



**AGENDA
CITY OF LAUREL
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2020
6:30 PM
ONLINE**

NEXT RES. NO.
R20-78

NEXT ORD. NO.
O20-04

WELCOME . . . By your presence in the City Council Chambers, you are participating in the process of representative government. To encourage that participation, the City Council has specified times for citizen comments on its agenda -- once following the Consent Agenda, at which time citizens may address the Council concerning any brief community announcement not to exceed one minute in duration for any speaker; and again following Items Removed from the Consent Agenda, at which time citizens may address the Council on any matter of City business that is not on tonight's agenda. Each speaker will be limited to three minutes, unless the time limit is extended by the Mayor with the consent of the Council. Citizens may also comment on any item removed from the consent agenda prior to council action, with each speaker limited to three minutes, unless the time limit is extended by the Mayor with the consent of the Council. If a citizen would like to comment on an agenda item, we ask that you wait until the agenda item is presented to the Council by the Mayor and the public is asked to comment by the Mayor. Once again, each speaker is limited to three minutes.

Any person who has any question concerning any agenda item may call the City Clerk-Treasurer's office to make an inquiry concerning the nature of the item described on the agenda. Your City government welcomes your interest and hopes you will attend the Laurel City Council meetings often.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call of the Council

Approval of Minutes

1. Approval of Minutes of November 10, 2020.

Correspondence

2. Beartooth RC&D November Correspondence.
3. Laurel 2021 Urban Allocation Correspondence

Council Disclosure of Ex Parte Communications

Public Hearing

4. Growth Management Plan

Consent Items

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

*The Consent Calendar adopting the printed Recommended Council Action will be enacted with one vote. **The Mayor will first ask the Council members if any Council member wishes to remove any item from the Consent Calendar for discussion and consideration.** The matters removed from the Consent Calendar will be considered individually at the end of this Agenda under "Items Removed from the Consent Calendar." (See Section 12.) The entire Consent Calendar, with the exception of items removed to be discussed under "Items Removed from the Consent Calendar," is then voted upon by roll call under one motion.*

5. Claims entered through November 20, 2020.
6. Approval of Payroll Register for PPE 11/1/2020 totaling \$198,495.03
7. Approval of Payroll Register for PPE 11/15/2020 totaling \$202,286.64.
8. Council Workshop Minutes of November 17, 2020.

Ceremonial Calendar

Reports of Boards and Commissions

9. Budget/Finance Committee Minutes of October 27, 2020.
Budget/Finance Committee Minutes of November 10, 2020.
Tree Board Minutes of October 15, 2020.

Public Works Committee Minutes of October 19, 2020.

Audience Participation (Three-Minute Limit)

Citizens may address the Council regarding any item of City business that is not on tonight's agenda. Comments regarding tonight's agenda items will be accepted under Scheduled Matters. The duration for an individual speaking under Audience Participation is limited to three minutes. While all comments are welcome, the Council will not take action on any item not on the agenda.

Scheduled Matters

- [10.](#) Resolution No. R20-78: A Resolution of the City Council Authorizing the submission of a Big Sky Economic Development Trust Fund Planning Project Grant Application and to Commit the Matching Funds Required by the Creating Agency.
- [11.](#) Resolution No. R20-79: Resolution Authorizing The Mayor To Execute An Agreement With Beartooth RC&D Economic Development District.
- [12.](#) Resolution No. R20-80: Resolution Of Intent By The City Council To Adopt The 2020 City Of Laurel Growth Policy Creating A Thirty (30) Day Public Comment Period.
- [13.](#) Resolution No. R20-81: A Resolution Granting A Variance To The Laurel Subdivision Ordinance Development Requirements To Approve The Proposed Krieghoff Loop As Currently Designed To Not Align And Continue The Existing Right-Of-Way For Mulberry Avenue Located South Of The Proposed Goldberg Sporting Estates Subdivision
- [14.](#) Resolution No. R20-82: A Resolution Granting A Variance From The City's Subdivision Ordinance Development Requirements To Approve A Thirty (30) Foot Right-Of-Way Dedication Along Yard Office Road And A Fifty-Six (56) Foot Wide Private Internal Road For Goldberg Sporting Estates Subdivision 4th Filing.

Items Removed From the Consent Agenda

Community Announcements (One-Minute Limit)

This portion of the meeting is to provide an opportunity for citizens to address the Council regarding community announcements. The duration for an individual speaking under Community Announcements is limited to one minute. While all comments are welcome, the Council will not take action on any item not on the agenda.

