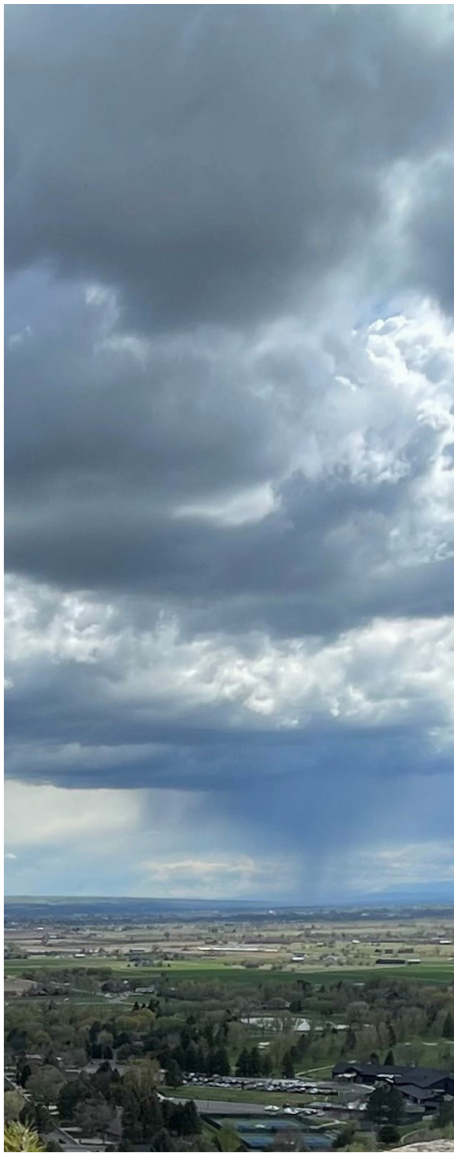

WEST BILLINGS NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

FINAL REPORT

Executive Summary

The West Billings Neighborhood Plan Update serves to update the 2001 West Billings Plan and the 2016 West End Multi-Modal Planning Study. Taken together, this plan, the Billings Heights Neighborhood Plan and the Billings 2045 Plan, will serve as Billings' new Future Land Use Plan and bring the City of Billings into compliance with the recently passed Montana Land Use Planning Act, which imposes new requirements on such planning documents.

The West Billings Neighborhood Plan provides a coordinated framework for guiding land use, transportation, and infrastructure investment in one of Yellowstone County's fastest-growing areas. The plan area encompasses approximately 15,000 acres between Shiloh Road and 64th Street West, from Interstate 90 to the Rimrocks, and includes land within the City of Billings, Yellowstone County, and areas outside zoning jurisdiction.

Since adoption of the 2001 West Billings Plan, the area has experienced rapid population growth, substantial housing development, and major infrastructure expansion, accompanied by a steady conversion of agricultural land to urban and suburban uses. This update responds to those changes by integrating current demographic, housing, economic, and transportation data with extensive public engagement to guide growth over the next twenty years.

A cornerstone of the plan is the adoption of Future Land Use Categories and a Future Land Use Map (FLUM) in compliance with the Montana Land Use Planning Act (MLUPA). These tools formalize the community's vision for development, improve predictability for landowners, and align zoning decisions with long-term infrastructure capacity. The FLUM establishes a range of land use categories—from rural agricultural areas to higher-intensity urban nodes—each with defined density ranges, building types, and mobility characteristics.

The plan emphasizes the integration of land use and transportation planning. Existing development patterns are characterized by disconnected street networks, limited pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and constrained transit service. To address these conditions and respond to public input, the plan promotes interconnected streets, expanded active transportation facilities, and land use patterns that support future transit service.

This plan creates a legally compliant roadmap for accommodating growth while preserving the character, safety, and quality of life valued by West Billings residents.

Acknowledgments

The project team is grateful to those who gave their time and efforts to guide and inform the production of this plan. Like the 2001 plan, The West Billings Neighborhood Plan Update is a product of the contributions of interdisciplinary professionals, elected officials, and members of the public. The combined efforts of everyone who participated in creating this plan have given Billings its first future land use map, which will guide the future of the West End.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Chapter One Contents

Plan Overview

Context

The “West End” of Billings is a collection of neighborhoods generally known as the area west of 24th St., south of the Rims, and north of I-90, with its western boundary moving ever further west with development.

The West Billings Neighborhood Plan encompasses approximately 15,000 acres of the West End, including areas in the Billings city limits, and unincorporated areas of Yellowstone County. The plan boundary includes developed neighborhoods, commercial areas, working agricultural lands, and natural areas. Because of differing jurisdictional boundaries, this plan uses two different boundaries; one for transportation analysis, which corresponds to the MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization) boundaries, and another boundary for land use analysis, which includes the area between Shiloh Road and 64th Street West, extending to 70th Street West north of Grand Avenue, as shown in Figure 1.1 to the right.

The 2016 City of Billings Growth Policy acknowledges the importance of West Billings and the likelihood of continued growth of the area. This Plan identifies guiding principles, goals and policies related to growth and land use planning within the West Billings Plan area. It creates land use categories and a future land use map that will guide policymakers and landowners over the next 20 years.

Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to take stock and look forward. It evaluates existing conditions in West Billings and states the community’s shared vision for its future by creating goals and recommendations for future growth. This neighborhood plan was created in compliance with the Montana Land Use Planning Act (MLUPA) as a Neighborhood Land Use Plan. The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) illustrates the general pattern of future land uses across the plan area and serves as a visual guide for how the community vision is intended to be implemented.

The West Billings Neighborhood Plan will inform zoning and future development decisions and document community priorities. It outlines a vision for West Billings that aligns growth with infrastructure improvements, prioritizes development adjacent to existing infrastructure, expands options for walking and biking, and enhances safety throughout the plan area.

Updating the 2001 Plan

The 2001 West Billings Plan is the current neighborhood plan for West Billings. In the 24 years since its adoption, much has changed. The population of the area has more than doubled, and the number of dwellings has more than tripled. Given the growth, regulatory changes, and local infrastructure investments, the time is right for an updated plan for West Billings.

The planning effort that resulted in the 2001

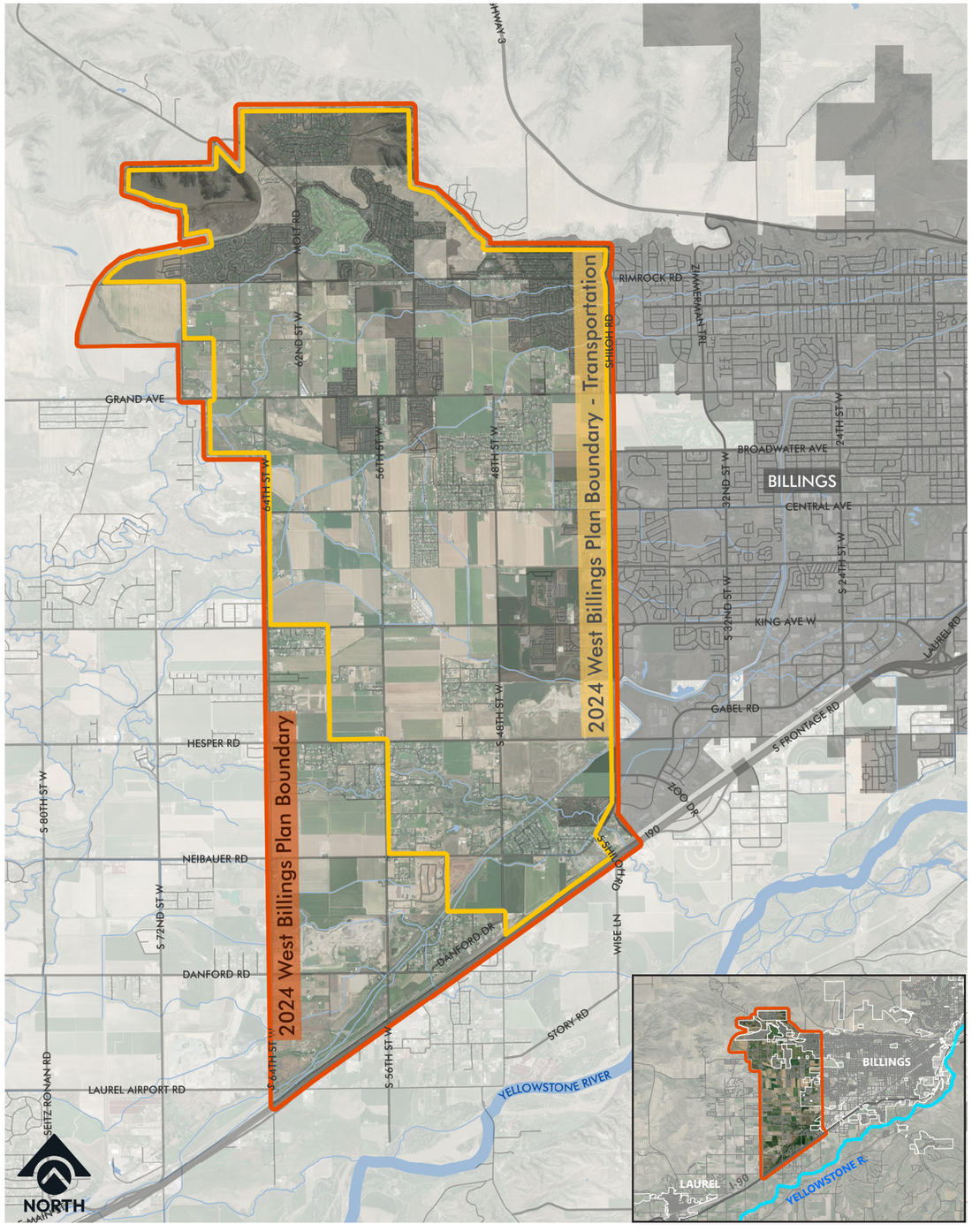


Figure 1.1 - Plan Area Map

Plan included extensive public engagement involving public meetings, surveys, visual preference surveys, and general discussions. While much has changed since that plan's completion, many elements are still relevant and important to the community. For that reason, the current plan relies on that previous document as the fundamental guide to developing the future of West Billings. The Plan is not a replacement of the 2001 Plan, but rather an update to a document that has guided the community for over the past 20 years. While the goals, policies, and future land uses are updated with this plan, the foundations remain the same.

The overall vision remains the same: "Create an achievable plan to meet the community's shared vision for the future of West Billings, enabling it to thrive on growth and change through innovative, compatible land use, and responsible development."

Themes from the 2001 plan include Planned Growth, Appropriate Land Utilization, Achieving a Community Character, and Enhancement of Public Safety, Open Space, Waterways and Scenic Resources. The key elements of the plan include:

- Establish development patterns that use land more efficiently
- Develop municipal water and wastewater facilities and other public services to support urban growth in West Billings
- Plan for the orderly and efficient urbanization of agricultural lands
- Create developments in West Billings that are compatible with their surroundings and provide a safe and desirable environment for residents, shoppers, workers, and visitors
- Identify and protect open spaces, flood channels, waterways, and scenic resources in West Billings

Many of these elements are carried through to this plan and updated with existing conditions.

Multi-Modal Update

In addition to the update to the 2001 West Billings Plan, this plan also updates the 2016 West End Multi-modal Planning Study ("Study"). The Study evaluated the cumulative effect of ongoing and projected future land development and population growth on the multi-modal transportation system for the area of Billings west of Shiloh Road. This Plan includes an update to that Study by incorporating current traffic counts with projected future development. That information was used to evaluate and prioritize potential project needs to help the City of Billings and Yellowstone County coordinate transportation improvements with projected land development. A summary of the existing conditions is in Chapter 2.

Growth Policy Alignment

Montana statute requires that neighborhood plans be consistent with growth policies. The Montana Land Use Planning Act now refers to a growth policy as a *land use plan*. Billings' land use plan, Billings 2045, will be adopted at roughly the same time as the West Billings Neighborhood Plan Update in mid 2026. The West Billings future land use map will be adopted as part of the Billings 2045 Plan, and the future land use categories established during the West Billings planning process will also be applied to the entire Billings zoning jurisdiction. Therefore, the two plans will be consistent in their approach to land use. Should any inconsistencies be within this Plan and Billings 2045, Billings 2045 takes precedence.

Jurisdictional Differences

The planning area includes land within the City of Billings and unincorporated areas of Yellowstone County. In addition, a portion of the planning area is located outside of the zoning jurisdiction. This Plan recognizes the jurisdictional differences between the City of Billings and Yellowstone County, which are reflected throughout the document.

Existing Conditions Overview

The following provides an overview of the existing conditions within the Plan Area. The Background Report within Chapter 2 provides a complete assessment of the existing conditions. The background information collected directly informed the development of the goals and policy recommendations outlined in this Plan.

Population

The West Billings Neighborhood has experienced substantial growth over the past two decades. According to census data, the population of West Billings surged from 6,226 in 2000 to 16,182 in 2020, a 160% growth rate. In comparison, Yellowstone County saw a growth rate of 27.35% during the same period, indicating the neighborhood's significant appeal.

Housing

The total number of housing units increased 208%, from 2,155 in 2000 to 6,644 in 2020. The majority of dwelling units are owner-occupied, accounting for 71.4% of the total, while renter-occupied units make up 28.6%. Vacancy rates are relatively low at 5.4%, suggesting a high demand for housing in the Plan Area. The area's housing stock is relatively new, with the vast majority of the neighborhood built within the past 40 years. Single family homes are the predominant housing type.

Land Use

The current land uses within the Plan Area include residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, and public lands.

Land use in the West Billings Plan Area has changed significantly since the adoption of the 2001 West Billings Plan. In 2003, agricultural use dominated the Plan Area, accounting for 56% of the land, while developed land comprised only 16%. In 2024, agricultural land use has decreased

2003

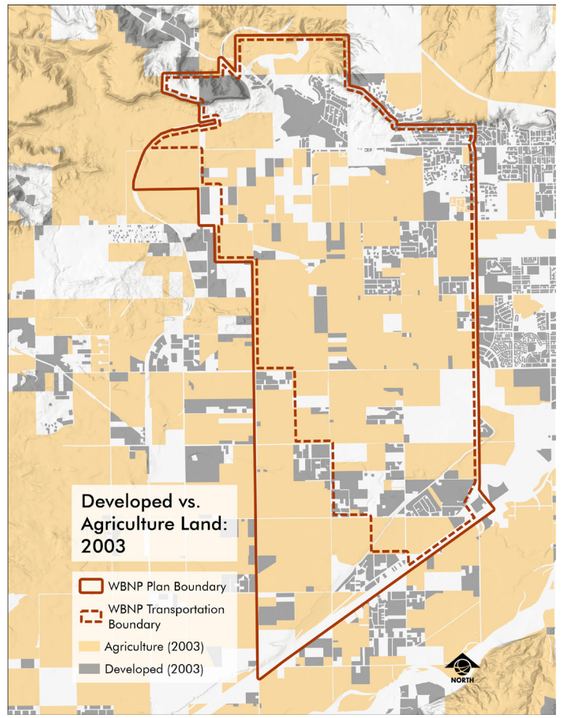


Figure 1.2 - Developed vs. Agriculture (2003)

2024

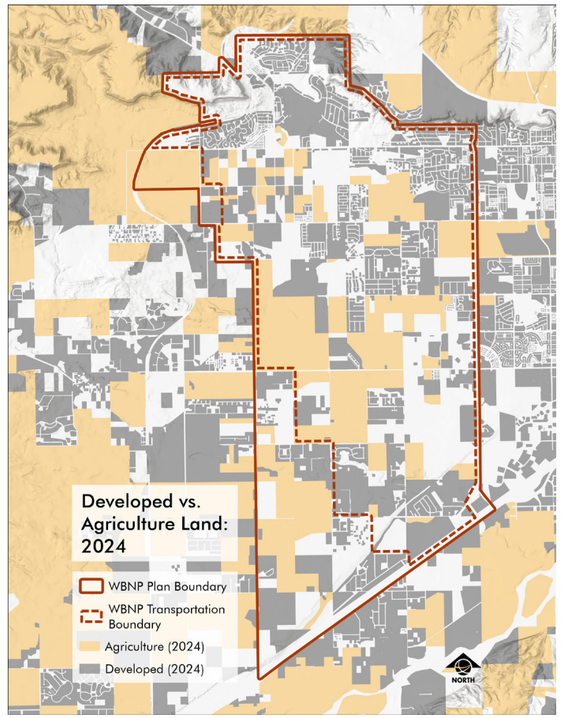


Figure 1.3 - Developed vs. Agriculture (2024)

Agricultural land use in the West Billings Plan Area is rapidly disappearing - See Chapter 2, Background Report for more details.

to 28% and developed land increased to 36%. More specifically, in 2024, residential usage constitutes about 29% of total land use within the Plan rea, while commercial, mixed-use, and industrial uses make up about 2%, 2%, and 3% respectively.

Vacant land, excluding agriculture and public lands accounts for 20% of the total plan area, with about 3,000 acres remaining unused in the plan area as of 2024.

See Figure 1.2 and 1.3 on above for visual reference.

Economic Development

Much of the economic activity within the Plan Area is focused along Shiloh Road. Healthcare represents the largest business sector, followed by construction, and retail trade. With a total of 289 businesses within the area and approximately 2,200 employees, many residents commute to other areas of Yellowstone County for work.

Transportation

Land within the Plan Area is accessed by a 135-mile street network in which small local access streets flow to larger collectors, which connect to a one-mile-by-one-mile arterial grid. Within the Plan Area, local access streets rarely connect from neighborhood to neighborhood or across arterials, which increases travel distances and requires most trips to include some travel on arterials. The southern boundary is defined by Interstate 90. Notable principal arterials include Rimrock Road, Grand Avenue, Central Ave, King Avenue W, Hesper Road, Neibauer Road, and Danford Road for east-west travel. The north-south travel arterials include 64th Street W, 62nd Street W, 56th Street W, 48th Street W, and Shiloh Road.

Existing pedestrian and bike infrastructure in West Billings is inconsistent and disconnected within the Plan Area. Sidewalks extend for a total of 64.5 miles within the Plan Area, yet only 32% of roads feature adjacent sidewalk infrastructure. In addition to sidewalks, there are 14.7 miles of paved multi-use trails in West Billings. There are currently no on-street bike lanes in the Plan Area.

Public transportation options in the West Billings area are notably limited, primarily confined to Shiloh Road, which delineates the eastern boundary of the Plan Area while also marking the westernmost extent of the bus network in Billings. Billings MET Transit provides services throughout the greater Billings area. Within the Plan Area, the North Westend and King Avenue West routes serve Shiloh Road and the immediate vicinity, with a small segment of the King Avenue West route extending just west of Shiloh Road to 44th Street W.

Shiloh Crossing - Sanbell

Between 2020 and 2024, there were a total of 239 reported crashes at intersections within the Plan Area, with crashes occurring primarily on Shiloh Rd, 48th St W, and 56th St W. Among these crashes, one incident was fatal at the intersection of 48th St W and King Ave in 2019, while four resulted in serious injuries.

Community Engagement

Throughout the planning process, community engagement has been critical to understanding issues within the Plan area. A complete summary of the public engagement process is provided in Appendix A. The following is a summary of the engagement conducted for the West Billings Plan.

Project Website

The project website was created in March 2024 to host project information, surveys, and other information critical to the project. It has hosted three (3) public surveys, an interactive webmap for the draft Future Land Use Map (FLUM), and provided project updates. The website also included contact information for key project team members.

Open House

In March 2024 a public open house was held to inform the public about the plan update and gather information about important issues.

This provided residents, interested community members, and City and County officials an opportunity to learn about and contribute to the plan development for West Billings. It offered a casual and interactive setting where attendees engaged with project materials, shared their perspectives, and interacted with the project team. Project team members engaged with attendees by using eleven informational boards dispersed around the room. The boards provided detailed information about what a neighborhood plan is, a contextual map of the area, the four major themes from the 2001 plan, land use and transportation, effects of transportation on land use and community character, transportation improvements map, and a next steps timeline for the project.

On August 14, 2025 the project team held an open house at Ben Steele Middle School. Before the meeting began, the project team distributed writing utensils and materials including a copy of the draft FLUM and future land use category descriptions. Attendees were encouraged to write comments on boards which displayed the Draft FLUM, guiding principles, and introductory information presented at the March 2024 open house. The project team gave a presentation introducing the project and recapping the work completed to that date, including the methods used to create the draft FLUM and next steps.

Future Land Use Workshops

In November 2024, the project team hosted two public future land use workshops. After a presentation on the planning process to-date and the rules of the future land use game, attendees made their own future land use maps collaboratively in groups of three to four.

Organization Presentations

Throughout the project, presentations were given to the Billings City Council, West End Neighborhood Task Force, West End Rotary Club, and the Billings Association of Realtors.

Open House March 2024 - Sanbell

Future Land Use Game November 2024 - Sanbell

CHAPTER TWO
BACKGROUND REPORT

Chapter Two Contents

Introduction

Purpose

This Background Report is intended to inform the update to the 2001 West Billings Neighborhood Plan and the 2016 West End Multimodal Plan. It provides a snapshot of current (2024) conditions and trends in West Billings. It provides a detailed description of a wide variety of topics important to the community, such as demographics, housing, transportation, and land uses. The Background Report provides decision-makers, the public, and local agencies with context for the development of the Neighborhood Plan.

The overall approach to updating the Plans includes:

- Updating demographic and land use components
- Incorporating relevant components of City of Billings and Yellowstone County adopted plans and policies
- Review development and traffic data
- Summarize themes and issues identified during the first round of public involvement

Background Report Methods

This Background Report compiles essential data and findings from existing local planning documents and sources, providing a comprehensive review of the West Billings Neighborhood. The data draws from a range of reputable sources, including the US Census Data from 2020 and 2010, American Community Survey (ACS) data spanning 2017 to 2021, and Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) data from 2023. By synthesizing these sources, the report offers a detailed understanding of demographic trends, housing dynamics, economic indicators, and other critical aspects of the plan area.

City and County Context

The “West End” of Billings is locally known as the area of town west of 24th St., south of the Rims, and north of I-90, with it’s western boundary moving ever further west with development. Growth in the area has accelerated in the last 30 years, driven, in large part by public investment in infrastructure like water, sewer, and transportation facilities.

The city’s boundary is a patchwork of annexed areas reflecting the incremental, uncoordinated history of development in the city and county. Development within the City has often “leap-frogged” over existing County developed areas, leaving islands of county land surrounded by incorporated areas.

The 2016 City of Billings Growth Policy acknowledges the importance of West Billings and the likelihood of continued growth of the area. That document identified a preferred development pattern focused on medium to high density residential, with commercial centers/nodes of development.

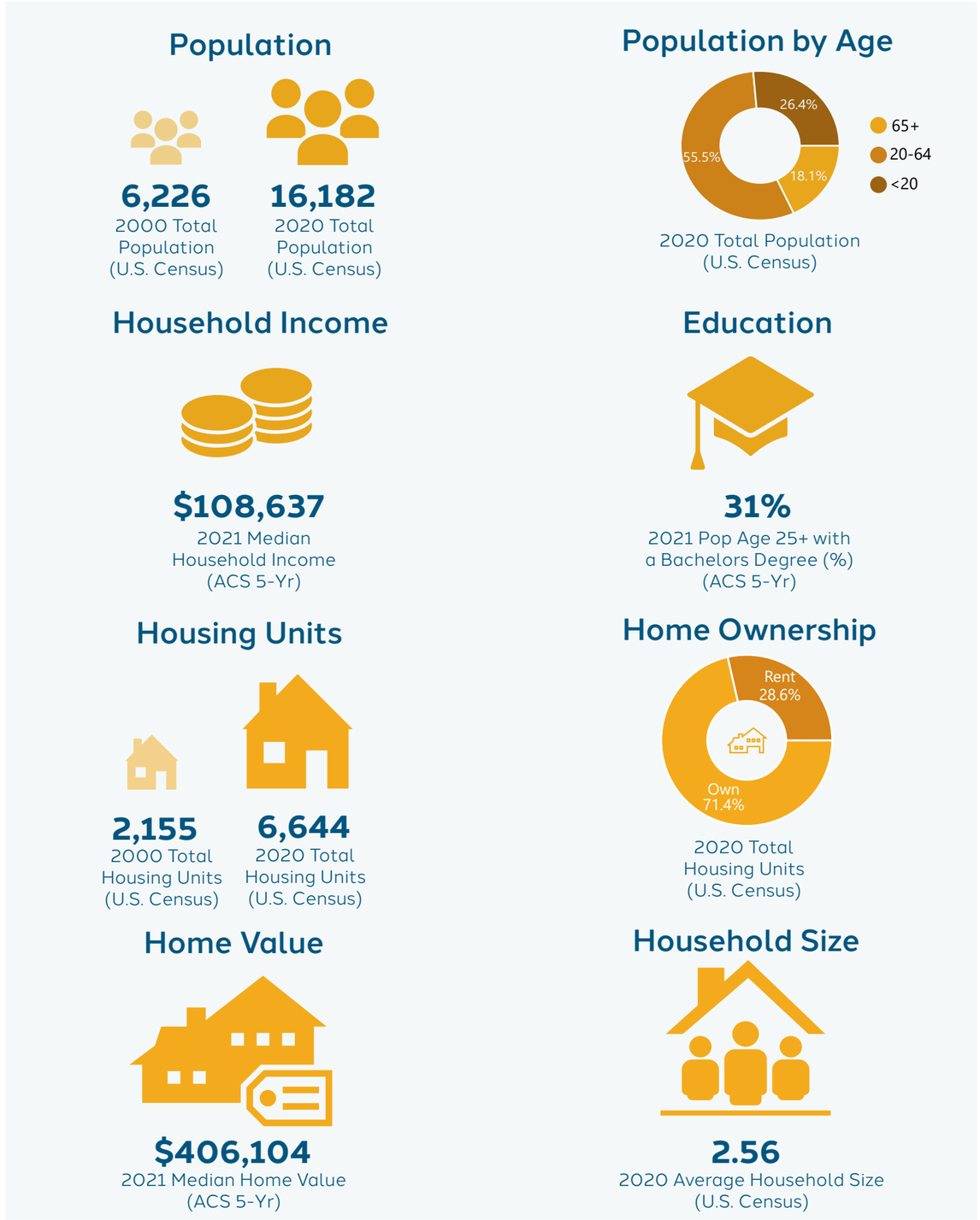


Figure 2.1 - Population and Household Statistics

Existing Conditions

Community Demographics

The West Billings Neighborhood has experienced substantial growth over the past two decades. According to census data, the population of West Billings surged from 6,226 in 2000 to 16,182 in 2020, a 160% growth rate. In comparison, Yellowstone County saw a growth rate of 27.35% during the same period, indicating the significant appeal of the neighborhood.

In terms of age distribution, the neighborhood has a diverse population with approximately 26.4% under the age of 20, 55.5% aged between 20 and 64, and 18.1% aged 65 and above. The plan area has a relatively small population of racial minorities, comprising just 11.5% of its residents. The median household income in West Billings is much higher than the county average, with a median of $108,637 compared to $65,656 for Yellowstone County. Education levels are relatively high, with 31.2% of the population aged 25 and above holding a bachelor's degree.These demographic characteristics are illustrated in Figure 2.1.

Housing

Over the past twenty years, residential land use in the West Billings plan area has developed to accommodate the area's rapid population growth. The total number of housing units increased 208%, from 2,155 in 2000 to 6,644 in 2020. Figure 2.2, shown to the right, illustrates the pattern and timing of residential development in the plan area based on year built. The majority of dwelling units are owner-occupied, accounting for 71.4% of the total, while renter-occupied units make up 28.6%. The average household size in the neighborhood is 2.56 persons. Home values in West Billings are 160% higher than the county average, with a median home value of $406,104 compared to $253,700 for Yellowstone County. Vacancy rates are relatively low at 5.4%, suggesting a high demand for housing in the plan area. According to the 2023 Billings Urban Area Long Range Transportation Plan, housing density within the Plan area is between 1-500 units per square mile, significantly lower than the older established neighborhoods of Billings. Those neighborhoods vary from 1,000 to 4,750 units per square mile.

Local Services and Facilities

West Billings is home to six schools, three public and three private institutions. These schools include Ben Steele Middle School (2017), Elder Grove Elementary School and Middle School (2020), Billings Christian School (1981), Billings Christian High School (2022), and Grace Montessori (2013). There are currently no libraries or formal community centers currently located in the plan area. Emergency services are provided by one City of Billings Fire station, Station 7 (2007), located off Grand Avenue on 54th Street West.

Development within the plan area is served by city water, sewer, and stormwater infrastructure within city limits and private wells and septic systems in the county. Figure 2.3 on page 22 shows the location of existing water and sewer infrastructure, as well as schools and fire services within the plan area.

Economic Development

As Montana's largest city and economy, Billings offers a wide array of economic opportunities. Top industries in Billings includes healthcare, retail trade, construction, wholesale trade, and educational services. These industries are all present in West Billings, with 263 businesses employing 1,988 individuals as of 2023. Employers in the area include Albertsons, Costco, First Interstate Bank, ExxonMobil, Intermountain Health, Cenex, and Town Pump. The Shiloh corridor hosts the largest

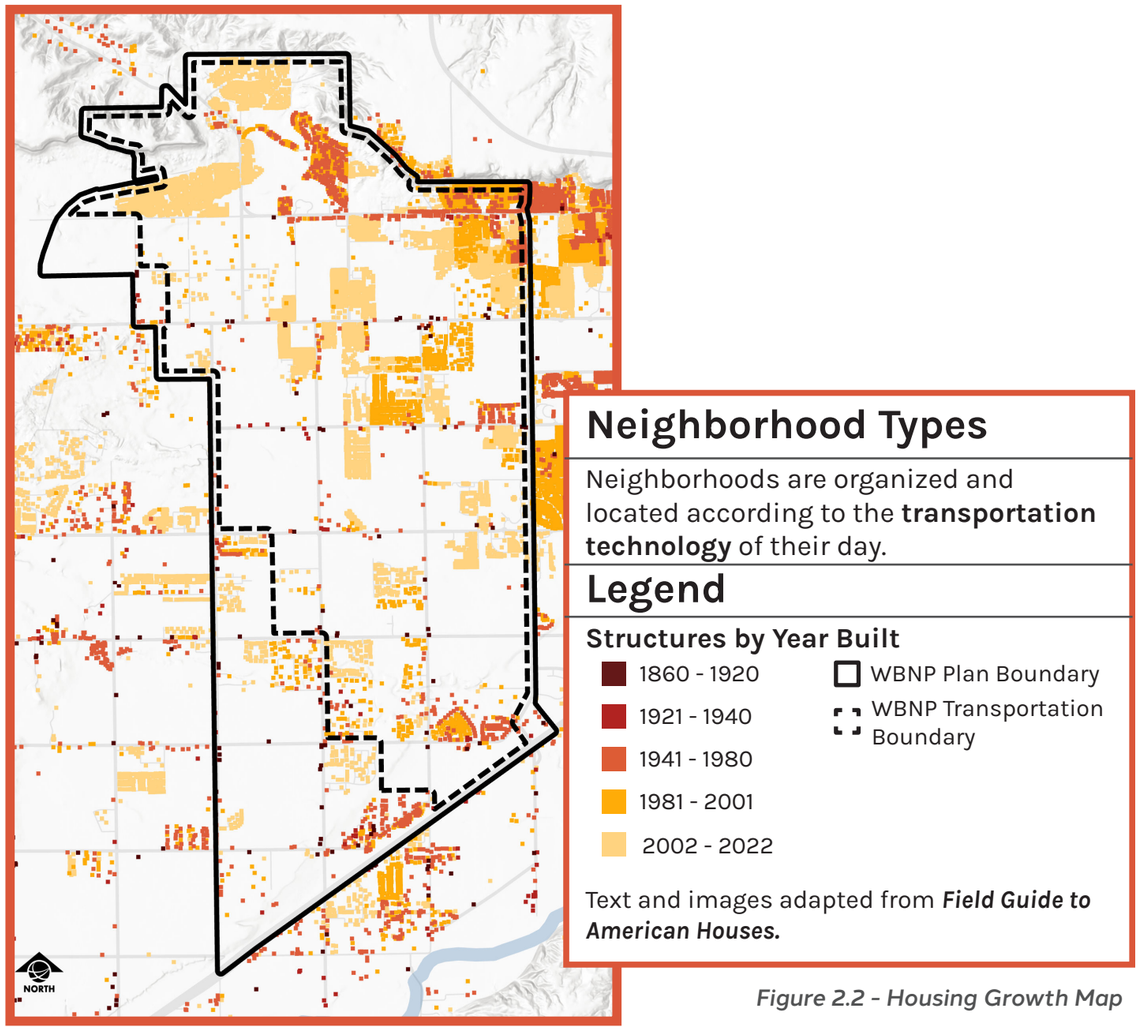


Figure 2.2 - Housing Growth Map

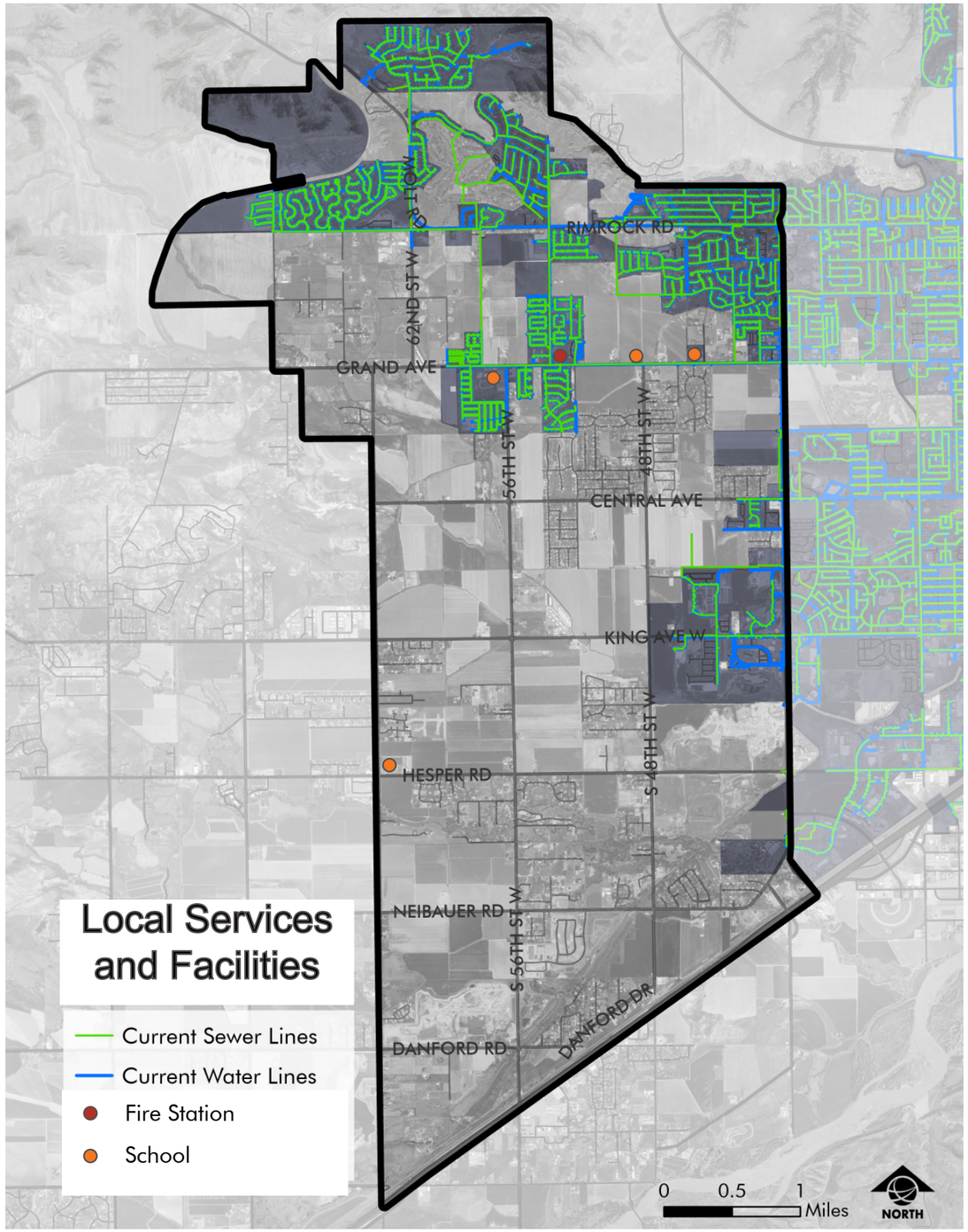


Figure 2.3 - Local Services Map

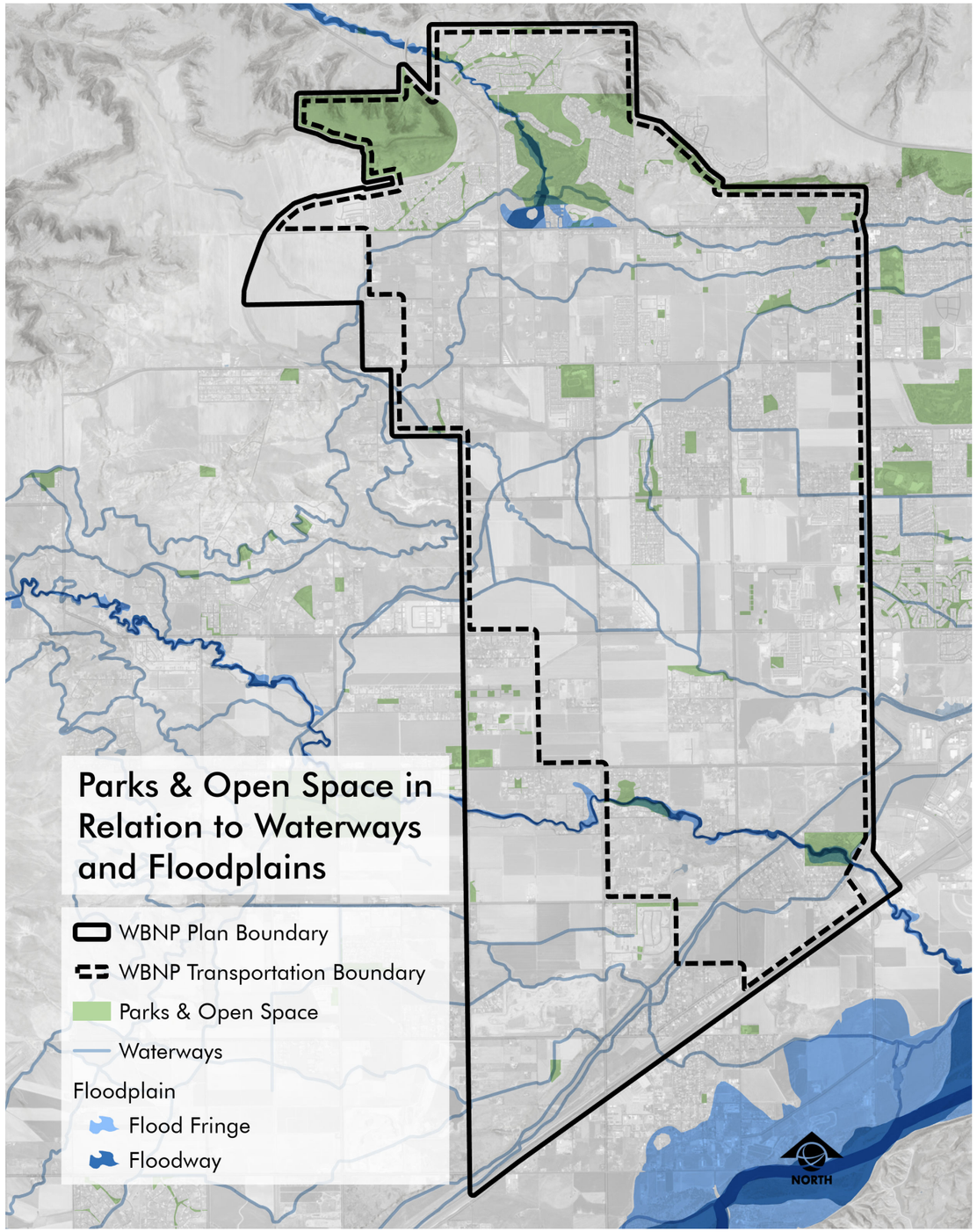


Figure 2.4 - Natural Environment Map

concentration of commercial activity, including retail uses, schools, and health care facilities. Additional development near the Zoo Drive interchange has increased the amount of retail square footage.

Land Use

Land use in the West Billings Plan Area has changed significantly since the adoption of the 2001 West Billings Plan. In 2003, agricultural use dominated the plan area, accounting for 56% of the land, while developed land comprised only 16%. In 2024, agricultural land use has decreased to 28% and developed land increasing to 36%. More specifically, in 2024, residential usage constitutes about 29% of total land use within the plan area, while commercial, mixed-use, and industrial uses make up about 2%, 2%, and 3% respectively.

Undeveloped land, excluding agriculture and public lands accounts for 20% of the total plan area, with about 3,000 acres remaining unused in the plan area as of 2024.

Natural Environment

The natural landscape of West Billings features several man-made and natural waterways, including Canyon Creek, Cove Creek, Big Ditch, High Ditch, Cove Ditch, Canyon Creek Ditch, and the BBWA Canal. 159 public parks provide area residents with access to 730 acres of wild and developed parklands for leisure and recreation.

The plan area also contains floodplains and about 160 acres of wetland, mostly along Canyon Creek, Cove Creek, and Hogan's Slough. These wetlands and riparian areas serve both as habitat for wildlife and as natural infrastructure, cleaning and absorbing water during floods and periods of high flow. Figure 2.4 on page 23 illustrates the location of parks and open space, waterways, and floodplain areas within the plan area.

Transportation

Land within the plan area is accessed by a 135-mile street network in which small local access streets flow to larger collectors, which connect to a one-mile-by-one-mile arterial grid. Within the Plan area, local access streets rarely connect from neighborhood to neighborhood or across arterials, which increases travel distances and requires most trips to include some travel on arterials. The southern boundary defined by Interstate 90. Notable principal arterials include Rimrock Road, Grand Avenue, Central Ave, King Avenue W, Hesper Road, Neibauer Road, and Danford Road for east-west travel, while 64th Street W, 62nd Street W, 56th Street W, 48th Street W, and Shiloh Road facilitate north-south travel.

Existing pedestrian and bike infrastructure in West Billings is inconsistent and disconnected within the Plan area. Sidewalks extend for a total of 64.5 miles within the plan area, yet only 32% of roads feature adjacent sidewalk infrastructure. In addition to sidewalks, there are 14.7 miles of paved multi-use trails in West Billings. There are currently no on-street bike lanes in the plan area.

Public transportation options in the West Billings area are notably limited, primarily confined to Shiloh Road, which delineates the eastern boundary of the plan area while also marking the westernmost extent of the bus network in Billings. Billings MET Transit provides services throughout the greater Billings area. Within the Plan area, the North Westend and King Avenue West routes serve Shiloh Road and the immediate vicinity, with a small segment of the King Avenue West route extending just west of Shiloh Road to 44th Street W. Between 2020 and 2024, there were a total of 239 reported crashes at intersections within the plan area, with crashes occurring primarily on Shiloh Rd, 48th St W, and 56th St W. Among these crashes, one incident was fatal at the intersection of 48th St W and King Ave in 2019, while four resulted in serious injuries. Figure 2.4 illustrates the existing street network, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, transit service, and planned transportation improvements within the plan area.

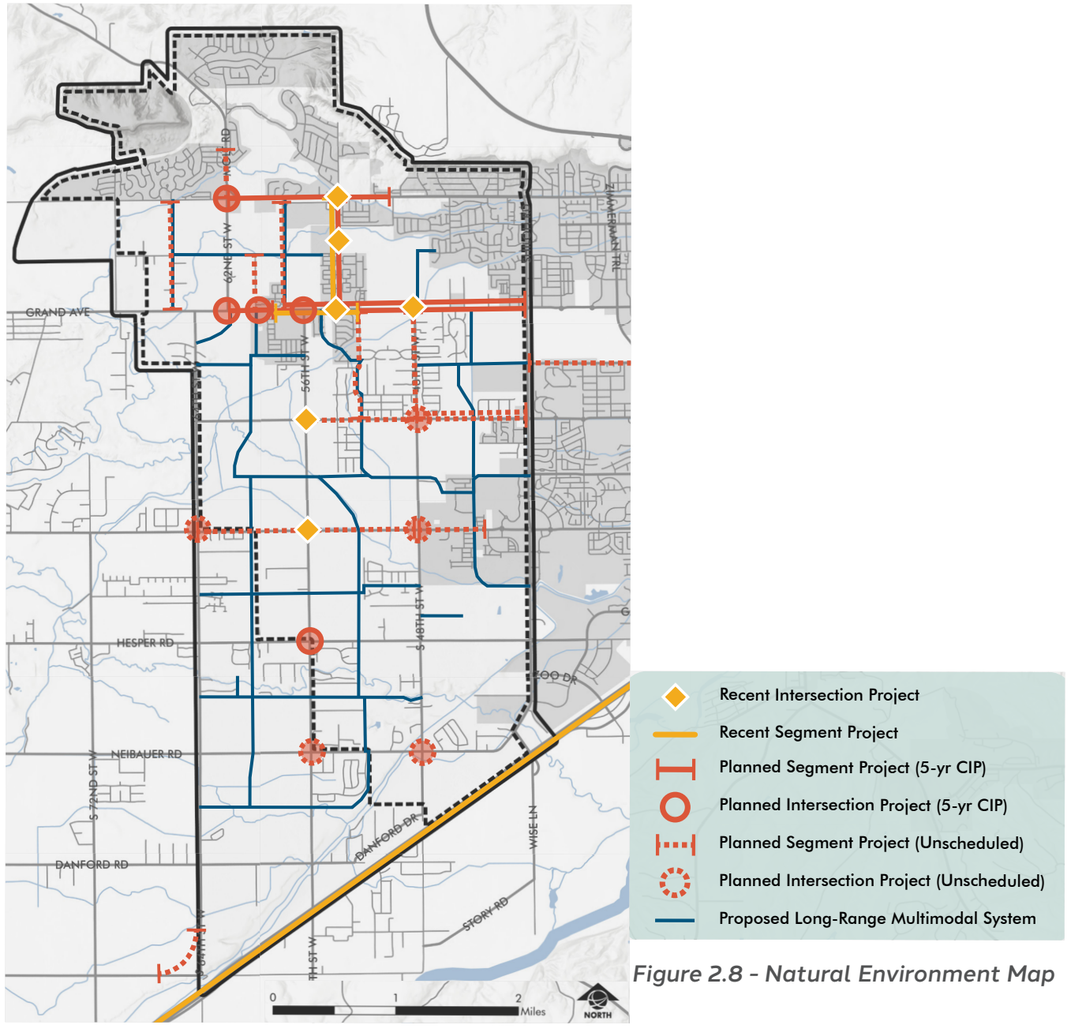


Figure 2.8 - Natural Environment Map

CHAPTER THREE
GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Chapter Three Contents

Guiding Principles Introduction

The West Billings Neighborhood Plan steering committee developed guiding principles to focus their work into four areas:

- Land Use
- Community Vitality
- Natural and Recreational Areas
- Transportation Network

This chapter outlines the Goals and Policies developed under those Guiding Principles, which are intended to steer development and planning activities going forward. These Goals and Policies reflect the results of community engagement, updating of the 2001 goals and policies, and existing conditions in the plan area.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES: Guiding principles are broad value statements that express the public vision for the future of the plan area. They are adaptations of the 2001 plan guiding principles.

GOALS: More specific than guiding principles, these statements identify a desired future state of the community. Goals are what this plan hopes to accomplish. they provide direction for decisions.

POLICIES: Policies are guidelines that help inform future policy

ACTIONS: Actions Implement the recommended policies. They are specific statements with a call to action to achieve the desired goals.

Land Use (LU)

Encourage a mix of residential, commercial, and employment uses that support the transition from rural to suburban to urban areas.

What we heard: Be thoughtful about development, connect transportation improvements with new development to ensure traffic impacts are minimized

- "Encourage unique small businesses"
- "Preserve our agricultural heritage"
- "Plan for areas that don't rely on private automobiles"
- "Need better coordination with the City, County and School District"

Housing

Goal LU – 1:

Grow responsibly by encouraging density and mixed-use development adjacent to existing infrastructure.

Policies:

- **Policy LU 1.1:** Use the Future Land Use Map to identify preferred growth areas.
  - **Action:** Adhere to minimum density standards specified by each land use category.
- **Policy LU 1.2:** Encourage infill development and new development adjacent to existing infrastructure.
  - **Action:** Review city infill and annexation policy for efficacy and revise if necessary.

Townhomes - Floberg Real Estate

- **Policy LU 1.3:** Zone land to accommodate projected population growth.
  - **Action:** Comply with the Montana Land Use Planning Act (MLUPA) by approving zone change requests that substantially comply with the Future Land Use Map (FLUM).

Goal LU – 2:

Plan for a variety of housing types at a variety of incomes.

Policies:

- **Policy LU 2.1:** Prioritize development of vibrant neighborhoods that offer a variety of housing types.
  - **Action:** Review Zoning to ensure Residential Zones allow for housing variation.

Goal LU – 3:

Identify transition areas between rural, suburban, and urban areas.

Policies:

- **Policy LU 3.1:** Develop a long-term plan for county subdivisions adjacent to city limits that would support annexation and connection to City services.
  - **Action:** Complete a MLUPA-compliant services study that includes analysis of providing service to county subdivisions in the event of water and sewer systems failure.
- **Policy LU 3.2:** Discourage leap-frog development to unincorporated areas where water and sewer services are unavailable. Leapfrog development occurs when development of new subdivisions occurs away from existing development and available. infrastructure.
  - **Action:** Review relevant city and county policy for efficacy in preventing leap-frog development.

Shiloh Commons - Google

Commercial Development

Goal LU-4:

Foster a pedestrian friendly environment for commercial areas

Policies:

- **Policy LU 4.1:** Coordinate sidewalk connectivity between commercial areas and adjacent residential neighborhoods.
    - **Action:** Review the city's master site plan review and regulatory requirement process for efficacy providing adequate pedestrian facilities in developments that do not go through subdivision.

Goal LU – 5:

Promote land uses that support Billings' key industries, encourage the diversification of the City's tax base, and enhance economic development through intentional infrastructure investments

Policies:

- **Policy LU 5.1:** Support development of Billings' and Yellowstone County's key industries: healthcare and health supply chain, retail trade, wholesale trade, tourism, hospitality, and professional services, as identified by Big Sky Economic Development and SB Friedman, an economic development consulting firm.
    - **Action:** Comply with MLUPA by reviewing the growth policy every five years for its efficacy in providing sufficient land for commercial development.

Agricultural Lands

Goal LU – 6:

Preserve agricultural lands in the County.

Policies:

- **Policy LU 6.1:** Identify key agricultural lands on the Future Land Use Map.
    - **Action:** Investigate adoption of county-wide zoning to preserve agricultural land uses and prevent creation of nuisance land uses adjacent to existing county residential.
- **Policy LU 6.2:** Encourage cluster subdivisions that conserve open space and agricultural lands.
    - **Action:** Consider changes to county subdivision regulations that will make cluster development more competative with typical county subdivisions.

Agriculture - MSU

Harvest Festival - KTVQ

Community Vitality (CV)

Create neighborhood centers/ nodes with integrated uses that are distinctive and contribute to increasing the community's vitality.

What we heard: Focus on improving safety, develop quality commercial areas that serve all residents

- "The more we focus on the development of family-friendly commercial and public land, the better for everyone."
- "Small commercial/retail businesses should be allowed in neighborhoods as opposed to pushing all commercial activity to major intersections."
- "Safety in everything is and should be the City's number one priority."

Activity Centers

Goal CV – 1:

Encourage the development of activity centers throughout the neighborhood

Policies:

- **Policy CV 1.1:** Identify and develop neighborhood centers/nodes within the community.
    - **Action:** Amend planned neighborhood development (PND), zoning, subdivision regulations and department policies to support and incentivize neighborhood-scale commercial.
    - **Action:** Include employment land uses in neighborhood centers to shorten commute times and reduce the impact of development on the transportation system.
- **Policy CV 1.2:** Strip commercial development is discouraged and should be prohibited through zoning regulations and city policy.
    - **Action:** Review existing regulations and policies for efficacy in reaching this goal.
- **Policy CV 1.3:** As appropriate in residential areas, neighborhood parks can be used as neighborhood centers/ nodes so long as certain amenities are provided.
    - **Action:** Work with the City Parks Department to develop a list of park amenities that would serve as a neighborhood center/ node. Possible examples include a community center or branch library at Cottonwood Park.

Mixed Use Development

Goal CV – 2:

Enhance the neighborhood by encouraging mixed-use developments

Policies:

- **Policy CV 2.1:** Encourage development of complete neighborhoods that integrate neighborhood centers/ nodes into the community.
  - **Action:** Amend PND, zoning, subdivision regulations and department policies to support and incentivize neighborhood-scale commercial.
- **Policy CV 2.2:** Create opportunities for mixed-use developments where supported by infrastructure.
  - **Action:** Survey local developers regarding barriers to mixed use development and multifamily residential development on commercially-zoned infill properties.

Billings PD - MFPE

Local Services and Facilities

Goal CV – 3:

Support public safety services and infrastructure to ensure that West Billings continues to be a safe, welcoming community that serves all residents.

- **Policy CV 3.1:** Improve community understanding of the cost to serve new developemnt in West Billings.
  - **Action:** Complete a MLUPA-compliant services study to ensure fiscal sustainability of providing services to new development on the West End.
  - **Action:** Complete a site selection analysis and cost feasibility study for constructing additional additional fire and police stations in the plan area.

Natural and Recreational Areas (NR)

Build a safe, healthy, and adaptable community that provides quality parks and green spaces while protecting floodways and natural areas.

What we heard: Build a well-connected, planned network of trails, multi-use paths, parks and natural spaces that are easily accessible by all West End residents.

- "Trails linking the shops to neighborhoods"
- "A large park, like Pioneer Park, west of Shiloh."
- "Although Phipps is fantastic, this large section of Billings needs more public gathering spaces. Development of Cottonwood park or other natural areas would add to the character of the community."
- "The development of new trails has been wonderful! It is one of the things that we love about Billings. We don't have the best trail system in Montana, but it is improving all the time."

Natural Resources

Goal NR – 1:

Preserve and protect floodways, waterways, and scenic resources.

Policies:

- **Policy NR 1.1:** Identify and preserve natural areas by limiting development within these areas.
  - **Action:** Explore potential for limiting development in rock fall hazard areas and popular recreational areas along the rims.
  - **Action:** Follow FEMA FIRM panels and agency regulations.

The Back Nine - MTB Project

Water Conservation

Goal NR – 2:

Encourage water conservation to manage water resources.

Policies:

- **Policy NR 2.1:** Encourage water conservation through development of landscape irrigation standards and best practices.
  - **Action:** Engage the City's Energy and Conservation Commission to review existing landscape irrigation standards against the recently updated standards of other jurisdictions for potential changes.
- **Policy NR 2.2:** Align review of the future land use map with the City of Billings Water Master Plan to ensure that projected growth can be served with municipal water supplies.
  - **Action:** Analyze natural resources, environment and hazards in the Billings 2045 plan as they apply to the West Billings Plan area.

Parks and Trails

Goal NR – 3:

Connect neighborhoods with interconnecting parks and trails.

Policies:

- **Policy NR 3.1:** Create a linked network of green spaces


Trails - Billings Gazette

- **Action:** Continue to review development applications for compliance with the 2023 LRTP.

- **Policy NR 3.2:** Support ongoing individual park and citywide park master planning including updating the 2017 City Park Master Plan, and addressing maintenance costs.
  - **Action:** Complete a MLUPA-compliant services study to determine what kind of development will support the level of park service desired by area residents.

Transportation Network (TR)

Create a balanced and connected transportation network that supports multiple modes of travel while supporting the daily needs of residents.

What we heard: Coordinate transportation improvements with new development, prioritize safety for pedestrians, particularly children walking to school, increase the amount of protected bikeways and walking trails. Discourage speeding and reduce speed limits to improve safety

- "The focus needs to be on the communities being built and making it easier to walk, bike and roll around."
- "West Billings needs to focus on the expansion of roadways and traffic control. Main corridors should have speed reduced, additional traffic control and turn lanes."
- "Anything that can be done to make Billings less of the personal car-dependent city it is now would be great."
- "The City must develop a safer and more pedestrian-friendly transportation plan"

Multi-Modal Development

Goal TR – 1:

Provide a complete pedestrian transport network

Policies:

- **Policy TR 1.1:** Continue to require pedestrian infrastructure with all new developments
  - **Action:** Review the city's master site plan review process for efficacy providing adequate pedestrian facilities in developments that do not go through subdivision.
- **Policy TR 1.2:** Increase active transportation mode share for school-age children.
  - **Action:** Implement the recommendations of the Safe Routes to School Plans, Phase 1 and 2.
- **Policy TR 1.3:** Identify trail corridors and networks that can supplement the pedestrian network, help connect neighborhoods to schools, parks, and future transit access.
  - **Action:** Implement the trail-related recommendations of the 2023 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and the 2017 Billings Area Bikeway + Trails Master Plan Update.

Goal TR – 2:

Encourage development of bicycle infrastructure

- **Policy TR 2.1:** Continue to build out the network of bicycle facilities.
  - **Action:** Continue to implement and update the recommendations from the 2017 Billings Area Bikeway + Trails Master Plan Update.

Street Network

Goal TR – 3:

Provide an interconnected street network

Traffic and growth-related pressures were identified as top concerns expressed throughout the public engagement as part of this Plan Update,

Policies:

- **Policy TR 3.1:** Require connection of new developments with adjacent developments and vacant or agricultural land that will be developed in the future.
  - **Action:** Enforce requirements of Subdivision Regulations.
- **Policy TR 3.2:** Develop strategies to mitigate traffic congestion during peak periods
  - **Action:** Implement street network improvements in alignment with the 2023 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).


MET Transit - KTVQ

Transit Development

Goal TR-4:

Encourage development at densities that support transit

Policies:

- **Policy TR 4.1:** Seek opportunities to expand transit service to and within West Billings over time
  - **Action:** Adhere to minimum density standards specified by each land use category to ensure that urban development supports transit service.

CHAPTER FOUR
FUTURE LAND USE

Chapter Four Contents

Introduction

The Montana Land Use Planning Act (MLUPA) of 2023 generally requires Montana cities to coordinate and streamline planning and development review processes. MLUPA also requires cities to create and adopt a Future Land Use Map (FLUM). The Future Land Use Map places Future Land Use Categories throughout the plan area to formalize the public's vision for their community's future, create a useful tool for decision-makers in guiding development, and for landowners as they plan private investment.

The FLUM does not change existing zoning and becomes relevant only when considering a change from existing zoning.

Legal Requirements of the Future Land Use Map

The Montana Land Use Planning Act (MLUPA) of 2023 sets specific requirements for cities as to how they plan for future growth. This includes projection of future population growth and housing demand among other considerations. The details of this Plan's compliance with MLUPA can be found in Chapter 7.

Future Land Use Categories

The FLUM becomes relevant to a landowner when they decide to change their property's zoning. At that time, the landowner can reference the FLUM to find what Future Land Use Category their property is in. That Category provides a "menu" of zones they can change to through the administrative process created under MLUPA. The landowner may also choose a zone outside of their property's Category by going through the same public application process that existed before the passage of MLUPA.

The following pages illustrate the different land use categories.

Rural Residential/Agricultural (RRA)

Productive Ag Land - City Staff

Rural Residential - City Staff

Summary:

Agricultural production lands and rural residential uses on lots larger than one acre that include agricultural uses and may conserve the agricultural heritage of the Yellowstone Valley. Due to the low-density nature of development, public water and wastewater utilities are generally not available. These districts are not in the City Limits.

Primary Land Uses:

Agriculture / Rural Residential

Building Types:

Single-Family and Duplex Dwellings / Manufactured Homes / Accessory Dwellings Units

Density:

Max 1 unit per acre (accessory dwelling units are not primary units)

Mobility & Street Network:

The street grid is more spread out, typically following section lines with private vehicles as the primary mode of transportation. Local streets are generally gravel.

County Neighborhoods (CN)

Black Rock Estates - Google

Cloverleaf Meadows - Google

Summary:

Large lot rural neighborhoods not developed in the city with limited access to public water and wastewater utility systems.

Primary Land Uses:

Suburban Residential

Building Types:

Single-Family and Duplex Dwellings / Manufactured Homes / Accessory Dwellings Units

Density:

0.33 - 2.99 units per acre (accessory dwelling units are not primary units)

Mobility & Street Network:

Neighborhood streets connected to collectors or arterials, some of which may be paved. Future county neighborhoods should be connected to existing neighborhoods.

Suburban Residential (SR)

Yellowstone Country Club - Google

Vintage Estates - Google

Summary:

Existing single family residential with structures of similar setback and maximum heights with access to public water and sewer.

Primary Land Uses:

Suburban Residential

Building Types:

Single-Family / Accessory Dwellings Units

Density:

4 - 7 units per acre (accessory dwelling units are not primary units)

Mobility & Street Network:

Paved neighborhood streets connected to collectors or arterials. These neighborhoods may have access to nearby community ammenities including parks, schools, and neighborhood commercial areas.

Urban Residential Limited (URL)

Country Club Estates - Google

Ironwood- Google

Summary:

Suburban residential with structures of similar setback and maximum heights, with access to public water and sewer.

Primary Land Uses:

Suburban Residential

Building Types:

Single-Family and Duplex Dwellings / Accessory Dwellings Units

Density:

3.5 - 7 units per acre (accessory dwelling units are not primary units)

Mobility & Street Network:

Paved neighborhood streets connected to collectors or arterials. Future neighborhoods should be connected to existing neighborhoods. These neighborhoods may have access to nearby community ammenities including parks, schools, and neighborhood commercial areas.

Urban Residential (UR)

Trails West - Google

Josephine Crossing - Google

Summary:

Mixed density neighborhoods including some neighborhood commercial and housing choices from single family to townhome (4 units/structure). Public water and sewer is provided.

Primary Land Uses:

Residential / Neighborhood Services / Small Offices

Building Types:

Single-Family to Four-Family Dwellings / Accessory Dwellings Units / Neighborhood Services

Density:

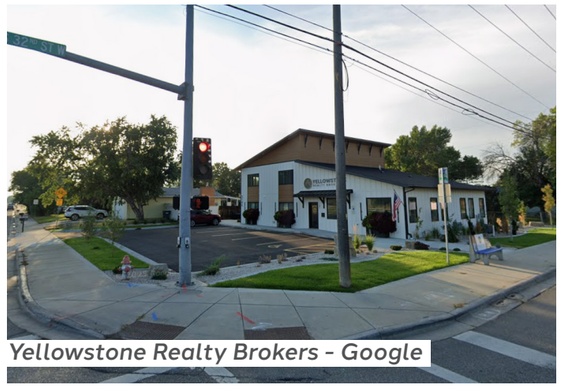
6 - 16 units per acre (accessory dwelling units are not primary units)

Mobility & Street Network:

Development is organized to support a walkable environment. Streets have adjacent sidewalks and shared use pathways to connect neighborhoods to community amenities and nearby commercial areas.

Urban Residential Mixed (URM)

Legacy Homes - Google



Yellowstone Realty Brokers - Google

Summary:

Higher density is adjacent to mixed use with corridor services such as smaller retail businesses. Highly walkable neighborhood with possible service from transit. Development should focus on active uses and providing a safe and comfortable environment for people, both residents and visitors.

Primary Land Uses:

Residential / Commercial / Offices / Public Spaces

Building Types:

Single-Family to Eight-Family Dwellings / Accessory Dwelling Units / Commercial Mixed-Use / Offices / Retail

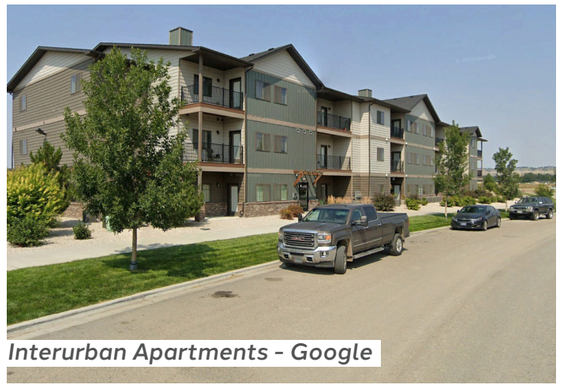
Density:

12 - 24 units per acre (accessory dwelling units are not primary units)

Mobility & Street Network:

Development is organized to support a walkable environment. Streets have adjacent sidewalks and shared use pathways to connect community amenities and commercial areas with walkable blocks.

Urban Node (UN)



Interurban Apartments - Google

Shiloh Commons - Google

Summary:

Higher-intensity, larger-scale places where destinations like shopping and services are walkable but primarily accessed by vehicles.

Primary Land Uses:

High-Density Residential / Commercial / Mixed-Use / Shopping Centers / Public Spaces / Offices

Building Types:

Apartments / Townhomes / Multi-Tenant Retail / Offices / Commercial with or without Drive-Through Services

Density:

16+ units per acre

Mobility & Street Network:

Arterials, collectors, local commercial streets supported by transit that are adjacent to sidewalks and shared use pathways.

Commercial Mixed (CM)

Commercial Uses - Google


Heavy Commercial Use - Google

Summary:

Standalone commercial areas either in the city or county sometimes with adjacent higher-density residential. Could include areas in the county for contractor shops, storage, warehousing, sometimes adjacent to Urban Nodes or Urban Residential Mixed.

Primary Land Uses:

Higher-Intensity Commercial Uses / High-Density Residential

Building Types:

Higher-Intensity Commercial Uses / High-Density Residential

Density:

16+ units per acre

Mobility & Street Network:

Arterials, collectors, and local commercial streets.

Downtown Urban (DU)


Downtown Billings - Google


Minnesota Ave. - Google

Summary:

High density residential, multi-tenant and multi-story buildings, buildings are built to the street, onsite parking may or may not be provided. Designed to be highly walkable.

Primary Land Uses:

High-Density Residential / Multi-Story Offices / Retail / Historic Buildings / Public Spaces

Building Types:

Multi-Story Buildings / Buildings are Built to the Street Front with or without Off-Street Parking

Density:

16+ units per acre

Mobility & Street Network:

Local streets that are adjacent to wider sidewalks that accommodate commercial activities and larger volumes of people.

Employment and Industrial (EI)

Pacific Supply - Google

Johnstone Supply - Google

Summary:

Areas of employment that provide a range of jobs in sectors such as production, manufacturing, research, distribution or extraction which may be incompatible with residential uses.

Primary Land Uses:

Warehousing / Hotels / Larger-Scale Buildings Providing Employment

Building Types:

Multi-Story or Multi-Acre Structures to Accommodate Employment

Density:

Residential units are unlikely in these areas, but are allowed in Heavy Commercial Areas.

Mobility & Street Network:

Sites are well connected to the arterial and collector street network and provide connections to interstate transportation networks (air, train, highway, etc.).

Open Space (OS)

Phipps Park - Google


Shiloh Conservation Area - Google

Summary:

Regional public parks, recreation areas, and natural or sensitive areas which provide a variety of recreational opportunities.

Primary Land Uses:

Regional and Neighborhood Recreational Facilities / Passive and Active Open Spaces

Building Types:

Facilities Associated with Public Use and Recreation

Density:

N/A

Mobility & Street Network:

Parks and recreation sites will be well connected to adjacent neighborhoods.

Public Institution (PI)

Ben Steele Middle School - Google

King of Glory Church - Google

Summary:

Public, civic, and institutional uses located within or on the edge of neighborhoods.

Primary Land Uses:

Schools / Churches / Hospitals / Public Facilities (Non-Recreational)

Building Types:

A Variety of Building Types Varying in Nature of Use and Sizing

Density:

Density associated with insitutional use.

Mobility & Street Network:

Typically located on collectors or arterials. Occassionally located within neighborhoods.

Alignment with Zoning

Future Land Use Categories incorporate existing city and county zoning by grouping together zones of similar scale, use, and intensity. In keeping with the Planned Neighborhood Development (PND) provisions of city zoning regulation, categories include a requirement that a development's average gross density falls within a specified range. This both allows for the mix of zones that the PND requires and ensures that developments meet the intent of the category and FLUM. Each category is described in terms of its primary zones, character, target densities for residential uses, building types, mobility network, open spaces, and performance metrics.

Future Land Use Map (FLUM)

The Montana Land Use Planning Act (MLUPA) requires that cities adopt a Future Land Use Map (FLUM), something Billings has never done before. To answer the question of how West Billings should grow over the next 20 years, the project team reviewed existing plan documents and undertook a public engagement process seeking the community's vision for the future of the plan area, which was used to update the themes of the 2001 West Billings Plan. A suitability analysis (described in Appendix B) of geographic factors known to drive development was also completed to inform the FLUM. This information was then used to create a map of future land uses, illustrated in Figure 4.1 to the following page, that accommodates anticipated population growth and housing demand, among other elements, over the next 20 years.

Statement of Intent

The future land use map gives Billings and Yellowstone County guidance as to what land is likely to develop first, what land has better access and supports more intense uses, and what land will be more cost effective to serve with municipal services like police, water and sewer.

Billings and Yellowstone County zoning and subdivision regulations have both been recently updated; zoning in 2021, and subdivision regulations in 2024. This plan is intended to comply with and reflect those updates as well as other local regulations like the limits of annexation policy and map. The future land use map developed as part of the overall Billings 2045 Plan will incorporate this map and also follow with existing local land use regulations.

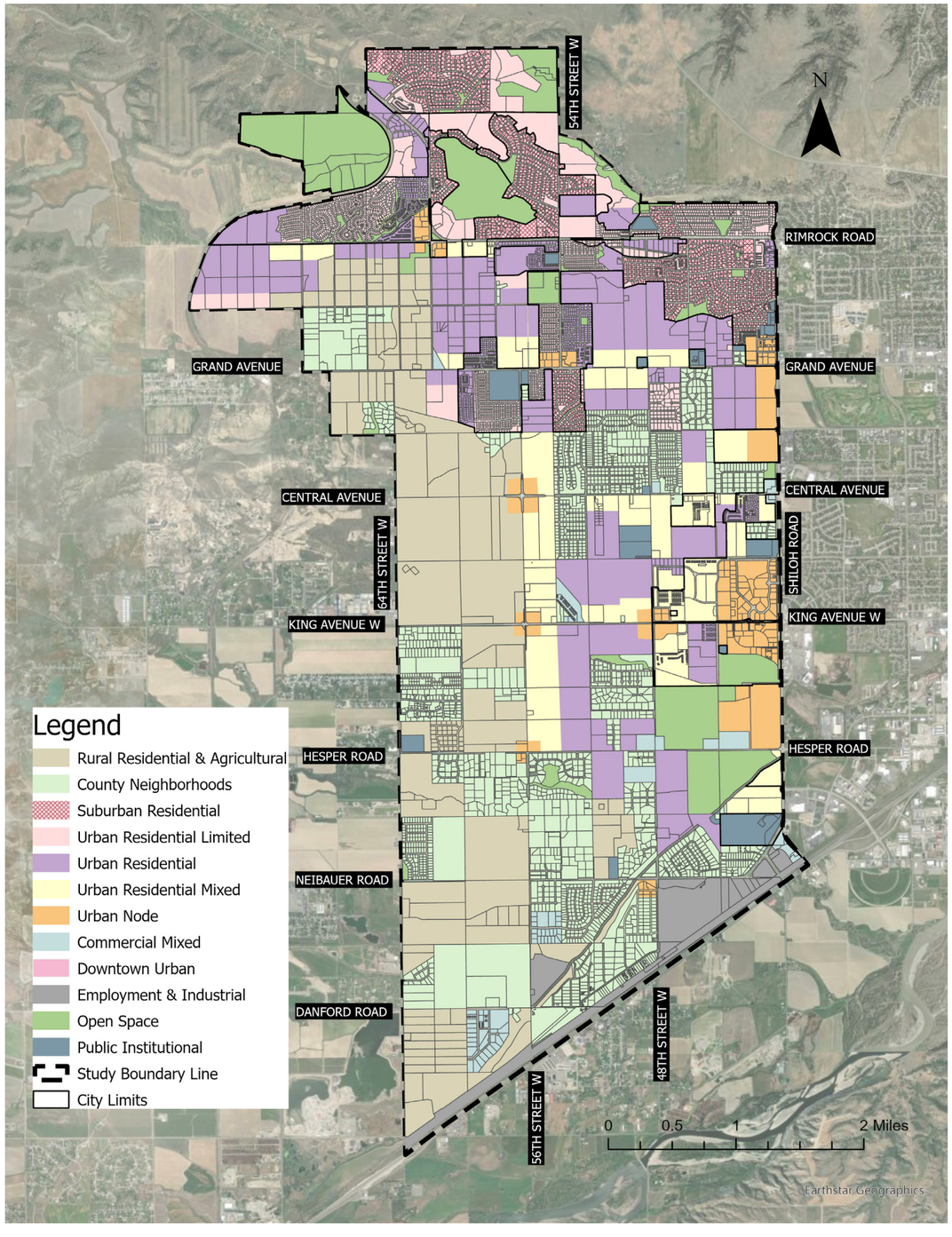


Figure 4.1 Future Land Use Map

Montana Land Use Planning Act Compliance

The Montana Land Use Planning Act (MLUPA) places many requirements on this plan, known as a Future Land Use Plan, and the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) it creates. Details of all aspects of this plan's MLUPA compliance are provided in Chapter 7. Aspects of the FLUM's compliance with MLUPA which have not already been addressed in this chapter are provided here.

Population Projections

Montana Code Annotated (MCA) Section 76-25-213 (4) requires that the FLUM identify the following:

(c) geographic distribution of future land uses in the jurisdiction, anticipated over a 20-year planning period that specifically demonstrate:

i) adequate land to support the projected population in all land use types in areas where local services can be adequately and cost-effectively provided for that population;

Historically, public investment in utility and transportation facilities combined with ample supply of developable land has driven rapid population growth in West Billings as compared to other areas of Yellowstone County. From 2000 to 2020, a total of 4,490 housing units were constructed in the plan area. This accounts for approximately 30 percent of all housing units constructed within Yellowstone County during that period. Population projections for this plan assumed that the West Billings plan area would continue to receive a similar share of county population growth over the next 20 years.

Consistent with the Montana Land Use Planning Act, population projections were estimated over the next 20 years (2045) based on data resources including the Billings Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), the US Census, and the Montana Department of Commerce Regional Economic Models Inc (REMI). For consistency among planning documents, data from the LRTP was used to create projections within the West Billings plan area. Below are the growth projections for the plan area.

Commercial Land Use Demand Projection

In order to meet the project guiding principles informed by the project's public input, the project team included varying scales of commercial zones in several future land use categories. Categories that allow commercial zones include; Urban Residential (UR), Urban Residential Mixed (URM), Urban Node (UN), Commercial Mixed (CM), and Employment and Industrial (EI).

The most current available data from Yellowstone County indicates that 760 acres within the plan area are under commercial use. Applying a compound annual growth rate similar to the plan area's projected population growth yields a projected demand of 1,400 acres. The FLUM provides 4,076 acres of future land use categories that allow commercial use.

Residential Land Use Demand Projection

Montana Code Annotated (MCA) Section 76-25-213 (4)(c) requires that the FLUM identify the following:

(ii) adequate sites to accommodate the type and supply of housing needed for the projected population; and

After performing an analysis of existing housing stock including factors like year built and residential density the project team cross referenced the plan area's population growth projections, as shown in Table 4.1 below, average houshold size, and percent of Yellowstone County residents who experience housing burden to determine the 20-year projected housing demand and percent of that projected demand which will need to be affordable to Billings area residents.

Because 29% of Yellowstone County residents experience housing burden, the project team determined that, to meet the above MLUPA requirement, 29% of the projected housing demand should be met by providing land in the FLUM categorized to provide "missing middle" housing, which tends to be more affordable than lower-density, typically single-family zones or higher-density apartment buildings. FLUM categories considered likely to provide missing middle housing include Urban Residential (UR) and Urban Residential Mixed (URM). To determine the area required to meet projected residential land use demand, the project team analyzed existing development in the plan area according to their zoning and the resulting residential density.

Population Projections				
	2000	**2021**	**2045 Projected**	**2020-2045 Change**
Study Area	**6,226**	**16,182**	**30,770**	**14,588**
MPO Planning Area	112092	142,358	190,986	48,628
Housing Needs				
	2000	**2021**	**2045 Projected**	**2020-2045 Change**
Study Area	**2,155**	**6,644**	**13,444**	**6,800**
MPO Planning Area		58,815	78,814	20,000
*Assumes a 30% capture rate of population growth and new housing units				

Table 4.1 Population Projections

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CHAPTER FIVE
MULTIMODAL PLAN UPDATE

Chapter Five Contents

Introduction

The Billings Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is responsible for coordinating federally required transportation planning for the urbanized area of Billings, ensuring that roadway, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian needs are addressed through a cooperative, continuing, and comprehensive planning process. As part of this effort, understanding growth trends and their effects on the transportation network is essential.

Billings is the largest municipality in Montana, with a 2024 population estimate of 121,483 according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The Billings MPO 2023 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) projected that West Billings alone could grow by more than 13,000 residents by 2045. This area includes property within the city limits and outside the city limits. The updated Future Land Use Map (FLUM), discussed in previous chapters, illustrates how this growth is anticipated to occur.

As West Billings expands, traffic volumes will increase and demand for pedestrian and bicycle facilities will intensify. These changes will directly affect the safety and operation of vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian systems throughout the area.

This chapter provides an update to the 2016 West End Multi-Modal Plan and offers multimodal transportation recommendations to support the safety, efficiency, and overall functionality of the West Billings transportation network.

This will include:

1. Analysis of existing vehicle and active transportation conditions within the study area;
2. Estimated future trip generation for West Billings based on projected growth and the updated FLUM;
3. A review of planned and committed transportation projects within the study area;
4. Identification of future deficiencies in vehicular and active transportation facilities based on the anticipated buildout of the area;
5. Evaluation of potential mitigation strategies to address these deficiencies; and
6. Recommendations to the City of Billings and Yellowstone County to resolve identified issues.

Existing Conditions

While the primary purpose of this study is to identify and prioritize potential project needs over a 20-year horizon, evaluating existing conditions is essential to establish a clear baseline for understanding future growth and demand. The following sections summarize Sanbell's assessment of current operational and safety conditions for all modes of travel.

Streets & Intersections

The following paragraphs present background information on the major streets and intersections within the study area. These descriptions include physical characteristics, speed limits, traffic control features, and roadway classifications, all of which help explain traffic demand and the composition of traffic using these facilities.

Streets

A series of streets transects this area of Billings and Yellowstone County, generally laid out on a standard north-south-east-west grid. Those streets have a variety of roles, typically defined by their Functional Classifications, in the transportation of people and goods throughout the area. Functional Classification is the process by which streets and highways are grouped into classes according to the character of the traffic service that they are intended to provide. The basic system generally includes three categories: 1.) Arterials; 2.) Collectors; and 3.) Local Streets. Arterials are intended to provide a high level of mobility with limited local access. At the other end of the spectrum, Local Streets are designed to focus on providing access with limited regional mobility. Collectors typically fall somewhere in the middle, aiming at a balance between mobility and access.

Most jurisdictions further expand upon this system by adding Major (Principal) and Minor designations to the Arterial and sometimes Collector categories. Interstate is also often a separate classification category. The MPO utilizes the designations of Interstate, Principal Arterial, Minor Arterial, Collector, and Local Street to define streets and highways in the urbanized area of Yellowstone County. The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) uses the categories of Interstate Principal Arterial, Other Principal Arterial, Minor Arterial, Major Collector, Minor Collector, Local, and Alley to classify roadways. Table 5.1 lists all non-local streets within the study area, with functional classifications provided based on both systems where applicable.

Yellowstone County Ordinance 07-107 establishes restrictions on truck traffic along designated County roads. The ordinance prohibits trucks—defined as vehicles with a combined gross vehicle weight of 16,000 pounds or more—from using restricted roads except when making local deliveries. Businesses located on restricted roads must route trucks along the shortest path to an unrestricted roadway. Within the West Billings Neighborhood Plan study area, most arterial streets are restricted, with the exceptions of Rimrock Road, Grand Avenue, King Avenue West, 56th Street West, and a portion of 64th St. W. Table 5.1 identifies these restrictions for each roadway.

With respect to the physical environment, roadway width (including lane and shoulder widths) and vehicle speeds are the two most significant factors influencing multimodal mobility in the study area. The Project Team inventoried these characteristics, and the results are summarized in Table 5.1. As shown, most street segments within the study area have posted speed limits of 45 mph or higher. When paired with narrow travel lanes and shoulders, these higher speeds create conditions that are generally uninviting—and often uncomfortable—for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Table 5.1: Study Area Arterial and Collector Street Characteristics

Street	Functional Classification		Truck Traffic Restriction	Typical Street Widths (ft)		Speed Limit (mph)
	MPO	MDT		Travel Lanes	Shoulders	
Rimrock Road	Principal Arterial/Collector[1]	Minor Arterial/Local[2]	Unrestricted	11.0 - 11.5	0.5 - 2.5	55 / 45[8]
Grand Avenue	Principal Arterial	Minor Collector/Major Collector[3]	Unrestricted	11.0 - 12.0	1.0 - 7.0	50 / 45 / 35[9]
Central Avenue	Principal Arterial	Minor Collector/Major Collector[4]	Restricted	11.0	0.5 - 1.0	50 / 45[10]
King Avenue	Principal Arterial	Major Collector	Unrestricted	11.5 - 12.0	0.5 - 1.0	60
Hesper Road	Principal Arterial	Local	Restricted	11.0	0.5 - 1.0	50 / 45 / 35 / 15[11]
Neibauer Road	Principal Arterial	Minor Collector/Major Collector[5]	Restricted	10.5 - 11.5	0.5 - 1.0	50 / 45[12]
64th Street West	Principal Arterial	Minor Collector/Local[6]	Unrestricted/Restricted[7]	10.5 - 11.0	1.0 - 2.5	50 / 35 / 15[13]
62nd Street West	Principal Arterial	Major Collector	Restricted	10.5 - 11.0	0.5 - 1.0	45
56th Street West	Principal Arterial	Minor Collector	Unrestricted	11.0	0.5 - 1.0	35 / 50[13]
54th Street West	Minor Arterial	Local	Unrestricted	11.0	0.5 - 1.0	45
48th Street West	Principal Arterial	Local	Restricted	10.0 - 11.0	0.5 - 1.0	35 / 45 / 50[14]
46th Street West	Collector	Local	Unrestricted	18.0	0.5 - 1.0	30

[1] Principal Arterial - 46th Street West to 62nd Street West / Collector - 62nd Street West to 70th Street West

[2] Minor Arterial - 46th Street West to 62nd Street West / Local - 62nd Street West to 70th Street West

[3] Major Collector - 48th Street West to 62nd Street West / Minor Collector - 62nd Street West to 64th Street West

[4] Major Collector - 48th Street West to 32nd Street West / Minor Collector - 32nd Street West to 64th Street West

[5] Major Collector - Autumn Lane to 48th Street West / Minor Collector - 48th Street West to 56th Street West

[6] Minor Collector - Grand Avenue to King Avenue / Local - King Avenue to Neibauer Road

[7] Unrestricted - Grand Avenue to King Avenue / Restricted - King Avenue to Neibauer Road

[8] 55 mph - 70th Street West to 54th Street West / 45 mph - 54th Street West to 46th Street West

[9] 50 mph - west of 64th Street West / 45 mph - 64th Street West to Widerness Drive / 35 mph - Wilderness Drive to 48th Street West

[10] 50 mph - west of 48th Street West / 45 mph - east of 48th Street West

[11] 50 mph - west of South 68th Street West and from Arthur Avenue to 48th Street West / 45 mph - east of 48th Street West / 35 mph - from South 59th Street West to Arthur Avenue and from Cherry Birch Lane to South 68th Street West/ 15 mph from Arthur Avenue to Cherry Birch Lane

[12] 50 mph - 56th Street West to 48th Street West / 45 mph - 48th Street West to Autumn Lane

[13] 50 mph - south of Peace Pipe Drive and North of Amen Corner Lane / 35 mph - Peace Pipe Drive to Hesper Road and from Eler Grove School north parking lot acces to Amen Corner Lane / 15 mph - from Hesper Road to Eler Grove School north parking lot acces

[14] 35 mph - Grand Avenue to Broadwater Avenue / 50 mph - Broadwater Avenue to Neibauer Road

[15] 35 mph - Grand Avenue to Broadwater Avenue / 45 mph - Broadwater Avenue to Central Avenue / 50 mph - Central Avenue to Neibauer Road

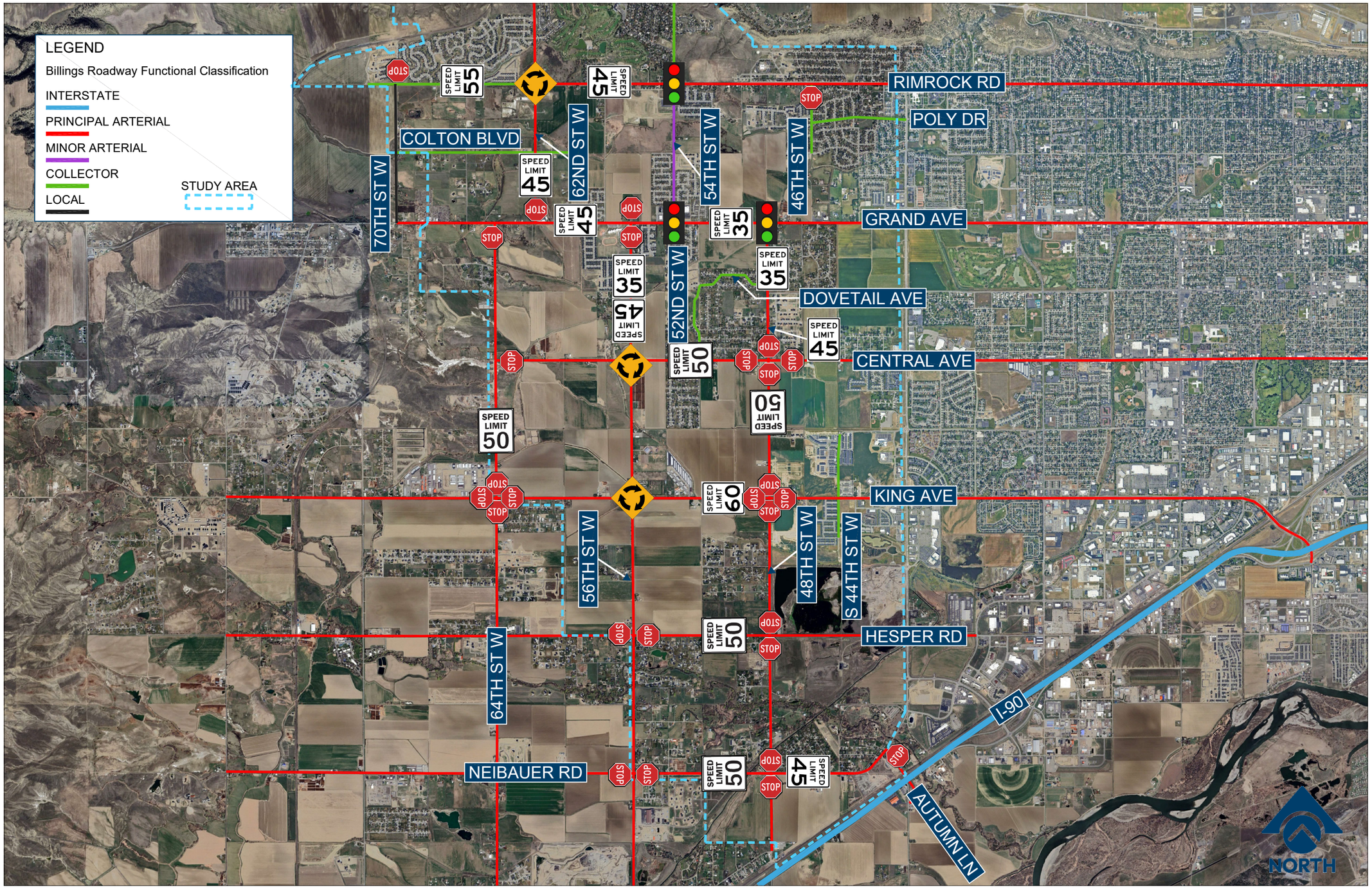


Figure 5.1 Streets and Intersection Characteristics

Figure 5.1 illustrates the City of Billings (MPO) street classifications, posted speed limits on study-area roadways, and the traffic control present at each study intersection.

Intersections

Twenty intersections within the study area were identified as key locations based on existing or anticipated traffic demand. These intersections are shown in Figure 5.2. The intersections in this review include:

- Central Avenue/56th Street West
- King Avenue West/56th Street West, and Rimrock Road/62nd Street West intersections currently operate as single-lane roundabouts
- Rimrock Road/54th Street West, Grand Avenue/54th Street West, and Grand Avenue/48th Street West intersections are signalized
- Central Avenue/48th Street West, King Avenue West/64th Street West, and King Avenue West/48th Street West intersections are controlled by all-way stop signs

The remaining study-area intersections are two-way stop-controlled, with several locations supplemented by overhead flashing beacons to alert high-speed drivers to approaching stop signs (red beacons) or to side-street stop control (amber beacons). Seasonal agricultural crop growth also limits sight distance at several intersections during certain times of the year.

Safety & Traffic

A comprehensive evaluation of existing traffic and safety conditions was completed to establish a baseline for analyzing future operating scenarios. This effort included reviewing historical traffic data from MDT and collecting new peak-hour turning-movement counts at key intersections.

Safety

The 2016 West End Multi-Modal Planning Study, completed by Sanderson Stewart and Fehr & Peers, identified seven intersections within the current study area that exhibited safety concerns at the time, based on intersections that had a crash rate greater than 1.0 crashes per million vehicles entering (MVE). These intersections included:

- Rimrock Road & 62nd Street West (excluding crashes occurring on the Molt Road curve)
- Central Avenue & 48th Street West
- Central Avenue & 56th Street West
- King Avenue & 56th Street West
- Hesper Road & 56th Street West
- Neibauer Road & 48th Street West
- Neibauer Road & 56th Street West

Of these seven locations, only two have not yet been improved or are not currently planned for near-term improvements . Safety at the Central Avenue/48th Street West intersection was enhanced by converting it to all-way stop control, and the intersection is now in design for a traffic signal and turn-lane project scheduled for construction in spring 2026. Single-lane roundabouts have been installed at Central Avenue/56th Street West, King Avenue/56th Street West, and Rimrock Road/62nd Street West. A single-lane roundabout has also been designed for the Hesper Road/56th Street West intersection but would require further right-of-way acquisition for construction.

The study further noted that the Neibauer Road/56th Street West and Neibauer Road/48th Street West intersections had some of the highest crash and severity rates. In this context, the severity index represents the weighted average of crash severity—accounting for fatal, injury, and property-damage-only crashes—while the severity rate is calculated by multiplying the crash rate by the severity index.

Updated crash data was obtained from MDT for the five-year period from 2020 through 2024 and crash rates were compared to the 2016 study. The new rates are shown in Table 5.2. The results show that several of the high crash rate locations noted above have seen reductions, likely due to the safety improvements described previously. Some of the above intersections have maintained crash rates greater than 1.0 crashes per MVE due to lack of improvements, and some new intersections are experiencing high crash rates that did not previously. The crash rate calculated at the Rimrock Road/62nd Street West intersection remains high, but the data does not reflect the impact of the recently completed roundabout.

Intersections with higher than 1.0 crashes/MVE in 2020 through 2024 include the following:

- Rimrock Road & 62nd Street West (excluding crashes occurring on the Molt Road curve)
- Hesper Road & 56th Street West
- Neibauer Road & 48th Street West
- Neibauer Road & 56th Street West
- Grand Avenue & 62nd Street West
- Central Avenue & 64th Street West
- King Avenue & 64th Street West
- King Avenue & 48th Street West
- Hesper Road & 48th Street West

The King Avenue/64th Street West intersection experienced the highest total number of crashes over the five-year period (30) and a crash rate of 2.00 crashes/MVE. Two-thirds of crashes resulted in injury at this intersection. A single lane roundabout is currently planned and is projected to improve safety by addressing both the high volume and high severity of crashes.

The Neibauer Road/56th Street West intersection experienced the third-highest crash total (22) and the highest crash rate by far, at 3.58 crashes/MVE. Approximately 36 percent of all reported crashes resulted in injury at this intersection. There are currently no improvements planned for this intersection, or the intersections of Neibauer Road/48th Street West, Hesper Road/48th Street West, Central

Table 5.2 Crash History - Frequency and Severity

Intersection	2020-2024 DEV[1]	Reported Crashes[2]	Crash Type			Crash Data[3]		
			PDO	Injury	Fatality	Average Crash Frequency (Crash/Yr)	Crash Rate (Crash/MVE)	Severity Index
Rimrock Rd & 70th St W	893	1	1	0	0	0.20	0.61	1.00
Rimrock Rd & 62nd St W	3459	14	10	4	0	2.80	2.22	1.57
Rimrock Rd & 54th St W	11985	10	7	3	0	2.00	0.46	1.60
Rimrock Rd & 46th St W	10430	2	1	1	0	0.40	0.11	2.00
Grand Ave & 64th St W	5836	5	4	1	0	1.00	0.47	1.40
Grand Ave & 62nd St W	5699	12	8	4	0	2.40	1.15	1.67
Grand Ave & 56th St W	8875	6	4	2	0	1.20	0.37	1.67
Grand Ave & 54th St W	9675	6	3	2	1	1.20	0.34	2.83
Grand Ave & 48th St W	13654	18	16	2	0	3.60	0.72	1.22
Central Ave & 64th St W	4372	10	6	4	0	2.00	1.25	1.80
Central Ave & 56th St W	4643	4	4	0	0	0.80	0.47	1.00
Central Ave & 48th St W	9603	9	8	1	0	1.80	0.51	1.22
King Ave & 64th St W	8208	30	10	20	0	6.00	2.00	2.33
King Ave & 56th St W	10466	14	9	4	1	2.80	0.73	2.07
King Ave & 48th St W	11649	26	16	10	0	5.20	1.22	1.77
Hesper Rd & 56th St W	5138	19	11	7	0	3.80	2.03	1.78
Hesper Rd & 48th St W	4550	14	9	5	0	2.80	1.69	1.71
Neibauer Rd & 56th St W	3370	22	14	8	0	4.40	3.58	1.73
Neibauer Rd & 48th St W	3410	11	7	4	0	2.20	1.77	1.73
Neibauer Rd & Shiloh Rd	4720	6	2	4	0	1.20	0.70	2.33

[1] Daily Entering Volume (DEV) estimated from 2024 peak hour counts and 2020-2024 MDT published ADTs

[2] Crashes reported from January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2024

[3] Crash rates expressed as crashes per million vehicles entering (MVE)

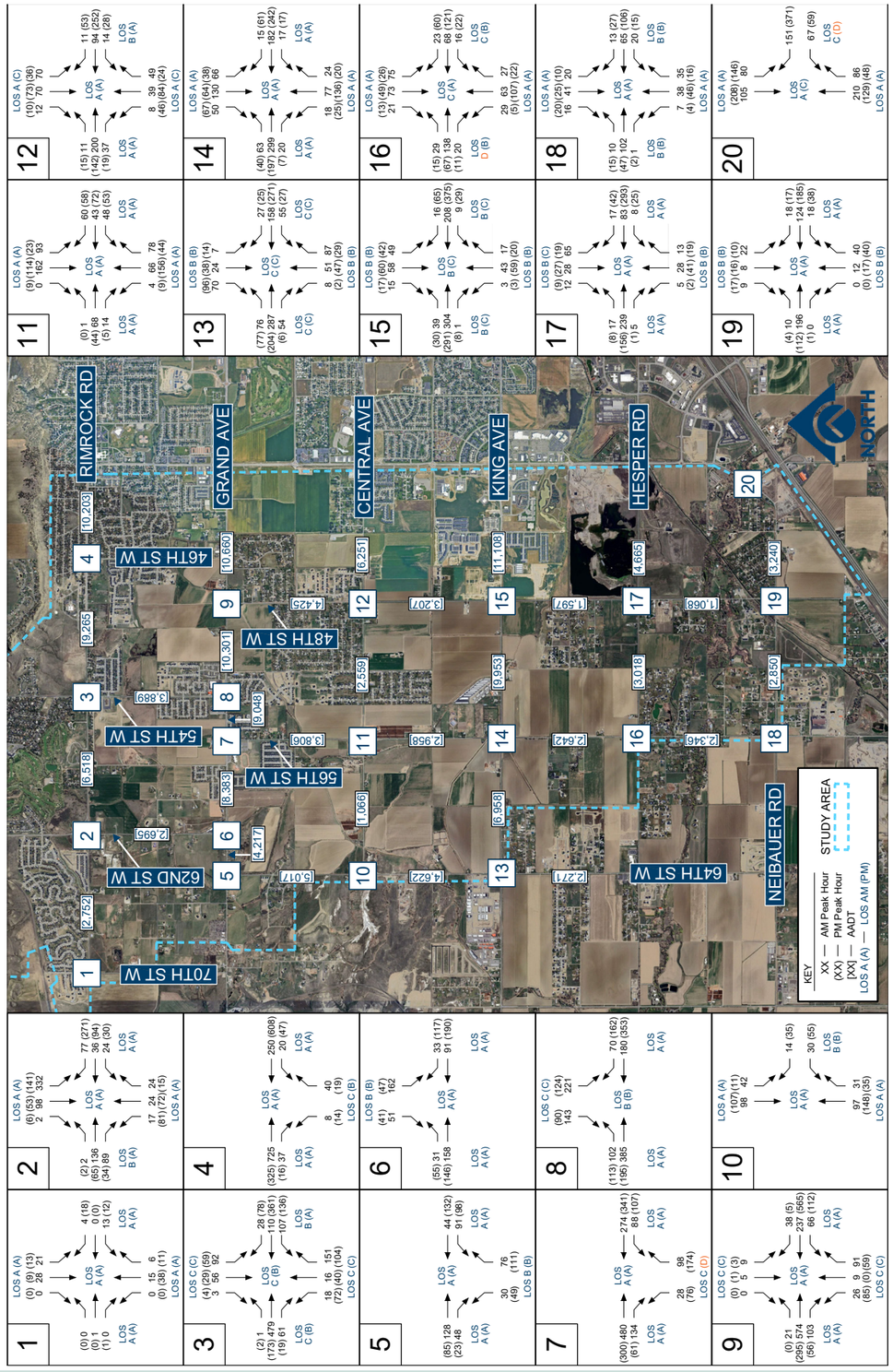


Figure 5.2: Existing Conditions (2024) Traffic Volumes

Avenue/64th Street West, or Grand Avenue/62nd Street West.

The remaining intersections on the above high crash rate list are all planned to have roundabouts or signals installed. For intersections without planned improvements, all-way stop-control should be considered where practical to reduce crash risk and severity.

It should also be noted that while the Neibauer Road/Shiloh Road intersection did not have an elevated crash rate, two-thirds of crashes at this intersection resulted in injury. The intersection's configuration is abnormal, with stop-control on the northbound approach, and free-flowing traffic for southbound and northwestbound vehicles, as well as a skew. Conversion to all-way stop-control may reduce driver confusion and provide a safer condition at this intersection. This could be paired with a reduction in the turning radius for the northwestbound right turns.

Traffic Volumes

Sanbell collected AM and PM peak-hour turning-movement counts at seven major intersections in May, August, and September 2023, and at 13 additional major intersections in January and February 2024. This data was used to support the existing-conditions traffic analysis and to calibrate the traffic model. Peak periods generally occurred from 7:15–8:15 a.m. and 4:45–5:45 p.m. Seasonal adjustment factors provided by the City of Billings were applied to the raw counts. Figure 5.2 summarizes the resulting peak-hour turning-movement volumes, with full count details provided in Appendix C.

Average Daily Traffic (ADT) volumes were compiled for key roadway segments using data collected by Sanbell and data provided by MDT. In total, 32 roadway segments were evaluated—18 with new data collected by the Project Team and the remainder from MDT. Using these datasets and a K-factor approach (represents the proportion of the Average Annual Daily Traffic [AADT] this is expected to occur during the peak hour), Sanbell estimated the AADT volumes for the study-area corridors. In addition to the previously mentioned turning-movement volumes, Figure 5.2 also presents the AADT estimates for the 2024 Existing Conditions scenario. The MPO's raw traffic count data are included in Appendix C.

Pedestrian Traffic Volumes

For the purposes of this analysis, bicycle volumes are included within the total pedestrian counts.

The highest pedestrian activity occurred during the May 2023 traffic count at the Grand Avenue/56th Street West intersection adjacent to Ben Steele Middle School. During the AM peak hour, 62 pedestrians were recorded crossing the south leg of 56th Street West, with more than 90% traveling toward the school. A second peak occurred between 2:30 and 3:30 PM, when 41 pedestrians crossed the same approach, this time with most traveling away from the school. Pedestrian activity at all other intersections within the study area was minimal.

Intersection Traffic Operations

Sanbell conducted AM and PM peak-hour intersection capacity analyses for the major intersections in the study area using Synchro (Version 12), which applies methodologies from the Highway Capacity Manual, 7th Edition (Transportation Research Board, 2022). Level of service (LOS) is a qualitative measure of intersection performance that reflects operational conditions such as speed, travel time, freedom of movement, delay, and overall comfort and convenience. LOS ranges from A, representing free-flowing operations with minimal delay, to F, representing severe congestion and high delay.

The purpose of this analysis was to establish a baseline for existing (2024) operating conditions and to identify intersections that are currently experiencing—or are nearing—capacity deficiencies during peak periods. Table 5.5 presents the results of the Existing Conditions (2024) intersection capacity evaluation .

The City of Billings and the Montana Department of Transportation generally use Level of Service (LOS) C as the minimum acceptable standard for existing intersection operations. The 2024 Existing Conditions analysis indicates that the 56th Street West/Hesper Road intersection and the Autumn Lane/Neibauer Road/Shiloh Road intersection operate below this threshold, with at least one approach functioning at LOS D during the AM or PM peak periods. Projected maximum queue lengths at all study-area intersection approaches were moderate to negligible, including those operating below the LOS standard. A detailed capacity summary table and the full set of capacity calculation worksheets for the 2024 Existing Conditions scenario are provided in Appendix D.

Corridor Traffic Operations

In addition to the peak-hour intersection analysis, Sanbell evaluated daily corridor LOS to assess overall capacity constraints and identify whether road widening or other improvements may be needed. This analysis used the Existing Conditions (2024) AADT volumes shown in Figure 5.2.

Planning-level corridor LOS was estimated by comparing Existing Conditions (2024) AADT volumes to assumed capacity values (noted in Table 5.3) to develop volume-to-capacity (V/C) ratios. Table 5.4 summarizes LOS categories and associated traffic conditions. In coordination with the City of Billings, LOS D was identified as the minimum acceptable threshold for corridor operations in both the West End Multi-Modal Planning Study and this study. Table 5.3 presents typical LOS thresholds by functional classification based on V/C ratios. Figure 5.3 shows the resulting LOS for the Existing Conditions (2024) scenario. Most corridors currently operate at LOS C or better; however, Grand Avenue and King Avenue West east of 48th Street West operate at LOS D. The color-coding used in Figure 5.3 aligns with Tables 5.3 and 5.4.

Table 5.3: Level of Service (LOS) Thresholds by Functional Classification

LOS Threshold	A-C	D	E	F
Arterials/Collectors	Upper Limit V/C Cutpoints			
	0.58	0.75	0.92	>0.92
Principal Arterial (Daily Capacity Per Lane - 9,000)	Total Daily Volume			
2-Lane	10,440	13,500	16,560	≥18,000
3-Lane	11,480	14,850	18,220	≥19,800
4-Lane	20,880	27,000	33,120	≥36,000
5-Lane	21,920	28,350	34,780	≥37,800
Minor Arterial (Daily Capacity Per Lane - 7,000)	Total Daily Volume			
2-Lane	8,120	10,500	12,880	≥14,000
3-Lane	8,930	11,550	14,170	≥15,400
4-Lane	16,240	21,000	25,760	≥28,000
5-Lane	17,050	22,050	27,050	≥29,400
Collector (Daily Capacity Per Lane - 6,000)	Total Daily Volume			
2-Lane	6,960	9,000	11,040	≥12,000
3-Lane	7,660	9,900	12,140	≥13,200
4-Lane	13,920	18,000	22,080	≥24,000
5-Lane	14,620	18,900	23,180	≥25,200

Table 5.4: Level of Service (LOS) Capacity Analysis Descriptions

	Level of Service	Traffic Flow	Description
Uncongested	A		• Light traffic • Free flow speeds
	B		• Slightly increased traffic levels • Still free flow speeds
	C		• Approaching moderate congestion levels • Speeds near free flow
Congesting	D		• Speeds reduced • Lane changes restricted due to traffic
Congested	E		• Congestion • Irregular traffic flow
	F		• Road at capacity • Gridlock with frequent stops

Table 5.5: Existing Conditions (2024) Intersection Capacity Calculation Results

Intersection	Approach	Existing (2024) AM Peak Avg Delay (s/veh)	AM Peak LOS	AM Peak 95th % Queue (veh)	PM Peak Avg Delay (s/veh)	PM Peak LOS	PM Peak 95th % Queue (veh)
Intersection Control		*One-Way Stop-Control (NB)*					
70th Street West & Rimrock Road	WB	0.0	A	0	0.0	A	0
	NB	0.0	A	0	0.0	A	0
	SB	8.8	A	1	8.9	A	1
	Intersection	6.8	A	--	2.5	A	--
Intersection Control		*Roundabout*					
62nd Street West & Rimrock Road	EB	10.6	B	2	4.3	A	1
	WB	4.5	A	1	6.5	A	2
	NB	7.9	A	1	4.9	A	1
	SB	9.5	A	5	4.9	A	1
	Intersection	8.8	A	--	5.5	A	--
Intersection Control		*Signalized*					
54th Street West & Rimrock Road	EB	22.7	C	16	10.8	B	4
	WB	12.3	B	3	9.1	A	8
	NB	31.1	C	2	33.0	C	4
	SB	35.3	D	5	34.8	C	3
	Intersection	23.7	C	--	16.6	B	--
Intersection Control		*One-Way Stop-Control (NB)*					
46th Street West & Rimrock Road	EB	0.0	A	0	0.0	A	0
	WB	0.7	A	1	0.6	A	1
	NB	16.7	C	1	13.3	B	1
	Intersection	0.9	A	--	0.8	A	--
Intersection Control		*One-Way Stop-Control (NB)*					
64th Street West & Grand Avenue	EB	0.0	A	0	0.0	A	0
	WB	5.3	A	1	3.3	A	1
	NB	10.8	B	1	11.0	B	1
	Intersection	4.6	A	--	4.8	A	--
Intersection Control		*One-Way Stop-Control (SB)*					
62nd Street West & Grand Avenue	EB	1.2	A	1	2.2	A	1
	WB	0.0	A	0	0.0	A	0
	SB	14.6	B	3	13.5	B	1
	Intersection	6.9	A	--	3.0	A	--
Intersection Control		*Two-Way Stop-Control (NB/SB)*					
56th Street West & Grand Avenue	EB	0.0	A	0	0.0	A	0
	WB	2.5	A	1	2.0	A	1
	NB	24.3	C	2	19.1	C	2
	SB	0.0	A	0	0.0	A	0
	Intersection	4.0	A	--	5.0	A	--

Intersection	Approach	Existing (2024) AM Peak Avg Delay (s/veh)	AM Peak LOS	AM Peak 95th % Queue (veh)	PM Peak Avg Delay (s/veh)	PM Peak LOS	PM Peak 95th % Queue (veh)
Intersection Control		*Signalized*					
54th Street West & Grand Avenue	EB	7.3	A	8	4.0	A	3
	WB	8.6	A	6	7.6	A	9
	SB	32.9	C	9	32.9	C	5
	Intersection	15.2	B	--	11.1	B	--
Intersection Control		*Signalized*					
48th Street West & Grand Avenue	EB	6.5	A	9	3.9	A	5
	WB	6.3	A	4	8.9	A	15
	NB	30.6	C	2	28.5	C	3
	SB	26.4	C	1	25.8	C	1
	Intersection	9.0	A	--	9.7	A	--
Intersection Control		*One-Way Stop-Control (WB)*					
64th Street West & Central Avenue	WB	10.6	B	1	10.9	B	1
	NB	0.0	A	0	0.0	A	0
	SB	2.3	A	1	0.7	A	0
	Intersection	2.5	A	--	2.3	A	--
Intersection Control		*Roundabout*					
56th Street West & Central Avenue	EB	5.0	A	1	4.2	A	1
	WB	4.8	A	1	5.1	A	1
	NB	4.7	A	1	4.7	A	1
	SB	6.1	A	2	4.6	A	1
	Intersection	5.4	A	--	4.7	A	--
Intersection Control		*All-Way Stop-Control*					
48th Street West & Central Avenue	EB	10.1	B	2	10.5	B	2
	WB	8.9	A	1	13.1	B	3
	NB	9.0	A	1	11.3	B	2
	SB	9.5	A	1	10.3	B	1
	Intersection	9.5	A	--	11.7	B	--
Intersection Control		*All-Way Stop-Control*					
64th Street West & King Avenue	EB	24.8	C	8	15.6	C	4
	WB	16.5	C	4	23.4	C	8
	NB	12.6	B	2	11.2	B	1
	SB	11.5	B	1	11.4	B	1
	Intersection	18.8	C	--	18.3	C	--
Intersection Control		*Roundabout*					
56th Street West & King Avenue	EB	8.7	A	3	5.2	A	2
	WB	5.7	A	2	6.7	A	2
	NB	6.8	A	1	5.9	A	2
	SB	6.6	A	2	5.4	A	1

Intersection	Approach	Existing (2024) AM Peak Avg Delay (s/veh)	AM Peak LOS	AM Peak 95th % Queue (veh)	PM Peak Avg Delay (s/veh)	PM Peak LOS	PM Peak 95th % Queue (veh)
Intersection Control		*All-Way Stop-Control*					
48th Street West & King Avenue	EB	15.0	B	4	15.6	C	4
	WB	11.6	B	2	23.4	C	8
	NB	10.3	B	1	11.2	B	1
	SB	11.1	B	2	11.4	B	1
	Intersection	12.9	B	--	18.3	C	--
Intersection Control		*Two-Way Stop-Control (NB/SB)*					
56th Street West & Hesper Road	EB	27.8	D	5	13.6	B	1
	WB	18.9	C	2	14.7	B	2
	NB	1.8	A	1	0.3	A	0
	SB	3.4	A	1	2.3	A	1
	Intersection	15.6	C	--	8.4	A	--
Intersection Control		*Two-Way Stop-Control (NB/SB)*					
48th Street West & Hesper Road	EB	0.5	A	0	0.4	A	0
	WB	0.6	A	0	0.5	A	1
	NB	12.3	B	1	14.2	B	1
	SB	14.9	B	2	16.7	C	1
	Intersection	4.9	A	--	3.4	A	--
Intersection Control		*Two-Way Stop-Control (NB/SB)*					
56th Street West & Neibauer Road	EB	11.8	B	1	10.7	B	1
	WB	11.6	B	1	11.2	B	1
	NB	0.7	A	0	0.4	A	0
	SB	1.9	A	1	1.8	A	0
	Intersection	7.0	A	--	7.7	A	--
Intersection Control		*Two-Way Stop-Control (NB/SB)*					
48th Street West & Neibauer Road	EB	0.4	A	0	0.3	A	0
	WB	0.9	A	0	1.2	A	1
	NB	10.9	B	1	10.4	B	1
	SB	12.6	B	1	12.2	B	1
	Intersection	2.6	A	--	3.2	A	--
Intersection Control		*One-Way Stop-Control (WB)*					
Autumn Lane & Neibauer Road & Shiloh Road	WB	15.3	C	2	31.3	D	10
	NB	0.0	A	0	0.0	A	0
	SB	3.6	A	1	3.3	A	1
	Intersection	5.5	A	--	17.3	C	--

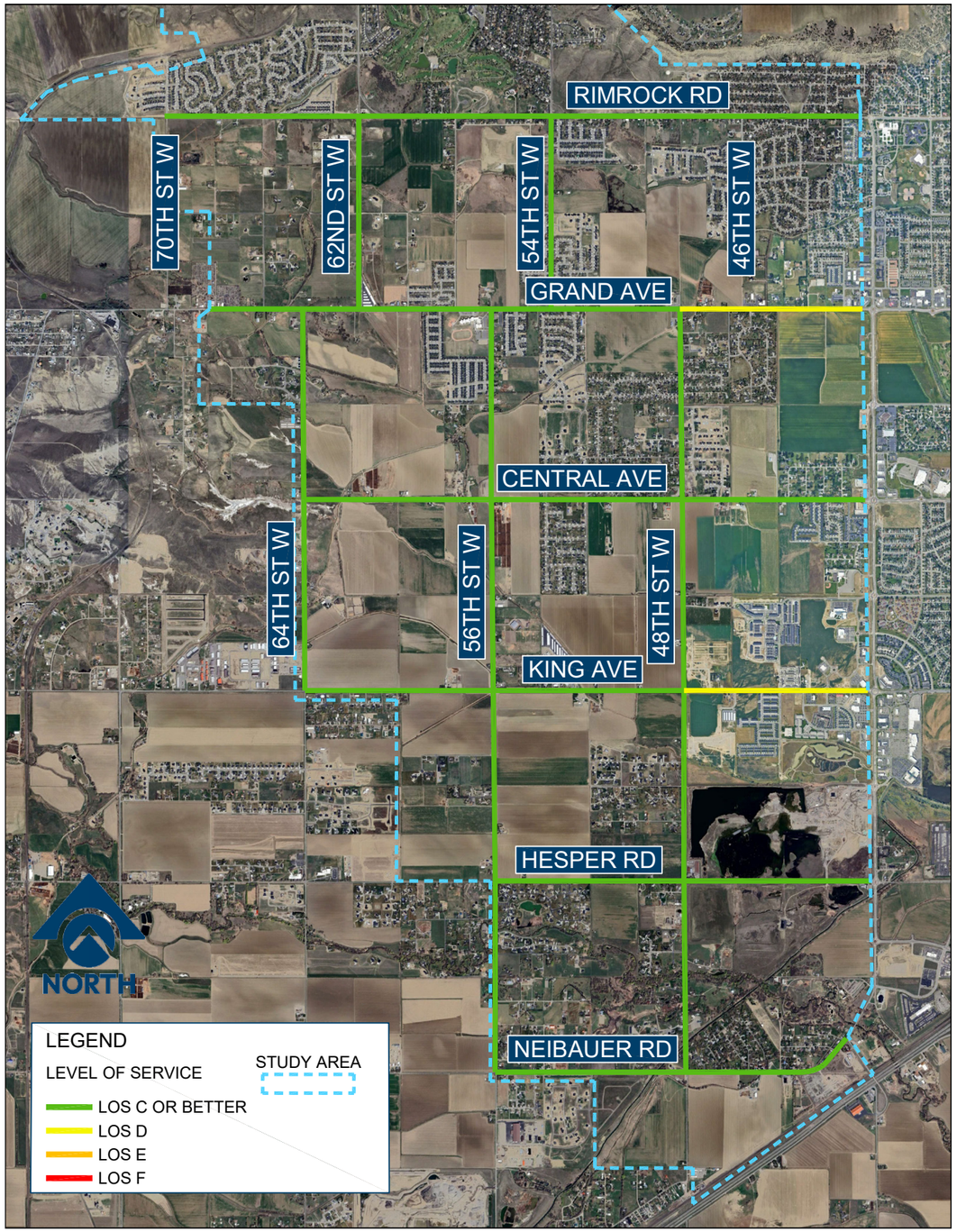


Figure 5.3: Existing Conditions (2024) Corridor Level of Service (LOS)

Active Transportation Facilities

"Active transportation" primarily refers to walking and bicycling, but it also includes other human-powered modes such as skateboards, kick scooters, and rollerblades. These trips provide affordable, healthy options for reaching jobs, schools, shopping areas, and recreational destinations. Just as roadway networks connect places for drivers, active transportation networks link people to their destinations using sidewalks, trails, low-traffic neighborhood streets, side paths, and bike lanes.

Figure 5.5 shows the existing active transportation network within the study area. Outside of sidewalks within developments, there are few sidewalks, side paths, trails, or bike lanes. This limited network is largely due to the area's predominantly undeveloped and agricultural character, especially south of Central Avenue. Just outside the eastern edge of the study boundary, development becomes denser as it nears the Billings urban core, where active transportation facilities are more common. High-quality paths along the eastern edge include the Rimrock Road Trail, Big Ditch Trail, Shiloh Road Trail, King Avenue West Trail, Zimmerman Trail, Gabel Road Trail, and the Olympic & Harvest Subdivision Trails. Monad Road also includes striped bike lanes, and sidewalks are generally present.

Although several low-stress facilities exist nearby, the study area lacks meaningful connections to them. Roads that could provide access are primarily arterials with narrow shoulders and speed limits ranging from 45 to 60 mph. In addition to high speeds, these corridors often include irrigation and borrow ditches, creating steep slopes and leaving little room for active transportation facilities without major reconstruction. Sidewalks and trails within subdivisions are similarly isolated, with limited connectivity to the broader Billings network just east of the study area.

What Type of Bike Rider are You?

For an active transportation system to be effective, it must offer a connected network that serves users with different equipment, comfort levels, and skills. For example, a corridor may include both side paths and bike lanes—allowing experienced riders to travel at higher speeds near traffic while providing children or more cautious users with a separate, more comfortable option. In Billings, on arterial roadways and in some cases, larger collectors, a separated multi-use path is used in lieu of on street bike facilities. However, each roadway is assessed on its own distinction.

A frequently referenced Portland Bureau of Transportation study identifies four general types of cyclists: the Strong and Fearless, the Enthused and Confident, the Interested but Concerned, and the No Way No How groups. Figure 5.4 illustrates the typical distribution of these categories and describes each. These categories help explain how different bikeway types influence a rider's comfort level.

The typology suggests that most potential riders—about 67 percent—fall within the Enthused and Confident or Interested but Concerned groups. This indicates

substantial opportunity to increase cycling by investing in a low-stress bikeway network that feels comfortable for a broader range of users. While the exact percentages in Billings may differ, the framework is useful for understanding which network characteristics can encourage more people to bike.

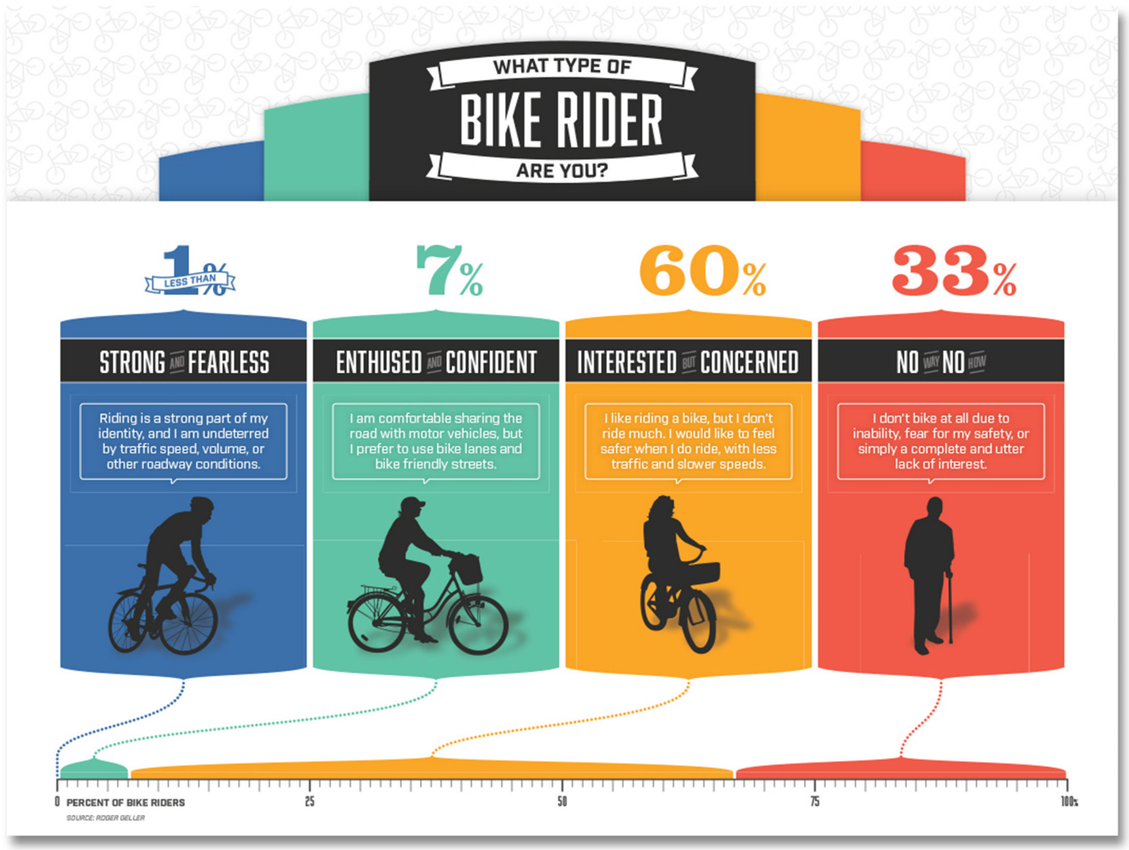


Figure 5.4: Types of Bicycle Riders

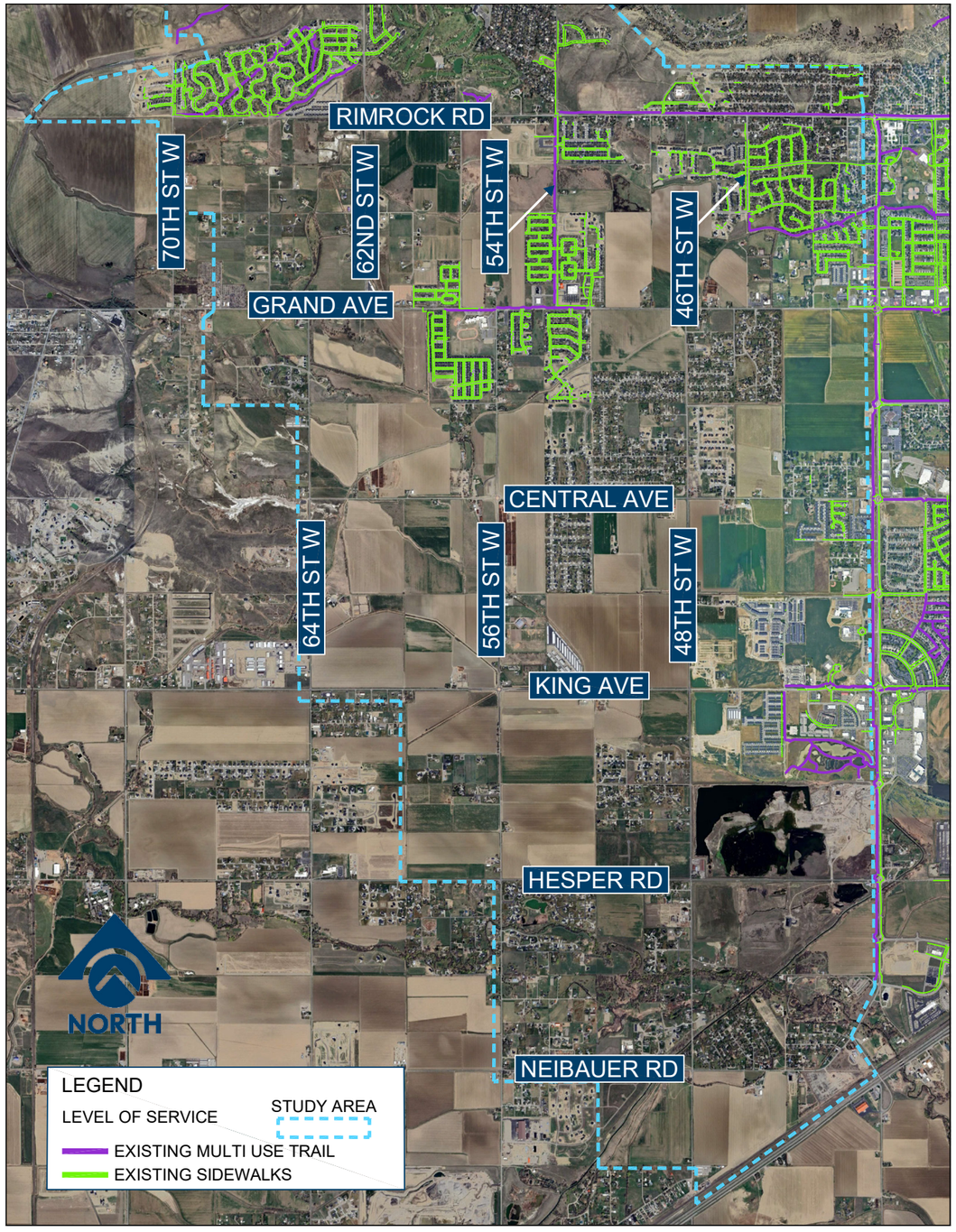


Figure 5.5: Existing Study Area Active Transportation Facilities

Level of Traffic Stress

Level of Traffic Stress (LTS), developed by Mekuria, Furth, and Nixon (2012), is a modern method for evaluating how roadway characteristics influence the stress experienced by bicyclists and, in turn, where they are likely to ride. Under this approach, roadway segments are classified into four stress levels—LTS 1 through LTS 4. Cyclists are grouped based on how much traffic stress they are willing to tolerate in different environments:

- LTS1: Most children can tolerate and feel safe while bicycling.
- LTS2: The mainstream adult population will tolerate and feel safe while bicycling.
- LTS3: Cyclists who are considered "enthused and confident" but still prefer having their own dedicated space for riding will tolerate and feel safe while bicycling.
- LTS4: A level tolerated only by those characterized as "strong and fearless", which comprises just 0.5 percent of the population. The high-stress streets that LTS4 groups will ride are those with high speed limits, multiple travel lanes, limited or non-existent bike lanes and signage, and large distances to cross at intersections.

Table 5.6 summarizes the variables used to assign LTS scores to the roadway network. LTS follows a "weakest link" principle, meaning the stress level for a corridor, intersection approach, or crossing is determined by its most stressful segment. As a result, an entire route takes on the score of its highest-stress portion. For example, a cross-town trip may include long stretches of LTS 1 and LTS 2, but a single LTS 3 segment creates a barrier—only riders comfortable with LTS 3 would use the full route.

LTS analysis in this study was limited to minor arterials and arterials because local and collector streets offer limited connectivity, requiring most bicyclists to travel on the arterial network. Figure 5.6 shows the resulting LTS classifications.

The analysis indicates that most arterials in the study area fall into LTS 4. Rimrock Road east of 54th Street West and 54th Street West are rated LTS 3. Grand Avenue between Wilderness Drive and 52nd Street West, and 56th Street West between Grand Avenue and Stockman Avenue, are rated LTS 2. The primary factors contributing to high stress levels are vehicle speeds above 35 mph and the absence of bike lanes or rideable shoulders.

Table 5.6: Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) Variables

Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) Variable	Data Source
Direction	Derived
Mode separation (mixed flow or bicycle lane)	Bike trails, field review
Is this a residential street?	Calculated based on land use
Adjacent parking	Field review
Number of lanes in analysis direction	Number of lanes from centerline file
Is there a median?	Field review
Is there a Center line?	Field review
What is the prevailing speed? (Use speed limit if prevailing speed is not available)	Speed limit from Centerline file
Bike Lane + Parking Width (if bike lane is present)	Field review
How oftern do bike lane blockages occur?	Estimate

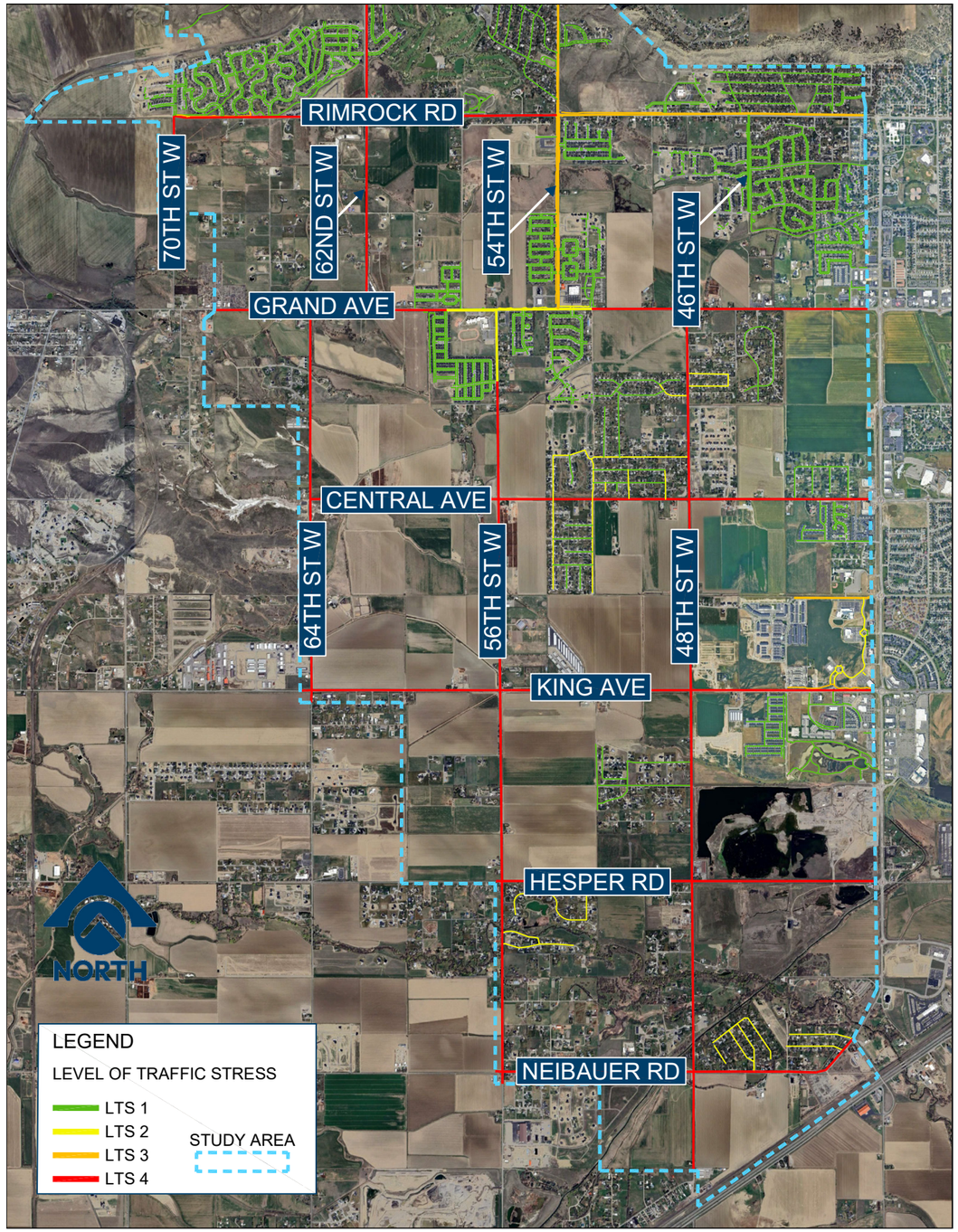


Figure 5.6: Existing Condition (2024) Level of Traffic Stress (LTS)

Land Development Forecasting

The Sanbell team collaborated with the City of Billings to evaluate every parcel in the study area and estimate the probability of future development. After the draft Future Land Use Map (FLUM) was updated to reflect public input, multimodal transportation forecasting began. Trip generation for already developed areas was based on observed traffic counts. For undeveloped areas, traffic volumes were estimated by applying industry-standard trip rates to the projected number of dwelling units and the anticipated commercial square footage for each future land use category.

This process, described in the following section, also incorporated historic development trends, zoning allowances, height and building coverage limits, and dwelling-per-structure standards. In categories permitting both residential and commercial uses, the mix of each was estimated using patterns observed in the plan area and the broader Billings metro region.

Because the FLUM shows substantially more potential development than the plan area's projected population growth is likely to create, a reduction factor was applied to trip-generation estimates (as detailed in the following section). This factor was based on each parcel's designation in the City of Billings Limits of Annexation Map. City/ County Planning staff reviewed and approved all assumptions used to estimate future residential and commercial development within the study area. These assumptions, along with the traffic generation calculation workflow, are provided in Appendix E. Figure 5.7 identifies the undeveloped FLUM parcels.

Trip-generation estimates were developed using the Institute of Transportation Engineers' Trip Generation Manual, 11th Edition—the industry standard for evaluating development impacts. For this study, the land use categories listed below were used to calculate projected trips, and the results are summarized in Table 5.7.

- Land Use 140 – Manufacturing
- Land Use 150 – Warehousing
- Land Use 210 – Single-Family Detached Housing
- Land Use 215 – Single-Family Attached Housing
- Land Use 220 – Multifamily Housing (Low- Rise)
- Land Use 230 – Low-Rise Residential with Ground-Floor Commercial
- Land Use 525 – High School
- Land Use 630 – Clinic
- Land Use 710 – General Office Building
- Land Use 820 – Shopping Center (>150K)
- Land Use 822 – Strip Retail Plaza (<40K)
- Land Use 850 – Supermarket
- Land use 912 – Drive-in Bank

Full buildout of the project area is projected to generate 114,224 gross average weekday

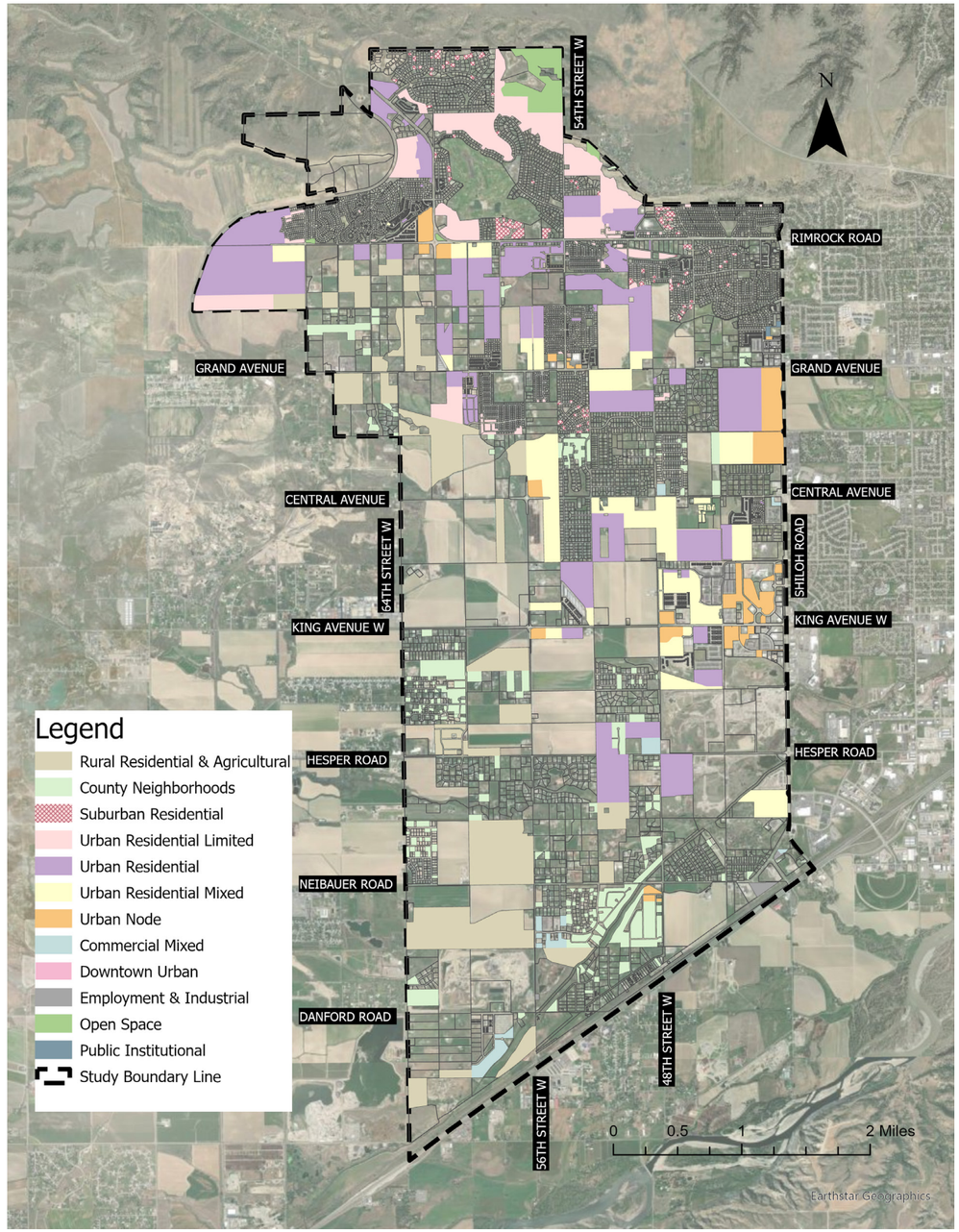


Figure 5.7: FLUM- Undeveloped Parcels

trips, including 7,775 trips (4,122 entering / 3,653 exiting) during the AM peak hour and 11,309 trips (5,543 entering / 5,766 exiting) during the PM peak hour.

Trip-generation estimates reflect the total number of trips associated with future development, but adjustments are needed to determine the number of external vehicle trips. These adjustments account for internal capture trips, pass-by trips, and trips made by alternate modes.

Internal capture (IC) trips occur entirely within the development and therefore do not affect external traffic. They are most common in mixed-use areas. For this study, all trips exchanged within future development areas were treated as internal. The study area is expected to generate 24,228 internal weekday trips, including 533 AM peak-hour trips (269 entering / 264 exiting) and 2,209 PM peak-hour trips (1,104 entering / 1,105 exiting).

Pass-by trips—intermediate stops made along a driver's primary route—were not calculated because these trips are typically associated with commercial sites and are not expected to be significant in this location.

Alternate mode trips (walking, biking, transit) are also expected to be limited due to the size of the study area, although some internal trips near schools may occur by bicycle or on foot. To remain conservative, trip-generation estimates were not reduced for alternate modes. A separate analysis of potential active transportation trips is provided later in this report.

After accounting for internal capture, the study area is projected to generate 89,996 new external weekday trips, including 7,242 AM peak-hour trips (3,853 entering / 3,389 exiting) and 9,100 PM peak-hour trips (4,439 entering / 4,661 exiting)

Growth Projections

Because the Future Land Use Map accommodates more growth than is projected for the plan area, future traffic projections were adjusted down using the methods described in Chapter 3. This resulted in traffic projections that are roughly consistent with the projected population growth rate arrived at in Appendix B, Future Land Use Map Production Methods.

The Billings Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) assumes an annual traffic growth rate of 1.5%, based on historic trends in the MPO planning area. After coordinating with City staff and comparing the annexation-based results with the LRTP forecast, the project team selected the 3.1% rate for projecting traffic volumes for the Future (2044) scenario.

Committed and Planned Projects

Several projects aimed at improving multimodal operations and safety have been committed through the City, County, and MDT capital improvement programs, or are tentatively planned for the near future. The following paragraphs summarize these committed or planned projects based on

Table 5.7: Trip Generation Summary

Trip-generation estimates were developed using the Institute of Transportation Engineers' Trip Generation Manual, 11th Edition—the industry standard for evaluating development impacts. Each land use category has an average rate of trips per associated with it, and this average rate is used as a multiplier for the number of quantity of each type of unit produced. For example, the average rate of daily trips for single-family detached housing is 9.43. In the RRA zone, the projection is 43 dwelling units. 43 x 9.43=405.49 trips, which is rounded to 405 trips per day. The list of average rates can be viewed in Appendix E.

Land Use	Independent Variable		Average Weekday
	Quantity	Units	total
Rural Residential & Agriculture - RRA			
Single-Family Detached Housing[3]	43	Dwelling Units	405
Internal Capture Trips**			67
Total RRA New External Trips			338
County Neighborhoods - CN			
Single-Family Detached Housing[3]	96	Dwelling Units	905
Internal Capture Trips**			151
Total CN New External Trips			754
Urban Residential Limited - URL			
Single-Family Detached Housing[3]	1103	Dwelling Units	10401
Internal Capture Trips**			1737
Total URL New External Trips			8664
Urban Residential - UR			
Single-Family Attached Housing[4]	196	Dwelling Units	1411
Low-Rise Residential with Ground-Floor Commercial[6]	754	Dwelling Units	2594
Multifamily Housing (Low-Rise)[5]	1781	Dwelling Units	12004
Internal Capture Trips**			2673
Total UR New External Trips			13336
Urban Residential Mixed - URM			
Multifamily Housing (Low-Rise)[5]	1381	Dwelling Units	9308
General Office Building[9]	524	1000 SF GFA	5683
Clinic[8]	72	1000 SF GFA	2724
Strip Retail Plaza (<40K)[11]	454	1000 SF GFA	24743
Internal Capture Trips**			10189
Total URM New External Trips			32269
Urban Node - UN			
Multifamily Housing (Low-Rise)[5]	1561	Dwelling Units	10521
General Office Building[9]	192	1000 SF GFA	2084
Shopping Center (>150K)[10]	382	1000 SF GFA	14154
Clinic[8]	197	1000 SF GFA	7407
Supermarket[12]	38	1000 SF GFA	3536
Drive-in Bank[13]	9	1000 SF GFA	854
Internal Capture Trips**			8989
Total UN New External Trips			29567
Commercial Mixed - CM			
Multifamily Housing (Low-Rise)[5]	31	Dwelling Units	209
Warehousing[2]	118	1000 SF GFA	202
General Office Building[9]	128	1000 SF GFA	1385
Internal Capture Trips**			422
Total CM New External Trips			1374
Employment & Industrial - EI			
Manufacturing[1]	67	1000 SF GFA	318
Total EI New External Trips			318
Public Institution - PI			
High School[7]	1740	Students	3376
Total PI New External Trips			3376
Total Buildout Gross Trips			114224
Total Buildout Internal Capture Trips			24228
Total Buildout New External Trips			89996

current information.

Street and Intersection Projects

The City of Billings has approved three safety-focused projects within the study area:

- Rimrock Road Improvements (62nd St W to Clearview Dr) – Scheduled to begin in 2025, this project will reconstruct Rimrock Road to full arterial and complete streets standards, including new multi-modal facilities along the corridor.
- Grand Avenue Improvements (43rd St W to 62nd St W) – Planned for 2028, this project will upgrade Grand Avenue to an arterial standard, incorporate multi-modal elements, and install a traffic signal at 56th Street West to improve safety near Ben Steele Middle School.
- 54th Street West Reconstruction (Grand Ave to Rimrock Rd) – Expected to start in 2028, this project will reconstruct the corridor to arterial and complete streets standards and may include auxiliary turn lanes, shoulders, multi-modal features, and storm drain upgrades.

Sanbell is also under contract with Yellowstone County to reconstruct the Hesper Road/56th Street West intersection. Due to long-standing safety concerns, the intersection has been redesigned as a single-lane roundabout with street lighting. Pedestrian facilities are not included. Construction timing depends on right-of-way acquisition.

Because right-of-way negotiations have delayed the Hesper/56th roundabout, its funding has been reassigned to reconstruct the Central Avenue/48th Street West intersection. This project will include a new traffic signal and auxiliary turn lanes on all approaches, with construction scheduled for 2026.

Sanbell and HDR are additionally under contract with MDT to design single-lane roundabouts at King Avenue West/64th Street West and King Avenue West/48th Street West to maintain consistency along the corridor.

The City of Billings has also noted concerns with periodic closures of Zimmerman Trail, a key connection between West Billings and Montana Highway 3. These closures can overload alternate routes. While no project is currently programmed, a new connection from Molt Road to Montana Highway 3—known as the Molt Connector—has been identified as a critical link. In addition to improving access to Highway 3 and the top of the Rimrocks, it would create another ingress/egress point for the study area. The Billings Roadway Functional Classification Map already identifies the Molt Connector as a proposed Minor Arterial.

At this time, the Project Team is not aware of any additional committed or planned street or intersection projects within or immediately adjacent to the study area.

Future 2044 Operations Analysis

Intersection Traffic Operations

Sanbell completed intersection capacity analyses for the Future (2044) scenario at all major intersections within the study area. Future traffic volumes were developed using the Billings MPO Long Range Transportation Plan 3.1% average annual growth rate. Synchro (Version 12) was used to analyze stop-controlled and signalized intersections, while Sidra (Version 10) was used for roundabout analyses.

The analysis assumed existing traffic control and lane configurations for all intersections except the following, which reflect planned improvements:

- King Ave W/64th St W, King Ave W/48th St W, and 56th St W/Hesper Rd, which were modeled as single-lane roundabouts.
- Grand Ave/56th St W and Central Ave/48th St W, which were modeled with traffic signals currently under design as part of committed projects.

Table 5.8 presents the results of the Future (2044) intersection capacity analysis, with detailed calculation sheets provided in Appendix F. Figure 5.8 summarizes the projected 2044 traffic conditions.

For this study, LOS C at the intersection level (not individual approaches) is considered the minimum acceptable performance threshold. Under the Future (2044) scenario, four intersections are projected to operate below LOS C during the AM peak hour, and two are projected to fall below LOS C during the PM peak hour. Among intersections that remain acceptable, five are expected to experience LOS D conditions on one or more approaches during the AM peak hour, and one during the PM peak hour.

The following intersections are projected to fall below LOS C during one or both peak periods:

- 54th St W & Rimrock Rd – AM Peak
- 56th St W & Grand Ave – AM Peak
- 48th St W & Grand Ave – AM and PM Peak
- Autumn Ln/Neibauer Rd/Shiloh Rd – AM and PM Peak

Figure 5.8: Future (2044) Intersection Capacity Calculation Results

Intersection	Approach	Future (2044) AM Peak Avg Delay (s/veh)	AM Peak LOS	AM Peak 95th % Queue (veh)	PM Peak Avg Delay (s/veh)	PM Peak LOS	PM Peak 95th % Queue (veh)
Intersection Control		*One-Way Stop-Control (NB)*					
70th Street West & Rimrock Road	WB	0.0	A	0	0.0	A	0
	NB	0.0	A	0	0.0	A	0
	SB	9.0	A	1	9.1	A	1
	Intersection	6.3	A	--	2.8	A	--
Intersection Control		*Roundabout*					
62nd Street West & Rimrock Road	EB	43.2	E	10	6.7	A	2
	WB	5.4	A	2	18.6	C	16
	NB	13.8	B	2	8.2	A	2
	SB	15.4	C	15	9.2	A	3
	Intersection	21.0	C	--	13.0	B	--
Intersection Control		*Signalized*					
54th Street West & Rimrock Road	EB	147.5	F	41	21.3	C	10
	WB	48.5	D	11	22.9	C	26
	NB	40.6	D	6	33.7	C	7
	SB	117.7	F	11	40.1	D	7
	Intersection	104.2	F	--	26.3	C	--
Intersection Control		*One-Way Stop-Control (NB)*					
46th Street West & Rimrock Road	EB	0.0	A	0	0.0	A	0
	WB	1.0	A	1	0.7	A	1
	NB	62.8	F	4	24.8	C	2
	Intersection	3.1	A	--	1.2	A	--
Intersection Control		*One-Way Stop-Control (NB)*					
64th Street West & Grand Avenue	EB	0.0	A	0	0.0	A	0
	WB	5.7	A	1	3.4	A	1
	NB	16.3	B	2	22.4	C	5
	Intersection	6.0	A	--	8.8	A	--
Intersection Control		*One-Way Stop-Control (SB)*					
62nd Street West & Grand Avenue	EB	1.3	A	1	2.5	A	1
	WB	0.0	A	0	0.0	A	0
	SB	53.9	F	11	29.0	D	4
	Intersection	22.3	C	--	5.2	A	--
Intersection Control		*Signalized*					
56th Street West & Grand Avenue	EB	26.1	C	48	12.7	B	16
	WB	72.2	E	7	16.1	B	14
	NB	83.7	F	4	41.2	D	7
	SB	0.0	A	3	0.0	A	0
	Intersection	47.8	D	--	20.8	C	--

Intersection	Approach	Future (2044) AM Peak Avg Delay (s/veh)	AM Peak LOS	AM Peak 95th % Queue (veh)	PM Peak Avg Delay (s/veh)	PM Peak LOS	PM Peak 95th % Queue (veh)
Intersection Control		*Signalized*					
54th Street West & Grand Avenue	EB	16.7	B	27	10.2	B	8
	WB	17.1	B	14	17.0	B	35
	SB	35.7	D	22	33.0	C	11
	Intersection	23.1	C	--	18.3	B	--
Intersection Control		*Signalized*					
48th Street West & Grand Avenue	EB	131.2	F	46	9.9	A	15
	WB	81.1	F	24	422.2	F	54
	NB	29.9	C	5	27.5	C	6
	SB	24.1	C	2	24.1	C	1
	Intersection	104.6	F	--	250.0	F	--
Intersection Control		*One-Way Stop-Control (WB)*					
64th Street West & Central Avenue	WB	13.5	B	1	15.0	C	2
	NB	0.0	A	0	0.0	A	0
	SB	2.4	A	1	0.7	A	1
	Intersection	3.0	A	--	3.3	A	--
Intersection Control		*Roundabout*					
56th Street West & Central Avenue	EB	7.4	A	1	4.8	A	1
	WB	5.8	A	2	7.6	A	2
	NB	7.2	A	2	6.2	A	3
	SB	8.3	A	3	6.2	A	2
	Intersection	7.3	A	--	6.5	A	--
Intersection Control		*Signalized*					
48th Street West & Central Avenue	EB	8.3	A	7	6.0	A	4
	WB	6.3	A	3	10.0	A	10
	NB	7.5	A	2	9.7	A	3
	SB	8.1	A	2	9.5	A	2
	Intersection	7.7	A	--	9.0	A	--
Intersection Control		*Roundabout*					
64th Street West & King Avenue	EB	15.9	C	15	8.5	A	4
	WB	9.1	A	3	11.5	B	7
	NB	13.7	B	3	7.3	A	1
	SB	6.6	A	2	10.0	A	3
	Intersection	12.7	B	--	9.8	A	--
Intersection Control		*Roundabout*					
56th Street West & King Avenue	EB	31.2	D	21	8.4	A	3
	WB	9.2	A	3	16.2	C	10
	NB	14.4	B	3	10.9	B	3
	SB	12.3	B	5	10.4	B	3
	Intersection	19.4	C	--	12.0	B	--

Intersection	Approach	Future (2044) AM Peak Avg Delay (s/veh)	AM Peak LOS	AM Peak 95th % Queue (veh)	PM Peak Avg Delay (s/veh)	PM Peak LOS	PM Peak 95th % Queue (veh)
Intersection Control		*Roundabout*					
48th Street West & King Avenue	EB	15.0	C	11	12.1	B	8
	WB	8.4	A	3	18.8	C	23
	NB	10.1	B	1	8.6	A	2
	SB	7.6	A	2	12.4	B	2
	Intersection	11.4	B	--	15.0	B	--
Intersection Control		*Roundabout*					
56th Street West & Hesper Road	EB	8.5	A	3	4.8	A	1
	WB	5.8	A	1	7.3	A	3
	NB	8.0	A	2	5.5	A	2
	SB	6.6	A	2	5.2	A	1
	Intersection	7.4	A	--	6.0	A	--
Intersection Control		*Two-Way Stop-Control (NB/SB)*					
48th Street West & Hesper Road	EB	0.5	A	1	0.5	A	1
	WB	0.6	A	0	0.6	A	1
	NB	19.6	C	2	34.7	D	3
	SB	52.8	F	6	71.4	E	5
	Intersection	12.8	B	--	9.9	A	--
Intersection Control		*Two-Way Stop-Control (NB/SB)*					
56th Street West & Neibauer Road	EB	16.9	C	3	13.3	B	1
	WB	16.7	C	2	14.5	B	3
	NB	0.7	A	0	0.4	A	0
	SB	2.0	A	1	1.3	A	0
	Intersection	10.2	B	--	9.3	A	--
Intersection Control		*Two-Way Stop-Control (NB/SB)*					
48th Street West & Neibauer Road	EB	0.4	A	0	0.3	A	0
	WB	0.9	A	1	1.2	A	1
	NB	13.7	B	1	13.6	B	1
	SB	21.4	C	1	18.5	C	1
	Intersection	3.9	A	--	4.1	A	--
Intersection Control		*One-Way Stop-Control (WB)*					
Autumn Lane & Neibauer Road & Shiloh Road	WB	146.8	F	19	726.6	F	91
	NB	0.0	A	0	0.0	A	0
	SB	1.1	A	1	3.7	A	1
	Intersection	46.8	E	--	378.9	F	--

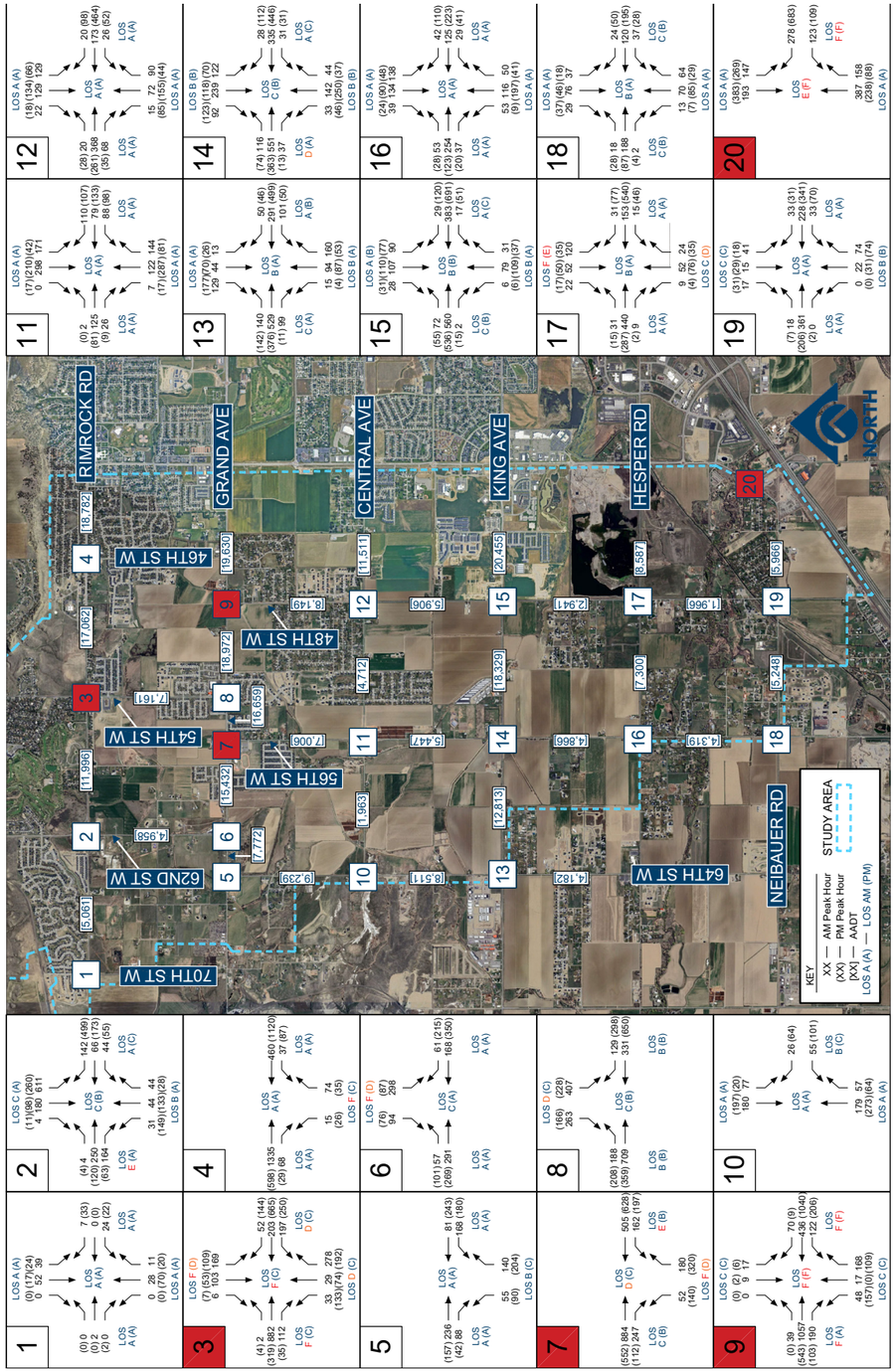


Figure 5.8: Future (2044) Traffic Volumes

Corridor Traffic Operations

Sanbell reassessed corridor level of service (LOS) for all arterial streets within the study area. As noted previously, LOS D is the minimum acceptable corridor performance threshold for this planning study. In addition to peak-hour intersection analysis, the Project Team evaluated daily corridor LOS to identify potential capacity issues and determine whether roadway widening, or other improvements may be needed.

Future (2044) corridor capacity calculations assumed completion of the planned transportation projects in the study area, including:

- Grand Avenue (43rd St W to 62nd St W)
- Rimrock Road (Clearview Dr to 62nd St W)
- 54th Street West (Rimrock Rd to Grand Ave)

Future (2044) AADTs were developed using the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) and the Billings MPO's 3.1% average annual traffic growth rate.

As illustrated in Figure 5.9, most corridors are projected to operate at LOS D or better. However:

- Rimrock Road is expected to operate at LOS E between 54th St W and 46th St W, and LOS F east of 46th St W.
- King Avenue is projected to operate at LOS F east of 56th St W and to be oversaturated between 56th St W and Shiloh Road, with volume-to-capacity ratios exceeding 1.0—conditions typically associated with long delays, queuing, and reduced travel speeds.

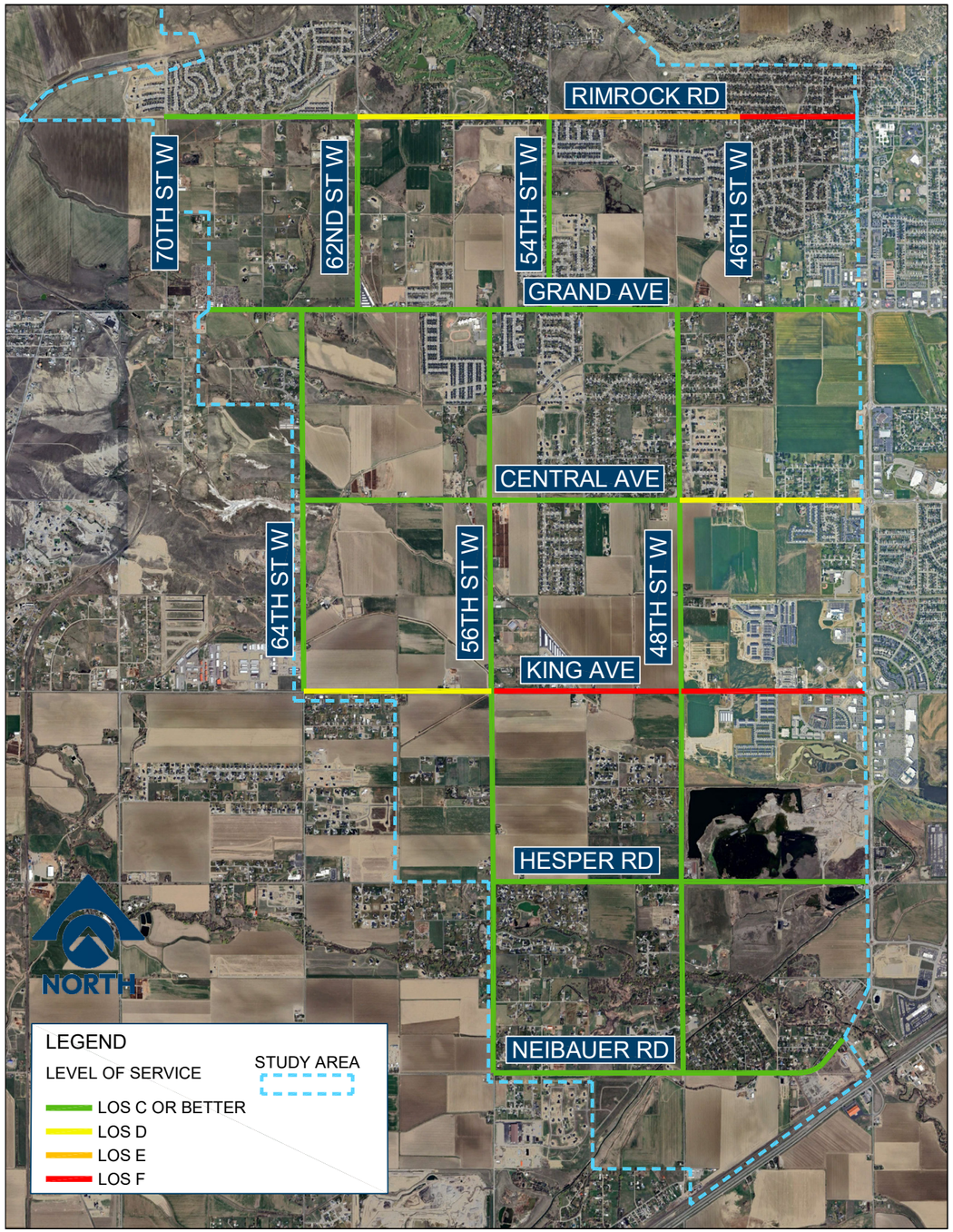


Figure 5.9: Future (2044) Corridor Level of Service (LOS)

Active Transportation Modeling

Instead of estimating the exact volume of bicycle and pedestrian activity, Sanbell used a methodology that identifies the relative demand for walking and biking within the study area. The Latent Demand Model evaluates economic, demographic, land use, and built environment factors to pinpoint active transportation "hot spots" and offers a clear framework for prioritizing investment and planning efforts.

Latent Demand Variables

Active transportation—bicycling and walking—is influenced by several factors. This analysis incorporates both existing and newly developed GIS data from the FLUM that relate to walking and biking conditions. Variable weighting is informed by prior research and refined for this project using FLUM planning analyses and engineering judgment. Tables 5.9 and 5.10 summarize the selected variables and their associated scoring criteria.

Table 5.9 & 5.10: Latent Active Transportation Demand Variables & Scoring

Built Environment Factors	
Dwelling Unit Density (Dwelling Units/Acre)	Score (12 Maximum)
0.0 - 0.4	0.0
0.5 - 1.3	2.4
1.4 - 2.3	4.8
2.4 - 4.1	7.2
4.2 - 6.7	9.6
> 6.7	12.0
Employment Density (Jobs/Acre)	Score (12 Maximum)
0.0 - 0.1	0.0
0.2 - 0.3	2.4
0.4 - 0.6	4.8
0.7 - 1.0	7.2
1.1 - 1.9	9.6
> 1.9	12.0
Land Use Mix (Jobs/Dwelling Units)	Score (6 Maximum)
0.0 - 0.2	0.0
0.3 - 0.6	1.5
0.7 - 1.5	3.0
1.6 - 2.5	4.5
> 2.5	6.0

Proximity Factors	
Schools (Proximity in Feet)	Score (25 Maximum)
0 - 660	25
661 - 1320	23.75
1231 - 2640	21.25
2641 - 3960	12.5
3961 - 5280	2.5
> 5280	0
Parks (Proximity in Feet)	Score (20 Maximum)
0 - 660	20
661 - 1320	15
1231 - 2640	10
2641 - 3960	5
> 3960	0
Retail (Proximity in Feet)	Score (10 Maximum)
0	10
1 - 2640	5
> 2640	0
Trails (Proximity in Feet)	Score (15 Maximum)
0 - 1320	15
1321 - 2640	7.5
> 2640	0

Active Transportation Demand Analysis

The Latent Demand Model identifies locations where there is underlying demand for active transportation—areas where walking or bicycling would likely occur if supportive conditions were in place. These favorable conditions typically include the presence of sidewalks, shared-use paths, and dedicated bicycle facilities.

The demand analysis was developed using GIS layers representing existing and planned built environments. Socio-economic projections for a fully built scenario were derived from the FLUM, which was developed by Sanbell and approved by the City of Billings. Future retail and school locations were estimated using local land use plans, zoning information, and input from City staff.

Figure 5.10 presents the results of the analysis, with blue tones indicating lower-demand areas and red/orange tones highlighting areas with higher demand. Under the FLUM's fully built scenario, the northern portion of the study area is expected to exhibit the greatest demand for active transportation. Most areas north of King Avenue and east of 56th Street West are projected to generate higher levels of demand, with the strongest concentrations along Grand Avenue, King Avenue West, and near Shiloh Road. This pattern aligns with planned higher-density development in these locations. In contrast, much of the remaining study area shows minimal demand due to low-density residential patterns, limited commercial or employment destinations, and predominantly agricultural land uses.

Overall, the analysis indicates that investments in active transportation infrastructure should be prioritized in the northern and eastern parts of the study area.

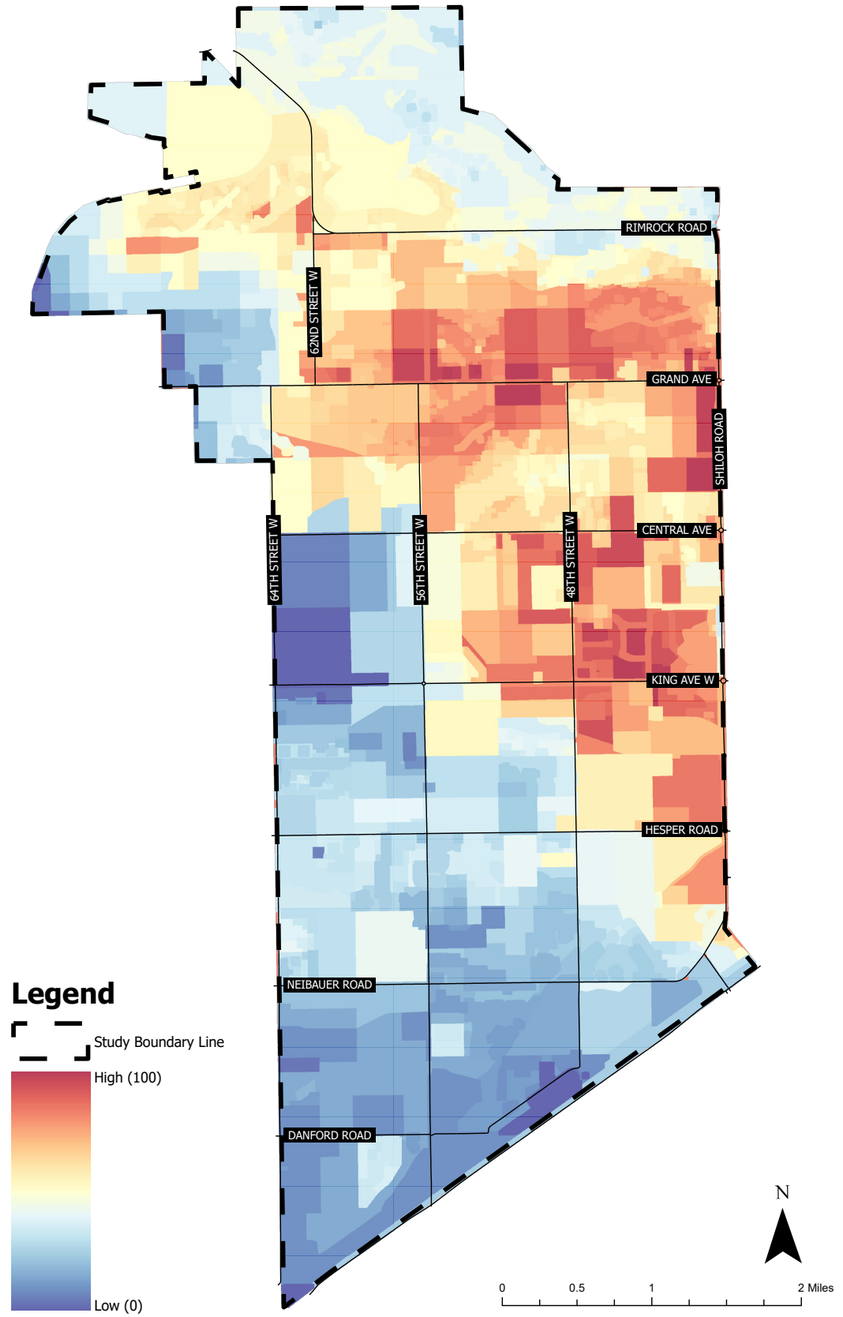


Figure 5.10 FLUM Full Built- Active Transportation Latent Demand Heat Map

Recommended Network Improvements and Mitigation Strategies

The previous section of this report identified the major study area intersections, street corridors, and active transportation facilities that are anticipated to need improvement or expansion to accommodate projected traffic demands under the Future (2044) growth scenario. This section presents recommended improvements along with mitigation alternatives to address the identified deficiencies. It also provides a summary of the analysis results for each alternative, illustrating the relative effectiveness of the proposed measures in meeting future transportation needs.

Intersections

Based on the intersection LOS deficiencies identified for the Future (2044) scenario, Sanbell evaluated a range of mitigation measures and recommended improvements to address those deficiencies. The purpose of this evaluation was to identify the minimum level of enhancement needed for each intersection to achieve an acceptable LOS C. The Project Team did not assess MUTCD Traffic Signal Warrants; instead, the analysis focused solely on operational performance.

The Future (2044) scenario was analyzed under an "improved" condition that applies recommended changes to intersection traffic control and lane configurations, along with any necessary mitigation strategies, to meet LOS objectives. Sensitivity analyses were performed using Synchro (Version 12) for stop-controlled and signalized intersections and Sidra (Version 10) for roundabout alternatives. Table 5.11 presents the results of the Future (2044) peak hour intersection capacity analysis for this "improved" condition.

Where signalization was identified as necessary to achieve acceptable performance, a roundabout option was also evaluated as both a mitigation strategy and a potential recommended alternative to a traffic signal. Results for each comparison are included in Table 5.11. Detailed capacity analysis worksheets for all improved alternatives under the Future (2044) scenario are provided in Appendix G.

54th Street West/Rimrock Road

The analysis indicates that the existing configuration at the 54th Street West and Rimrock Road intersection will not adequately accommodate Future (2044) traffic volumes, particularly during the AM peak hour. To address these deficiencies, several improvement strategies are recommended.

Recommended Improvements and Mitigation Activities/Alternatives:

Signalized Intersection Improvements:

Mitigation action:

- To maintain acceptable operations under future conditions, the signalized intersection would require an added eastbound shared through/right-turn lane

Mitigation benefits and considerations:

- This improvement is expected to reduce average eastbound delay by approximately 65% and lower overall intersection delay by 50% during the AM peak period

Outcomes:

- Despite these benefits, all approaches and the overall intersection would still operate at LOS D, indicating continued but manageable congestion

Roundabout Alternative:

Mitigation action:

- A multi-lane roundabout

Figure 5.11: Future (2044) Intersection Capacity Calculation Results - Mitigations

Intersection	Approach	Future (2044) with Improvements											
		AM Peak			PM Peak			AM Peak			PM Peak		
		Avg Delay (s/veh)	LOS	95th % Queue (veh)	Avg Delay (s/veh)	LOS	95th % Queue (veh)	Avg Delay (s/veh)	LOS	95th % Queue (veh)	Avg Delay (s/veh)	LOS	95th % Queue (veh)
Intersection Control		*Signalized - EB Shared TR/RT Lane*						*Double-Lane Roundabout*					
54th Street West & Rimrock Road	EB	51.2	D	24	19.4	B	5	23.9	C	19	6.1	A	2
	WB	47.2	D	13	22.9	C	21	4.8	A	2	13.9	B	15
	NB	37.1	D	4	27.6	C	6	17.6	C	4	8.0	A	2
	SB	53.6	D	13	31.3	C	6	6.6	A	2	10.9	B	2
	Intersection	48.3	D	--	24.0	C	--	16.4	C	--	11.1	B	--
Intersection Control		*One-Way Stop-Control (NB) NB RT/LT Lanes*						*Single-Lane Roundabout - EB RT Slip Lane*					
46th Street West & Rimrock Road	EB	0.0	A	0	0.0	A	0	18.5	C	51	6.8	A	3
	WB	1.0	A	1	0.7	A	1	5.3	A	3	13.1	B	24
	NB	48.3	E	3	22.2	C	1	15.2	C	1	5.8	A	1
	Intersection	2.4	A	--	1.1	A	--	15.0	C	--	10.8	B	--
Intersection Control		*Signalized - EB LT & EB RT Lanes*						*Single-Lane Roundabout*					
62nd Street West & Grand Avenue	EB	10.1	B	5	6.7	A	4	6.9	A	2	5.3	A	2
	WB	8.4	A	3	6.2	A	5	4.4	A	1	7.1	A	3
	SB	10.9	B	8	11.8	B	3	6.3	A	2	5.2	A	1
	Intersection	10.0	B	--	7.2	A	--	6.1	A	--	6.2	A	--
Intersection Control		*Signalized - EB/WB LT, Thru, Shared RT/Thru, NB RT Lanes*						*Turbo Roundabout - 2 EB/WB Lanes*					
56th Street West & Grand Avenue	EB	22.3	C	13	19.2	B	7	11.3	B	10	7.1	A	3
	WB	12.6	B	7	11.1	B	6	5.9	A	3	7.8	A	4
	NB	23.0	C	2	22.3	C	4	13.1	B	2	11.3	B	4
	SB	0.0	A	0	0.0	A	0	4.7	A	0	5.7	A	0
	Intersection	19.2	B	--	16.5	B	--	9.7	A	--	8.3	A	--
Intersection Control		*Signalized - EB/WB LT, Thru, Shared RT/Thru Lanes*						*Turbo Roundabout - 2 EB/WB Lanes*					
48th Street West & Grand Avenue	EB	17.4	B	13	11.8	B	7	15.9	C	22	7.0	A	3
	WB	13.3	B	5	7.5	A	7	6.1	A	3	14.9	B	20
	NB	29.4	C	3	14.9	B	5	14.6	B	2	7.1	A	2
	SB	20.4	C	2	12.9	B	1	4.5	A	1	8.3	A	1
	Intersection	17.6	B	--	9.7	A	--	12.8	B	--	11.6	B	--
Intersection Control		*Signalized*						*Single-Lane Roundabout*					
48th Street West & Hesper Road	EB	8.6	A	10	4.9	A	4	7.9	A	3	5.2	A	2
	WB	6.4	A	4	7.6	A	15	4.5	A	1	8.1	A	4
	NB	10.4	B	2	14.7	B	3	6.6	A	1	4.7	A	1
	SB	11.6	B	5	14.3	B	3	4.7	A	1	6.2	A	1
	Intersection	8.9	A	--	8.1	A	--	6.4	A	--	6.9	A	--
Intersection Control		*Signalized - SB LT, NB RT & WB RT Slip Lanes*						*Single-Lane Roundabout*					
Autumn Lane & Neibauer Road & Shiloh Road	EB	0.0	A	0	0.0	A	0	4.4	A	0	5.6	A	0
	WB	16.3	B	4	16.0	B	6	9.9	A	3	15.0	C	13
	NB	11.2	B	14	13.4	B	10	8.6	A	4	6.7	A	2
	SB	12.1	B	7	9.9	A	8	6.2	A	2	8.3	A	4
	Intersection	12.1	B	--	11.8	B	--	8.4	A	--	11.0	B	--
Intersection Control		*Roundabout - EB RT Slip Lane*						*No Alternative Analysis Required*					
62nd Street West & Rimrock Road	EB	10.5	B	3	4.7	A	1						
	WB	5.4	A	2	18.6	C	16						
	NB	13.5	B	2	8.2	A	2						
	SB	14.7	B	14	9.2	A	3						
	Intersection	12.0	B	--	12.8	B	--						
Intersection Control		*Roundabout - EB RT Slip Lane*						*No Alternative Analysis Required*					
56th Street West & King Avenue	EB	19.0	C	13	7.4	A	3						
	WB	9.2	A	3	16.2	C	10						
	NB	14.4	B	3	10.9	B	3						
	SB	12.3	B	5	10.4	B	3						
	Intersection	14.6	B	--	11.7	B	--						

configuration—featuring dual entering and exiting lanes on all approaches—would provide the highest operational benefit

Mitigation benefits and considerations:

- Projected delay reductions include an 84% decrease during the AM peak hour and a 57% decrease during the PM peak hour

Outcomes:

- This alternative offers substantial performance improvements and addresses long-term capacity needs more effectively than a signalized layout

Supportive Network Mitigation:

Mitigation action:

- Construct a dedicated eastbound right-turn lane at the Rimrock Road and 54th Street West intersection

Mitigation benefits and considerations:

- The right turn lane will facilitate traffic redistribution by improving access to Grand Avenue, which will be able to accommodate the additional demand after the corridor is reconstructed as planned.

Outcomes:

- Enhanced access encourages drivers to use Grand Avenue as an alternate route, helping reduce congestion east of the study area

Summary:

Sanbell is currently under contract with the City of Billings to redesign the intersection as part of the Rimrock Road Improvements Project (54th Street West to 62nd Street West). Funding for design and construction has been planned in the City's 2026 Capital Improvements Plan (CIP). These programmed improvements serve as the primary mitigation steps toward addressing long-term operational needs at the intersection.

48th Street West/Grand Avenue

Future (2044) traffic projections show that the existing traffic signal at the 48th Street West and Grand Avenue intersection will fail without significant improvements. Several mitigation strategies are recommended to support acceptable operations and to complement planned upgrades along the Grand Avenue corridor.

Recommended Improvements and Mitigation Activities/Alternatives:

Upgrade the Traffic Signal with Auxiliary Turn Lanes:

To achieve acceptable levels of service, the signalized intersection should be upgraded with additional turn lanes.

Mitigation Actions:

- Add auxiliary left-turn lanes on both the eastbound and westbound approaches
- Provide dedicated through lanes on the eastbound and westbound approaches

Mitigation Benefits:

- LOS C or better for all approaches in both peak periods
- Maximum 95th-percentile queue of 13 vehicles (eastbound AM)
- Intersection average delay reduced by up to 80% (AM) and 96% (PM)

Outcome:

- This configuration provides substantial operational improvement and restores acceptable performance

Consider a Turbo Roundabout:

Mitigation action:

- Installation of a turbo roundabout

Mitigation Benefits and considerations:

- Operational performance similar to the signalized upgrade
- Improved circulation for turning movements
- Longer projected queues on the major road (up to 22 vehicles eastbound AM and 20 vehicles westbound PM)

Outcome:

- While functional, the roundabout alternative may introduce higher queueing on Grand Avenue and creates trade-offs

Widen Grand Avenue

Mitigation action:

- Widen Grand Avenue to a five-lane section at this location to support either intersection control option

Mitigation benefits:

- Reduction in average approaches delay by up to 87%
- Reduction in overall intersection delay by up to 96% during the PM peak hour

Outcome:

- These improvements provide the necessary capacity to meet Future (2044) traffic demands

Summary :

To ensure long-term operational effectiveness, the City should:

1. Pursue signal upgrades or evaluate a turbo roundabout, comparing their operational performance and corridor compatibility.
2. Include widening of Grand Avenue to five lanes at this intersection as a key supporting mitigation measure.
3. Coordinate intersection improvements with the broader Grand Avenue corridor project to maintain consistent operations.

62nd Street West/Grand Avenue

Future (2044) traffic projections indicate that the current traffic control at the 62nd Street West and Grand Avenue intersection will not accommodate expected southbound demand and would fail without improvements. Several mitigation strategies are recommended to ensure acceptable long-term operations.

Recommended Improvements and Mitigation Activities/Alternatives:

Signal and turn lanes

Mitigation action:

- Installation of signalized intersection with added turn lanes is recommended as a primary mitigation option
- Add an eastbound auxiliary left-turn lane
- Add a westbound auxiliary right-turn lane

Mitigation benefits and considerations:

- Intersection operates efficiently under Future (2044) AM and PM peak volumes 95th percentile queues remain under 10 vehicles in both peak periods Southbound delay reduced by nearly 80% during the AM peak hour

Outcome:

- This treatment provides reliable performance with manageable queuing

Roundabout

Mitigation action:

- Installation of a single-lane roundabout is a viable alternative that would also offer strong operational performance

Mitigation benefits and considerations:

- Minimal queuing during AM and PM peak surges
- Southbound average delay reduced by approximately 88% during the AM peak hour

Outcome:

- Comparable or slightly better operational results than a signalized option, particularly for southbound movements

Summary:

Although both alternatives provide substantial operational improvements, their physical footprints differ, and right-of-way needs should be evaluated prior to final selection. This will ensure that the selected control method aligns with site constraints and minimizes impacts to adjacent properties.

48th Street West/Central Avenue

Future (2044) traffic projections indicate that the existing stop-controlled intersection at 48th Street West and Central Avenue will operate at unacceptable levels, particularly during the PM peak hour. To address these deficiencies, several improvements are planned, and additional mitigation actions are recommended. Sanbell is currently under contract with Yellowstone County to redesign the intersection; funding for design and construction has been programmed in the County's 2026 budget.

Recommended Improvements and Mitigation Activities/Alternatives:

Traffic signal with Auxiliary Turn Lanes:

Mitigation actions:

- Install a traffic signal
- Add auxiliary left-turn lanes on the major approaches

Mitigation Benefits:

- Provides LOS B or better during both peak periods
- Produces manageable 95th-percentile queues

Outcome:

- This improvement would significantly enhance traffic flow and ensure acceptable long-term operations

Summary:

Given the projected substandard operations, a traffic signal is recommended as the primary mitigation measure. A traffic signal with auxiliary left-turn lanes should be constructed at the 48th Street West and Central Avenue intersection to mitigate future congestion and maintain acceptable operations under 2044 traffic volumes. Yellowstone County's programmed activities position the project for timely implementation and support the recommended signal installation.

Autumn Lane/Neibauer Road/Shiloh Road

Future (2044) traffic projections indicate that the Autumn Lane, Neibauer Road, and Shiloh Road intersection will fail under its existing one-way stop-controlled configuration and will require substantial improvements to achieve acceptable operations .

Recommended Improvements and Mitigation Activities/Alternatives:

Signal and turn lanes

Mitigation action:

- Installation of a traffic signal
- Installation of auxiliary turn lanes, including:
  - A southbound left-turn lane
  - A northbound right-turn lane
  - A westbound right-turn bypass (slip) lane

Mitigation benefits and considerations:

- LOS B or better during both peak periods
- Maximum 95th-percentile queue of 14 vehicles (AM peak)
- Over 90% reduction in westbound approach delay
- 97% reduction in overall intersection delay during the PM peak

Outcome:

- A traffic signal would significantly improve operations, provided that auxiliary lanes are added to accommodate turning movements
- Provides substantial performance improvement while maintaining compatibility with adjacent corridor operations

Roundabout

Mitigation action:

- Single-Lane Roundabout

Mitigation benefits and considerations:

- LOS C or better on all approaches during both peak hours

- Reduces overall intersection delay by 97% during the PM peak
- Reduces westbound approach delay by more than 90%
- May require additional right-of-way, which should be evaluated during design

Outcome:

- Delivers strong operational benefits with consistent and predictable traffic flow

Summary:

Given existing PM peak congestion and future failure of the current configuration, construct either a traffic signal with auxiliary turn lanes or a single-lane roundabout, based on right-of-way needs, constructability, and cost. Both would provide excellent operational performance under 2044 traffic volumes.

56th Street West/Grand Avenue

Future (2044) traffic projections show that the existing configuration at the 56th Street West and Grand Avenue intersection will not operate acceptably without improvements. Several mitigation strategies have been identified to address anticipated congestion and support the planned Grand Avenue reconstruction.

Recommended Improvements and Mitigation Activities/Alternatives:

Traffic signal and roadway reconstruction

Mitigation action:

- Implementation of a Traffic Signal with Auxiliary Turn Lanes (Planned Improvement). The City of Billings intends to install a traffic signal at this intersection as part of the Grand Avenue – 43rd Street West to 62nd Street West reconstruction project
- Add an auxiliary right-turn lane on the northbound approach
- Provide additional dedicated through lanes on the eastbound and westbound approaches
- Widen Grand Avenue to a five-lane section to meet operational needs

Mitigation benefits and considerations:

- LOS C or better on all approaches during both peak hours
- iMaximum 95th-percentile queue of 13 vehicles (eastbound AM)
- Up to 60% reduction in overall average delay
- 82% reduction in westbound approach delay during the AM peak

Outcome:

- With the 5-lane widening, signalization, and turn lanes, the configuration provides reliable and efficient operations under Future (2044) conditions.

Turbo Roundabout

Mitigation action:

- A turbo roundabout with two circulating lanes on the eastbound and westbound approaches may offer additional benefits

Mitigation benefits and considerations:

- Lower delays than the signalized alternative
- Shorter queues during both AM and PM peak periods
- Improved traffic flow on all approaches

Outcome:

- This option may provide superior operational performance but must be evaluated in the context of corridor coordination needs.

Signal Coordination

Mitigation action:

- Coordination of operations with adjacent signals. The intersection must operate cohesively with the planned traffic signal at Grand Avenue and 54th Street West
- Evaluate corridor-wide signal timing and spacing needs before selecting a preferred intersection control option

Mitigation benefits and considerations:

- Ensures that the selected treatment supports the overall performance of the Grand Avenue corridor

Summary:

Both alternatives require additional roadway footprint, with the magnitude of impacts varying by design. The City should conduct a right-of-way and cost assessment to determine the most feasible long-term solution.

62nd Street West/Rimrock Road

While the overall intersection is expected to function at an acceptable LOS with the recently constructed single-lane roundabout, the eastbound approach is projected to operate at LOS E during the AM peak hour due to conflicting high southbound volumes.

Recommended Improvements and Mitigation Activities/Alternatives:

Slip Lane

Mitigation action:

- An eastbound right-turn slip lane at this roundabout is recommended to enhance operations under Future (2044) traffic volumes

Mitigation benefits and considerations:

- Would allow right-turning vehicles to bypass the heavy southbound left-turn demand

Outcomes:

- Reduction of the average delay on the eastbound approach by approximately 74 percent during the AM peak hour

Summary:

With additional development anticipated in the area, implementing this slip lane is recommended to maintain acceptable operations and mitigate future congestion on the eastbound approach.

56th Street West/King Avenue

The existing single-lane roundabout at this intersection is projected to operate LOS D at

the eastbound approach with Future (2044) volumes during the AM peak hour.

Recommended Improvements and Mitigation Activities/Alternatives:

Slip Lane

Mitigation action:

- An eastbound right-turn slip lane

Mitigation benefits and considerations:

- Would allow right turning vehicles to bypass the heavy southbound through and left-turn demand

Outcomes:

- Reduction of the average delay at the eastbound approach by 40 percent in the AM peak hour

Summary:

This intersection is expected to operate with acceptable LOS under Future (2044) traffic volumes with the existing single-lane roundabout configuration. However, the eastbound approach is projected to operate at LOS D during the AM peak period. It is recommended that traffic continues to be monitored at this intersection to determine whether a right- turn slip lane is needed.

46th Street West/ Rimrock Road

The Future (2044) traffic analysis indicates that heavy eastbound through volumes on Rimrock Road will result in very limited gaps for northbound vehicles entering the corridor. Several improvement strategies are recommended to mitigate these projected operational challenges.

Recommended Improvements and Mitigation Activities/Alternatives:

Dedicated turn lanes

Mitigation action:

- Add Dedicated Northbound Left- and Right-Turn Lanes

Mitigation Benefits and considerations:

- These lanes would help relieve pressure created by continuous eastbound traffic and reduce average northbound approach delay by more than 20%

Outcome:

- This improvement provides near-term relief but may not fully address long-term operational needs as traffic demands continue to increase

Roundabout

Mitigation Action:

- Evaluate a Single-Lane Roundabout: A single-lane roundabout would further enhance northbound access to Rimrock Road.

Mitigation benefits and considerations:

- Reduction of average northbound delay by approximately 75% during peak hours, greatly improving access

Outcome:

- While beneficial to the northbound approach, a roundabout would reduce overall intersection LOS from A to C during the AM peak hour, requiring careful weighing of trade-offs between movement-specific and systemwide performance

Summary:

Under projected 2044 volumes, even with dedicated turn lanes, northbound operations remain constrained due to the dominance of eastbound traffic. The intersection should be monitored over time to track changes in volumes and delays. If operational conditions deteriorate, signalization may be needed to provide controlled access for northbound drivers and maintain acceptable levels of service.

48th Street West/Hesper Road

Future (2044) traffic projections show that high volumes along Hesper Road will limit opportunities for minor-road drivers to enter the intersection at 48th Street West. Although minor-road queues are expected to remain relatively short, several mitigation options would improve overall operations and reduce delays.

Recommended Improvements and Mitigation Activities/Alternatives:

Traffic Signal:

Mitigation action:

- Installation of a traffic signal without the need for auxiliary turn lanes

Mitigation benefits and considerations:

- LOS B or better during both peak hours
- Reduces southbound average delay by approximately 80%
- Manageable 95th-percentile queues, with a maximum of 15 vehicles during the PM peak on the major approaches

Outcome:

- Provides reliable control and improved access for minor-road drivers under future demand.

Roundabout:

Mitigation action:

- A single-lane roundabout would also function well at this location.

Mitigation benefits and considerations:

- LOS A on all approaches throughout the day
- Smooth traffic flow and low delay for all movements

Outcome:

- Offers excellent performance, comparable to the signal option, with consistently high levels of service

Summary:

Although both a traffic signal and a roundabout would effectively serve the intersection under 2044 conditions, immediate changes may not be necessary. This intersection should continue to be monitored for traffic volumes, delay patterns, and queue lengths over time to determine when an upgrade becomes warranted. This will ensures a data-driven decision on future traffic control, allowing improvements to be implemented when operational needs justify them.

Corridors

Several major streets within the study area are projected to operate below the acceptable Level of Service (LOS D) in the Future (2044) scenario. This section stratifies those corridors into individual segments and identifies potential mitigation strategies to address corridor capacity deficiencies.

To quantify the benefit of adding two-way left-turn lanes (TWLTL) or auxiliary left-turn lanes, the project team assumed an added capacity of 3,600 vehicles per day—equivalent to a 20 percent increase in capacity for a typical two-lane principal arterial. For a five-lane cross section, the same 3,600-vehicle capacity increase was applied by converting additional lanes using a factor of 0.2. The added capacity of the center turn lane remains consistent whether applied to a three-lane or five-lane section.

Figure 5.9 illustrates projected corridor LOS conditions for the Future (2044) scenario, and Table 5.12 demonstrates how center turn lanes or additional through lanes improve the volume-to-capacity (V/C) ratio and, in some cases, the overall LOS.

Key Findings and Recommended Mitigation

King Avenue West Corridor

Future (2044) traffic projections indicate that the existing two-lane configuration of King Avenue West will fail to provide adequate capacity east of 56th Street West without improvements. Several mitigation strategies are recommended to support acceptable operations.

Recommended Improvements and Mitigation Activities/Alternatives:

Corridor widening

Mitigation action:

- Corridor widening to a four-lane or five-lane section

Mitigation benefits and considerations:

- LOS C or better

Outcome:

- Additional lanes would significantly improve operations
- Additional capacity would allow for the redistribution of traffic through the network

Summary:

Given the projected failure of the current configuration, widen the corridor to either a four- or five-lane section, based on right-of-way needs, constructability, and cost. Both would provide acceptable operational performance under 2044 traffic volumes and would allow for better redistribution of traffic volumes throughout the network.

Figure 5.12: Future (2044) Corridor Capacity Calculation Results - Mitigations

Segment	Future (2044) - Planned			Future (2044) - Mitigations		
	Lanes	V / C Ratio	LOS	Lanes	V / C Ratio	LOS
Rimrock Road - 54th Street West to 46th Street West	3	0.862	E	4	0.474	A-C
Rimrock Road - East of 46th Street West	3	0.949	F	4	0.522	A-C
King Avenue West - 56th Street West to 48th Street West	2	1.018	F	4	0.509	A-C
King Avenue West - East of 48th Street West	2	1.136	F	4	0.568	A-C

Grand Avenue Corridor

Grand Avenue is planned to be improved to arterial standards, with either a four- or five-lane section. Funding for design and construction improvements has been programmed in the City's 2027 Capital Improvements Plan.

Recommended Improvements and Mitigation Activities/Alternatives:

Corridor Widening

Mitigation action:

- Corridor widening to a five-lane section

Mitigation benefits and considerations:

- LOS C or better

Outcome:

- A five-lane section would significantly improve corridor and intersection operations
- Additional capacity would allow for the redistribution of traffic through the network

Summary:

Although a four-lane section would sufficiently serve the corridor under 2044 traffic volumes, a five-lane section would provide a better driving experience, especially near intersections. Additionally, a five-lane section would better distribute traffic throughout the network. Therefore, this corridor should be widened to a five-lane section.

Rimrock Road Corridor

Rimrock Road is planned to be improved to full arterial and complete streets standards with a three-lane section. Funding for design and construction improvements has been programmed in the City's 2027 Capital Improvements Plan. However, Rimrock Road is projected to operate at unacceptable conditions with this improvement alone.

Recommended Improvements and Mitigation Activities/Alternatives:

Traffic redistribution

Mitigation action:

- Redistribute traffic to other collectors and arterials

Mitigation benefits and considerations:

- North-south corridors are projected to have enough capacity to carry the volume shift
- East-west arterials are projected to be able to carry higher volumes, particularly after the expansion of Grand Avenue and King Avenue West
- LOS D or better

Outcome:

- Redistributing traffic volumes would significantly alleviate and improve operations of the Rimrock Road corridor and remove the need to expand Rimrock Road to a four-lane section.

Summary:

Right-of-way constraints limit the expansion of Rimrock Road to a four-lane section east of the project limits. This makes expanding Rimrock Road to a four- or five-lane section impractical. The corridor is projected to operate at LOS E or

worse with a three-lane section if no traffic is diverted under 2044 traffic volumes. After the expansion of Grand Avenue to a five-lane section and King Avenue West to a four-lane section, under 2044 traffic volumes, the two corridors could support roughly an additional 16,000 daily trips combined before operating in LOS E. The north-south corridors also have available capacity to help redistribute traffic throughout the network. All arterial and collectors would operate with LOS D or better if 20 percent of the 2044 projected traffic volumes for Rimrock Road are shifted to other corridors. North-south corridor should be monitored as traffic is shifted from Rimrock Road.

Access Management

The West Billings transportation system could be improved by a more robust implementation of access management on arterial roads.

Recommended Improvements and Mitigation Activities/Alternatives:

Access Management

Mitigation action:

Regulate public access to and from properties adjacent to arterial roads

Mitigation benefits and considerations:

- Reduce frequency and severity of crashes
- Help improve traffic operations

Outcomes:

- Safer transportation network
- Improved travel reliability

Summary:

Access management would help create a safer, more reliable transportation network in West Billings. Traffic congestion could also be improved by regulating access to main routes.

Corridor Connectivity

The existing West Billings network lacks collector connections, which forces drivers to rely primarily on the arterial road system.

Recommended Improvements and Mitigation Activities/Alternatives:

Create a connected network of collectors and local streets

Mitigation action:

- Create collector and local streets connections between subdivisions

Mitigation benefits and considerations:

- Help redistribute traffic
- Minimize the number of accesses to arterial roads

Outcomes:

- Allow drivers to rely on roads that aren't arterials and balance regional mobility
- Alleviate traffic on arterial roads

Summary:

Create collector and local street connections to provide a more balanced transportation network and help alleviate traffic on arterial roads. Figure 5.11 provides a graphical representation of the location and features associated with the priority street and intersection project recommendations from this study.

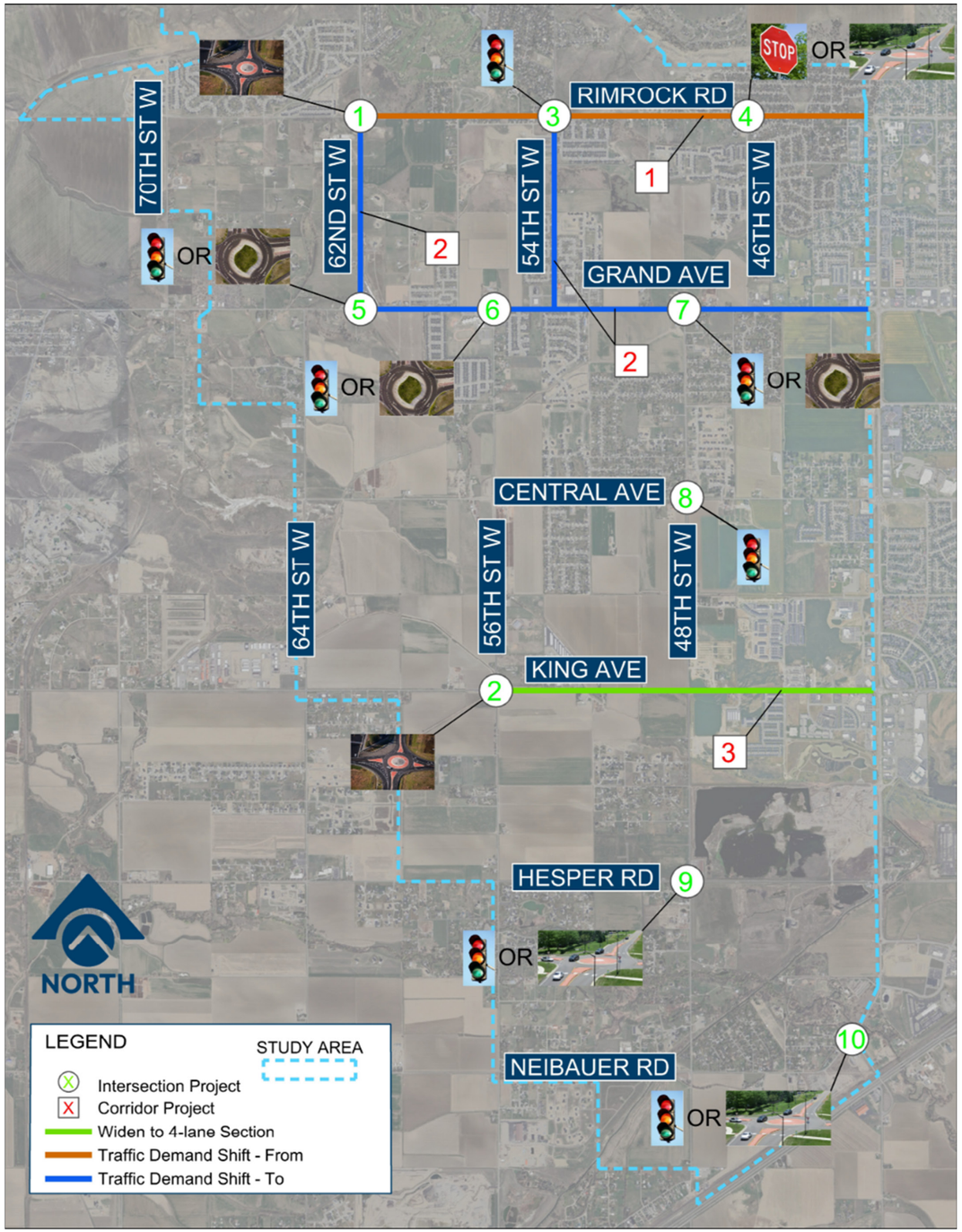


Figure 5.11: Street & Intersection Recommendations

Active Transportation Recommendations

The Existing Conditions (2024) and Future (2044) Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) analyses, combined with the Latent Demand Model, reveal a significant gap between projected active transportation demand and the availability of existing and planned facilities. The northeastern portion of the study area—particularly around Grand Avenue, King Avenue West, and Shiloh Road—shows the highest latent demand due to planned higher-density development and proximity to schools, commercial areas, and residential growth.

The Future (2044) LTS analysis indicates that most corridors within the study area will continue to operate at high stress levels for pedestrians and cyclists. High vehicle speeds, limited shoulders, and the absence of dedicated bicycle facilities will make these corridors inaccessible to most potential users unless substantial improvements are made.

Recommended Active Transportation Improvements

Prioritize Investment in High-Demand Areas

The Latent Demand Model provides a framework for directing infrastructure funding where it will have the greatest impact. Areas north of King Avenue West and east of 56th Street West are expected to generate the highest volumes of walking and biking trips and should be prioritized for improvements. Investments in these zones will support mode shift, enhance safety, and improve accessibility. Improvements, when located in City limits, should be consistent with the City of Billings Complete Streets standards and include sidewalks, side paths, protected bicycle facilities, and enhanced crossings. Improvements in the County should follow adopted subdivision regulations. While final facility locations will depend on subdivision design and FLUM-consistent land uses, the following recommendations identify improvements that should be incorporated into future development and capital projects.

Redesign Arterial Corridors to Reduce Traffic Stress

Most arterial corridors are projected to remain high-stress environments without substantial redesign. To make these roads usable for the broader public, complete street design elements must be implemented to achieve LTS 2 or better. This includes providing side paths or other forms of physical separation required under the City's Complete Streets policy. Planned reconstruction projects on Rimrock Road and Grand Avenue are expected to reduce stress to LTS 2, and similar design standards should be extended to remaining arterial corridors.

Develop a Connected Network of Low-Stress Streets

A functional active transportation system cannot rely solely on arterials. A connected network of collector and local streets—designed with multimodal considerations—is needed to provide safe alternatives to high-speed corridors. Such a network will allow users to move between neighborhoods, schools, parks, and commercial areas without entering high-stress environments and will help distribute traffic more evenly across the system. Future subdivisions should be required to maintain inter-neighborhood connectivity for active modes rather than relying exclusively on reconstructed arterial corridors.

Improve Arterial Road Crossings

High-volume, high-speed arterials often create significant barriers for pedestrians and cyclists. Although roundabouts and signals are planned at major intersection points, these locations are typically spaced a mile or more apart. As development patterns evolve, additional mid-block or intermediate crossings will be needed at intervals of roughly one-quarter mile. Enhanced treatments such as Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons, Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons, and refuge islands should be used to provide safe and frequent crossing options.

Integrate Active Transportation Requirements into Land Development Standards

To ensure that multimodal infrastructure keeps pace with growth, new developments should be required to incorporate active transportation facilities. Future land development should include:

- Installation of sidewalks and bicycle facilities within new subdivisions.
- Dedication of right-of-way for future multimodal corridors.
- Direct connections to existing and planned trail systems.

These strategies together will help close the gap between future demand and available facilities, creating a safer, more connected, and more accessible active transportation network for the study area.

City of Billings

The City of Billings has adopted a Complete Streets policy to ensure its transportation network safely and efficiently serves all users. This policy guides the design of roadways to accommodate pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, and drivers.

Across all roadway types, Billings applies a consistent principle: every street project must consider the needs of all users from the outset. This approach creates a safer, more inclusive, and better-connected network citywide. All future intersection, corridor, and active transportation projects should continue to implement Complete Streets standards.

Note: The Complete Streets policy is specific to the City of Billings; it does not apply to transportation projects or facilities in Yellowstone County.

CHAPTER SIX

IMPLEMENTATION

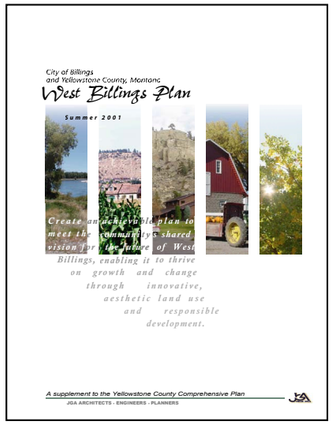
Chapter Six Contents

Overview

Implementation of the West Billings Neighborhood Plan will be guided by numerous influencing factors including state statute and existing local development regulations like zoning code, subdivision regulations, annexation policy and municipal approval processes. In the event of any inconsistencies between this plan and the city-wide, Billings 2045 plan, the Billings 2045 plan shall supersede this plan. Factors beyond the control of state and local governments will also contribute to the implementation of the West Billings Plan, including land use decisions of private landowners and economic market factors.

Land Use and Zoning Recommendations

The future land use map created by this plan will be integrated into the larger Billings 2045 plan future land use map which will be adopted as the City of Billings Future Land Use Plan, per requirements of the Montana Land Use Planning Act. The future land use categories established in this plan will be applied throughout the city and its projected 20-year growth area as part of the Billings 2045 plan. Should the future land use categories be amended as part of the Billings 2045 plan, the Billings 2045 plan shall prevail. The categories are based on existing zones that were adopted by the City of Billings and Yellowstone County during the 2020 Re:Code process.



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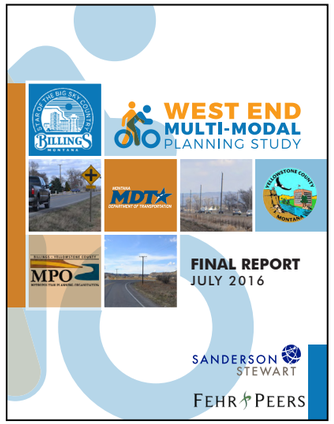

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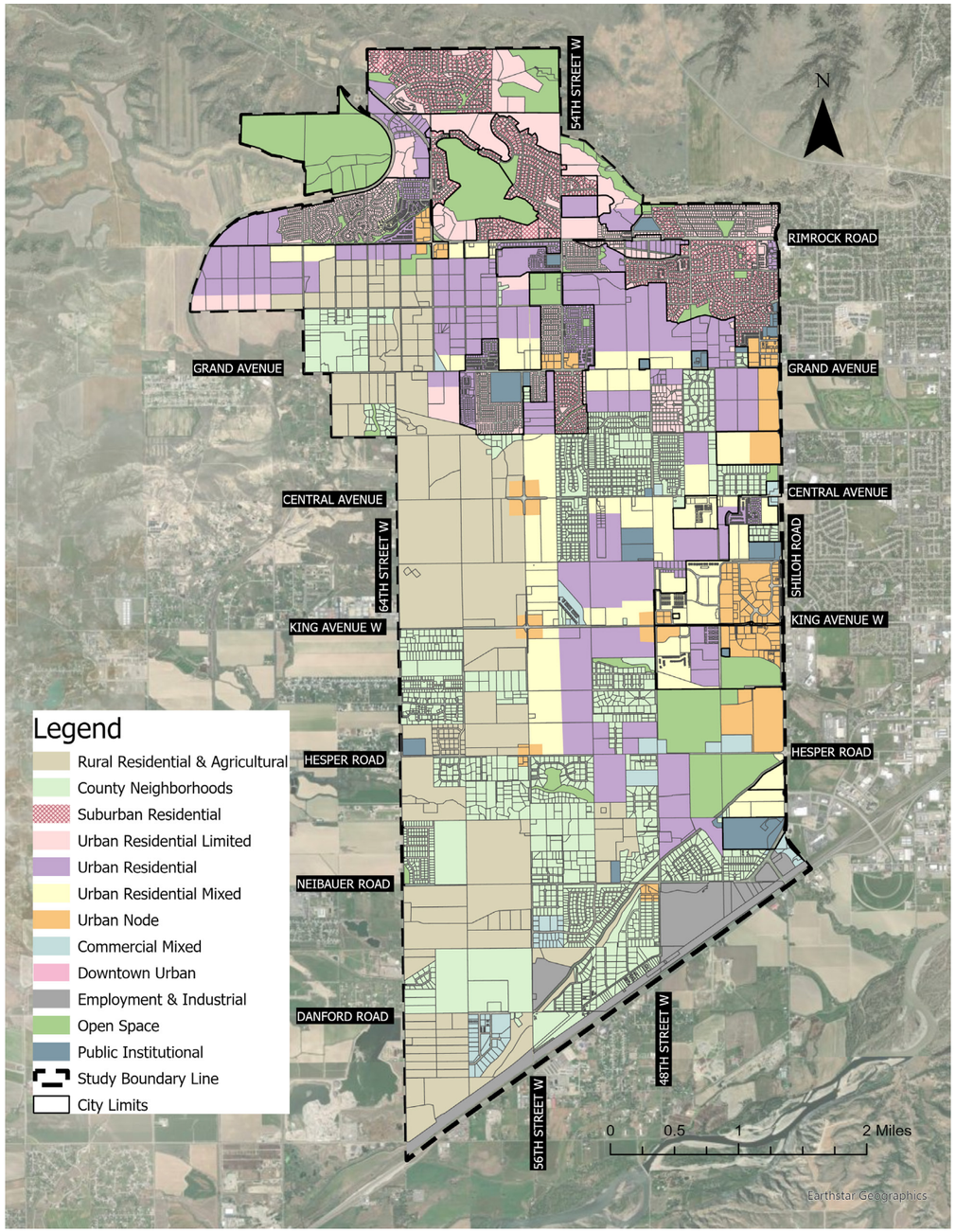

Figure 6.1 Future Land Use Map

Policy Recommendations

This plan and the Billings 2045 Future Land Use Plan will become what, before the Montana Land Use Planning Act, was referred to as Billings' Growth Policy. Therefore, all development approvals that require conformity with the Future Land Use Plan will be judged against the intent and metrics of the future land use map adopted by this Plan and the Billings 2045 Plan. Other policy documents like the City of Billings Subdivision Regulations, Annexation Policy, and Municipal Code will also guide development within the Plan Area.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

In practice, the future land use map established in this Plan only applies to land within the City of Billings zoning jurisdictional area. While County zoning exists and property are assigned future land uses these land uses only apply when annexed into the City.

During creation of this Plan, representatives of City of Billings, Yellowstone County, and local School Districts were included in the plan's steering committee and provided with weekly project updates. Members of the steering committee were given advanced opportunities to provide feedback on the future land use map, which was drawn to incorporate existing policy documents from each governmental entity.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

MONTANA LAND USE PLANNING ACT COMPLIANCE

Chapter Seven Contents

Introduction

In 2023 the Montana Legislature passed Senate Bill 382, the Montana Land Use Planning Act (MLUPA), and later amended it in 2025 through Senate Bill 121. The purpose of MLUPA is to coordinate and streamline planning and development review processes. It establishes that a Growth Policy, such as the City of Billings' 2016 Growth Policy will now be referred to as a Land Use Plan. MLUPA lists criteria for these plans and how they shall be adopted and amended in Part 2 of the statute.

This chapter documents how this plan, the West Billings Neighborhood Plan, as an update to the 2001 West Billings Plan, complies with section 76-25-201 of the Montana Land Use Planning Act.

76-25-201. Adoption or Amendment of Land Use Plan and Future Land Use Map

(1) The local governing body shall adopt or amend by resolution a land use plan and future land use map in accordance with this part only after consideration by and on the recommendation of the planning commission.

(2) Prior to making a recommendation to the governing body to adopt or amend a land use plan and future land use map, the planning commission shall:

(a) provide public notice and participation in accordance with 76-25-106; and

(b) (b) accept, consider, and respond to public comment on the proposed land use plan and future land use map. All public comment must be part of the administrative record transmitted to the governing body.

City/County staff completed all public meeting notices in accordance with section 76-25-106. Sanbell, in its capacity as consultant to Yellowstone County, posted materials presented during public and the City of Billings meetings on the project website. Public comment received in meetings, surveys and maps were analyzed and integrated into the plan document. Questions and comments received during public meetings were responded to by staff and consultants at that time. All comments received during the public input process are included in Appendix A.

(3) After meeting the requirements of subsection (2), the planning commission shall make a final recommendation to the governing body to adopt, modify, or reject the proposed land use plan and future land use map or any amendment to the proposed land use plan and future land use map.

(4) The governing body shall incorporate any existing neighborhood, area, or plans adopted pursuant to Title 76, chapter 1, that meet the requirements of this chapter into the land use plan and future land use map.

(5)

(a) The governing body shall consider the recommendation of the planning commission to adopt, modify, or reject the proposed land use plan and future land use map or any amendment to the proposed land use plan and future land use map.

(b) After providing public notice and participation in accordance with 76-25-106, the governing body may adopt, with any revisions the local governing body considers appropriate, or reject the land use plan and future land use map or any amendment to the proposed land use plan and future land use map proposed by the planning commission.

(6) An amendment to a land use plan or future land use map may be initiated:

(a) by majority vote of the governing body;

(b) on petition of at least 15% of the electors of the local government jurisdiction to which the plan applies, as registered at the last general election; or

(c) by a property owner applying for a zoning, subdivision, or other land use permit.

(7)

(a) After the initiation of an amendment to a land use plan or future land use map allowed in subsection (6), the planning commission shall make a preliminary determination of whether the proposed land use plan or future land use map amendment results in new or increased impacts to or from local facilities, services, natural resources, natural environment, or natural hazards from those previously described and analyzed in the assessment conducted in the development of the land use plan.

(b) If the planning commission finds new or increased impacts from the proposed land use plan or future land use map amendment, the local government shall collect additional data and conduct additional analysis necessary to provide the planning commission with the opportunity to consider all potential impacts resulting from the amendment before proceeding under subsection (2).

(8) The governing body may not amend the land use plan or future land use map unless:

(a) the amendment is found in substantial compliance with the land use plan; and

(b) the potential impacts resulting from development in substantial compliance with the proposed amendment have been made available for public review and comment and have been fully considered by the governing body.

The City of Billings City Council and the City Planning Commission will follow the statutory amendment adoption requirements set forth in 76-25-201.

The West Billings Neighborhood Plan Update was initiated by majority votes of Billings City Council and the Yellowstone Board of County Commissioners.

The themes of the West Billings Neighborhood Plan Update were directly adapted from the themes of the 2001 West Billings Plan and the goals of the 2016 City of Billings Growth Policy with input provided by members of the public, ensuring that the plan update is in substantial compliance with those documents. Adequate time for public review of this plan will be provided, and the City of Billings and Yellowstone County will follow statutory requirements regarding a complete review of this plan as part of the adoption process.

Analysis of natural resources, natural environment and natural hazards was

limited to inclusion of floodplain in future land use map drafting process.

76-25-202. Update of Land Use Plan or Future Land Use Map

(1) After a local government adopts a land use plan and future land use map in accordance with 76-25-201, the land use plan and future land use map must be reviewed by the planning commission every fifth year after adoption to determine whether an update to the land use plan and future land use map must be performed. The planning commission shall:

(a) make a preliminary determination regarding the existence of new or increased impacts to or from local facilities, services, natural resources, natural environment, or natural hazards from those previously described and analyzed when the land use plan and future land use map were previously adopted;

(b) provide public notice and participation in accordance with 76-25-106; and

(c) accept, consider, and respond to public comment on the review of the land use plan and future land use map. All public comment must be part of the administrative record transmitted to the governing body.

(2)

(a) If the planning commission finds new or increased impacts under subsection (1), the planning commission shall recommend an update to the land use plan, future land use map, or both.

(b) If the planning commission finds no new or increased impacts under subsection (1), the planning commission shall make a recommendation to the governing body that no update to the land use plan or future land use map is necessary.

(3) After receiving the recommendation of the planning commission, the governing body may direct that an update of the land use plan, future land use map, or both be completed or may readopt the current land use plan, future land use map, or both.

(4)

(a) In developing, drafting, and considering an update to the land use plan or future land use map, the planning commission shall follow the process set forth in 76-25-201 with respect to the changes proposed to the land use plan or future land use map.

(b) If the planning commission finds new or increased impacts resulting from the land use plan or future land use map, the local government shall collect additional data and conduct additional analysis necessary to provide the governing body and the public with the opportunity to comment on and consider all potential impacts resulting from an update to the land use plan or future land use map.

(5) At any time before an update is required after a review under subsection (1), the local governing body may direct that an update to the land use plan or future land use map be prepared for consideration by the planning commission and for recommendation to the governing body.

(6) Once an update to the land use plan or future land use map is adopted or the land use plan or future land use map is readopted, the information and analysis contained within the land use plan and future land use map must be considered accurate for the purposes of making site-specific development decisions in substantial compliance with the land use plan and future land use map.

The City of Billings City Council and the City Planning Commission will follow the statutory Land Use Plan and land Use Map update requirements set forth in 76-25-202.

The West Billings Neighborhood Plan will be reviewed in conjunction with the overall 5-year review cycle of the Land Use Plan and the subsequent creation of a community-wide future land use map.

76-25-203. Existing Conditions and Population Projections

(1) The land use plan must include, at a minimum, inventories and descriptions of existing conditions of housing, local services and facilities, economic development, natural resources, environment, and hazards, and land use within the jurisdictional boundaries of the land use plan.

(2) As set forth in 76-25-206 through 76-25-209 and 76-25-213 through 76-25-216, the land use plan must include, at minimum, a description, map, and analysis of how the jurisdiction will accommodate its projected population over the next 20 years and the expected impacts of the development in the areas of housing, local services and facilities, economic development, natural resources, environment, and hazards.

(3) The inventories and descriptions in the plan must be based on up-to-date surveys, maps, diagrams, charts, descriptive material, studies, and reports necessary to explain and supplement the analysis of each section of the land use plan.

(4)

(a) A jurisdiction shall use demographics provided by:

(i) the most recent decennial census or census estimate of the United States census bureau; and

(ii) population projections for a 20-year period based on permanent and seasonal population estimates: (A) provided by demographics published by the department of commerce; (B) generated by the local government; or (C) produced by a professional firm specializing in projections.

(b) When a population projection is not available, population projections for the jurisdiction must be reflective of the area's proportional share of the total county population and the total county population growth.

The West Billings Neighborhood Plan incorporates by reference the demographic information contained in the 2023 LRTP Billings Urban Area Long Range Transportation Plan. Details of demographic trends and housing demand projections used in this plan are included in Chapter 4, Future Land Use. Existing conditions of the plan area's land use, zoning, and public infrastructure were sourced from Yellowstone County GIS data. Analysis of natural resources, environment and hazards were not included in this plan and will be

analyzed as part of the overall Billings 2045 plan.

76-25-206. Housing

(1) A local governing body shall identify and analyze existing and projected housing needs for the projected population of the jurisdiction and provide regulations that allow for the rehabilitation, improvement, or development of the number of housing units needed, as identified in the land use plan and future land use map, including:

(a) a quantification of the jurisdiction's existing and projected needed housing types, including location, age, condition, and occupancy required to accommodate existing and estimated population projections;

(b) an inventory of sites, including zoned, unzoned, vacant, underutilized, and potential redevelopment sites, available to meet the jurisdiction's needed housing types;

(c) an analysis of any constraints to housing development, such as zoning, development standards, and infrastructure needs and capacity, and the identification of market-based incentives that may affect or encourage the development of needed housing types; and

(d) a detailed description of what actions the jurisdiction may take to accommodate the projected needed housing types identified in subsection (1)(a).

(2) The housing section of the land use plan and future land use map may incorporate by reference any information or policies identified in other housing needs assessments adopted by the governing body.

(3) If, after performing the analysis required in subsection (1), the local government determines that the total needed housing types may not be met due to lack of resources, development sites, infrastructure capacity, or other documented constraints, the local government shall establish the minimum number of housing units that may be rehabilitated, improved, or developed within the jurisdiction over the 20-year planning period and the actions the local government may take to remove constraints to the development of those units over that period.

(4) Progress toward the construction of the housing units identified as needed to meet projected housing needs during the 20-year planning period of the land use plan must be documented at each fifth year review of the land use plan as required in 76-25-202.

(5) The amount of detail provided in the analysis beyond the minimum criteria established in this section is at the discretion of the local governing body.

During production of the West Billings Neighborhood Plan several sources were referenced to assess the plan area's current housing inventory and future housing demand for the 2045 plan horizon. These sources include the 2023 LRTP Billings Urban Area Long Range Transportation Plan, the Billings-Yellowstone Metropolitan Planning Organization, the 2020 decennial Census, and the Montana Department of Commerce. A detailed explanation of the methods used to project population growth in the plan area is included in Chapter 4, Future Land Use. Recommendations for policy changes are included in Chapter 6, Implementation. The plan incorporates the themes and goals of the 2001 West Billings Plan and the 2016 City of Billings Growth Policy as they relate to housing choice and affordability.

76-25-207. Local Services and Facilities

(1) The land use plan must:

(a) determine the existing and anticipated levels of public safety and emergency services necessary to serve the projected population of the jurisdiction, including law enforcement, fire protection, emergency management system agencies, and local health care organizations;

(b) contain an inventory and map of existing fire protection, law enforcement, and emergency service jurisdictional areas and anticipated response times, a description of mutual aid or cooperative service agreements, and the location of hospitals or clinics in the jurisdiction;

(c) identify capital and service improvements for fire, law enforcement, emergency services, and health services for the jurisdictional area necessary to meet the projected population;

(d) determine the existing capacity, existing deficiencies, planned expansion, and anticipated levels of utility services necessary to serve the projected population in the jurisdiction, including water, wastewater, and storm water systems, solid waste disposal, and other utility services, as identified by the local government;

(e) contain an inventory and map of all utility service areas, system networks, and facilities;

(f) identify local utility capital and service improvements for the jurisdictional area necessary to meet the projected population;

(g) determine the existing capacity, existing deficiencies, planned expansion, and anticipated improvements to the transportation network serving the jurisdictional area necessary to serve the projected population in the jurisdiction;

(h) contain an inventory and classification map of all existing and planned roads within the jurisdictional area, including major highways, secondary highways, and local routes, all non-motorized routes, including bike lanes and pedestrian thoroughfares, and all public transit systems and facilities; and

(i) identify planned capital and service transportation improvements necessary to serve the projected population.

(2) The local government shall:

(a) coordinate with school districts within the jurisdiction to determine the existing capacity of, planned expansion of, and anticipated improvements necessary for the local K-12 school system to serve the projected population in the jurisdiction; and

(b) request that the local school district provide any inventory and maps of existing K-12 educational facilities within the jurisdictional area and identify any capital and service improvements necessary to meet the projected population.

(3) The local government may include an analysis of existing capacity and service levels, planned expansions of, and anticipated improvements necessary to provide other services to the projected population in the jurisdiction.

(4) The local government may incorporate by

reference any information or policies identified in other relevant local services or facilities assessments adopted by the local governing body, such as a capital improvements plan or an impact fee study.

(5) The amount of detail provided in the analysis beyond the minimum criteria established in this section is at the discretion of the local governing body.

The West Billings Neighborhood Plan incorporates, by reference, the local services and facilities analysis of the 2023 Billings Urban Area Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Inventories of facilities like schools, roadways and utilities were also included for analysis in Chapter 34, Future Land Use. Future provision of transportation infrastructure is included in the Multi-modal Transportation Chapter 4 of this plan.

76-25-208. Economic Development

(1) The land use plan must:

(a) assess existing and potential commercial, industrial, small business, and institutional enterprises in the jurisdiction, including the types of sites and supporting services needed by the enterprises;

(b) summarize job composition and trends by industry sector, including existing labor force characteristics and future labor force requirements, for existing and potential enterprises in the jurisdiction;

(c) assess the extent to which local characteristics, assets, and resources support or constrain existing and potential enterprises, including access to transportation to market goods and services, and assess historic, cultural, and scenic resources and their relationship to private sector success in the jurisdiction;

(d) inventory sites within the jurisdiction, including zoned, unzoned, vacant, underutilized, and potentially redeveloped sites, available to meet the jurisdiction's economic development needs;

(e) assess the adequacy of existing and projected local facilities and services, schools, housing stock, and other land uses necessary to support existing and potential commercial, industrial, and institutional enterprises; and

(f) assess the financial feasibility of supporting anticipated economic growth in the jurisdiction.

(2) The local government may incorporate by reference any information or policies identified in other relevant economic development assessments.

(3) The amount of detail provided in the analysis beyond the minimum criteria established in this section is at the discretion of the local governing body.

The West Billings Neighborhood Plan incorporates, by reference, the economic development and commercial land use needs analysis of the 2023 Billings Urban Area Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Analysis of job growth in the plan area is included in the existing conditions overview of in Chapter 1.

76-25-209. Natural Resources, Environment, and Hazards

(1) The land use plan must:

(a) include inventories and maps of natural resources within the jurisdiction, including but not limited to agricultural lands, agricultural water user facilities, minerals, sand and gravel resources, forestry lands, and other natural resources identified by the local government;

(b) describe the natural resource characteristics of the jurisdictional area, including a summary of historical natural resource utilization, data on existing utilization, and projected future trends;

(c) include an inventory, maps, and description of the natural environment of the jurisdictional area, including a summary of important natural features and the conditions of and real and potential threats to soils, geology, topography, vegetation, surface water, groundwater, aquifers, floodplains, scenic resources, wildlife, wildlife habitat, wildlife corridors, and wildlife nesting sites within the jurisdiction; and

(d) include maps of, identify factors related to, and describe natural hazards within the jurisdictional area, including flooding, fire, earthquakes, steep slopes and other known geologic hazards and other natural hazards identified by the jurisdiction, with a summary of past significant events resulting from natural hazards that includes:

(i) a description of land use constraints resulting from natural hazards;

(ii) a description of the efforts that have been taken within the local jurisdiction to mitigate the impact of natural hazards; and

(iii) a description of the role that natural resources and the environment play in the local economy.

(2) The local government may incorporate by reference any information or policies identified in other relevant assessments of natural resources, environment, or hazards.

(3) The amount of detail provided in the analysis beyond the minimum criteria established in this section is at the discretion of the local governing body.

The West Billings Neighborhood Plan incorporates, by reference, the environmental analysis of the 2023 Billings Urban Area Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and the 2025 Yellowstone County Community Wildfire Protection Plan. Floodplain data provided by Yellowstone County was incorporated into production of the future land use map of the West Billings plan area. Further analysis of environmental constraints and hazards as well as natural resources will be completed as part of the Billings 2045 plan.

76-25-213. Land Use and Future Land Use Map

(1) A land use plan must include a future land use map and a written description of the proposed general distribution, location, and extent of residential, commercial, mixed, industrial, agricultural, recreational, and

conservation uses of land and other categories of public and private uses, as determined by the local government.

(2) The future land use map must reflect the anticipated and preferred pattern and intensities of development for the jurisdiction over the next 20 years, based on the information, analysis, and public input collected, considered, and relevant to the population projections for and economic development of the jurisdiction and the housing and local services needed to accommodate those projections, while acknowledging and addressing the natural resource, environment, and natural hazards of the jurisdiction.

(3) The future land use map may not confer any authority to regulate what is not otherwise specifically authorized in this chapter.

(4) The future land use map and the written description must include:

(a) a statement of intent describing the jurisdiction's applicable zoning, subdivision, and other land use regulations;

(b) descriptions of existing and future land uses, including:

(i) categories of public and private use;

(ii) general descriptions of use types and densities of those uses;

(iii) general descriptions of population; and

(iv) other aspects of the built environment;

(c) geographic distribution of future land uses in the jurisdiction, anticipated over a 20-year planning period that specifically demonstrate:

(i) adequate land to support the projected population in all land use types in areas where local services can be adequately and cost-effectively provided for that population;

(ii) adequate sites to accommodate the type and supply of housing needed for the projected population; and

(iii) areas of the jurisdiction that are not generally suitable for development and the reason, based on the constraints identified through the land use plan analysis;

(d) a statement acknowledging areas within the jurisdiction known to be subject to covenants, codes, and restrictions that may limit the type, density, or intensity of housing development projected in the future land use map; and

(e) areas of or adjacent to the jurisdiction subject to increased growth pressures, higher development densities, or other urban development influences.

(5) To the greatest extent possible, local governments shall create compatibility in the land use plans and future land use map in those areas identified in subsection (4)(e).

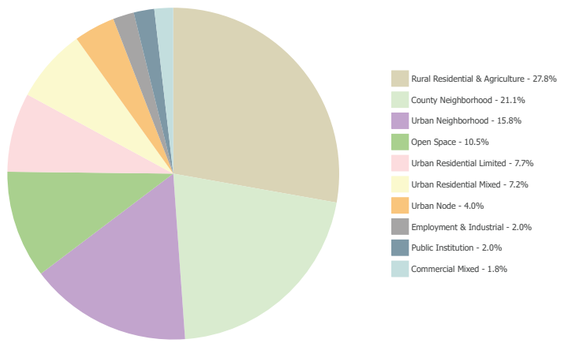

Figure 7.1 - Future Land Use Categories

(6)
The land use plan may:

(a) provide information required by a federal land management agency for the local governing body to establish or maintain coordination or cooperating agency status; and

(b) incorporate by reference any information or policies identified in other relevant assessments adopted by the local governing body, such as a pre-disaster mitigation plan or wildfire protection plan.

(7) The amount of detail provided in the analysis beyond the minimum criteria established in this section is at the discretion of the local governing body.

The West Billings Neighborhood Plan creates a future land use map for the West Billings plan area. The details of the methods of production, land use categories, and final map are included in Chapter 4 of this document: Future Land Use.

76-25-214. Area Plans

(1) A local governing body may adopt area plans for a portion of the jurisdiction to provide a more localized analysis of all or any part of a land use plan. An area plan may include but is not limited to a neighborhood plan, a corridor plan, or a subarea plan.

(2) The adoption, amendment, or update of an area plan must follow the same process as a land use plan provided for in this part and may be adopted as an amendment to the land use plan.

(3) The area plan must be in substantial compliance with the land use plan. To the extent an area plan is inconsistent with the land use plan, the land use plan controls.

Figure 7.2 - Themes to Principles

The West Billings Neighborhood Plan creates a future land use map for the West Billings plan area and will be adopted concurrently with the Billings 2045 plan, which will include a future land use map for the entirety of the Billings MPO jurisdiction. The West Billings Neighborhood Plan is built upon five themes adapted from the 2001 West Billings Plan, ensuring that the update is consistent with the previous area plan.

76-25-216. Implementation

(1) The land use plan and future land use map is not a regulatory document and must include an implementation section that:

(a) establishes meaningful and predictable implementation measures for the use and development of land within the jurisdiction based on the contents of the land use plan and future land use map;

(b) provides meaningful direction for the content of more detailed land use regulations and future land use maps; and

(c) requires identification of those programs, activities, actions, or land use regulations that may be part of the overall strategy of the jurisdiction for implementing the land use plan.

(2) The implementation section of the land use plan must include:

(a) if the local jurisdiction does not have current zoning regulations, a schedule by which zoning regulations and a zoning map will be adopted in accordance with the deadlines set forth in 76-25-105;

(b) if the local jurisdiction has current zoning regulations, an analysis of whether any inconsistencies exist between current zoning regulations and the land use plan and future land use map, including a map of the inconsistencies. If inconsistencies exist, the local government shall identify:

(i) specific implementation actions necessary to amend the zoning regulations and the zoning map to bring the zoning regulations and zoning map into substantial compliance with the land use plan and future land use map;

(ii) a schedule for amending the zoning regulations and zoning map to be in substantial compliance with the land use plan and future land use map, in accordance with the deadlines set forth in 76-25-105;

(iii) a schedule for adopting a capital improvements program or for amending an existing capital improvements program to be in substantial compliance with the land use plan and future land use map;

(iv) a schedule for expanding or replacing public facilities and the anticipated costs and revenue sources proposed to meet those costs, which must be reflected in a jurisdiction's capital improvement program;

(v) if applicable, a schedule for updating the plan for extension of services required in 7-2-4732 to be in substantial compliance with the land use plan; and

(vi) a schedule for implementing any other specific actions necessary to achieve the components of the land use plan, including a timeframe or prioritization of each specific public action; and

(c) procedures for monitoring and evaluating the local government's progress toward meeting the implementation schedule.

The West Billings Neighborhood Plan proposes strategies for implementation in Chapter 6 of this document, Implementation.