Council Discussion

Council members may give the City Council a brief report regarding committees or groups in which they are involved.

Mayor Updates

Unscheduled Matters

Adjournment

The City makes reasonable accommodations for any known disability that may interfere with a person's ability to participate in this meeting. Persons needing accommodation must notify the City Clerk's Office to make needed arrangements. To make your request known, please call 406-628-7431, Ext. 2, or write to City Clerk, PO Box 10, Laurel, MT 59044, or present your request at City Hall, 115 West First Street, Laurel, Montana.

DATES TO REMEMBER

File Attachments for Item:

1. Approval of Minutes of November 10, 2020.

DRAFT

MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF LAUREL

November 10, 2020

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Laurel, Montana, was held in the Council Chambers and called to order by Mayor Tom Nelson at 6:30 p.m. on November 10, 2020.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Emelie Eaton Heidi Sparks
 Bruce McGee Richard Herr
 Scot Stokes
 Richard Klose

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: Irv Wilke Don Nelson

OTHER STAFF PRESENT: Nick Altonaga, Planning Director

Mayor Nelson led the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag.

Mayor Nelson asked the Council to observe a moment of silence.

MINUTES:

Motion by Council Member McGee to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of October 27, 2020, as presented, seconded by Council Member Klose. There was no public comment or council discussion. A vote was taken on the motion. All six council members present voted aye. Motion carried 6-0.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- Airport Authority Minutes of August 25, 2020.
- Airport Authority Minutes of September 22, 2020.

COUNCIL DISCLOSURE OF EX PARTE COMMUNICATIONS: None.

PUBLIC HEARING:

- **Public Hearing – A Resolution To Approve The Conditional Use Of The Property Located At 1009 East 6th Street In Laurel For The Construction And Operation Of A Union Meeting Hall At Such Address Within The City Of Laurel.**

Mayor Nelson stated this is the time and place set for the public hearing on the City of Laurel's A Resolution To Approve The Conditional Use Of The Property Located At 1009 East 6th Street In Laurel For The Construction And Operation Of A Union Meeting Hall At Such Address Within The City Of Laurel.

Mayor Nelson opened the public hearing and asked Staff to present the item.

Nick Altonaga, Planning Director, read the attached Staff Report.

Mayor Nelson opened the floor for public comment and stated that copies of the rules governing the public hearing were posted in the council chambers.

Mayor Nelson asked three (3) times if there were any proponents. There were none.

Mayor Nelson asked three (3) times if there were any opponents. There were none.

Mayor Nelson stated that he would not have Staff respond to questions as there were none.

Mayor Nelson closed the public hearing.

DRAFT

- **Public Hearing – Goldberg Sporting Estate Variance #1 – Street Connectivity.**

Mayor Nelson stated this is the time and place set for the public hearing on the City of Laurel's Goldberg Sporting Estate Variance #1 – Street Connectivity.

Mayor Nelson opened the public hearing and asked Staff to present the item.

Nick Altonaga, Planning Director, read the attached Staff Report.

Mayor Nelson opened the floor for public comment and stated that copies of the rules governing the public hearing were posted in the council chambers.

Mayor Nelson asked three (3) times if there were any proponents.

Scott Aspenlieder, Performance Engineering, stated he is representing the Developer, Goldberg Investments. He stated they feel they have put forward what they believe is a pretty solid case in relation to why they feel the variance is supported, why it meets the requirements of the City, and why they feel it is the best long-range situation as far as this development is concerned. The big thing with the alignment of Mullberry is a one block long street that does not connect to anything at this stage of the game, off of E. 8th. Mr. Altonaga noted in his staff report that there may be future plans off of E. 7th, but from a development standpoint, it is impossible for us to know what the City may or may not see for development for that end of the City when there is not a capital improvement plans in place, and nothing noted to us. And quite frankly as we modified our layout to try and create connectivity and connect to the commercial portion of the development. And modify that plat so that the commercial part ties to the residential part. So you have a tie from Yard Office Road through the development to E. 8th. We have done everything that we can. The alignment from our standpoint, just strictly from a technical standpoint, you want to minimize intersections and minimize traffic conflicts. It's even acknowledged in Staffs Report that this alignment would align with a more utilized approach into Cotter's Sewer Service. That is used by a commercial business. It is used quite frequently; there is a lot of traffic there. It's a more safe situation to align this intersection with Cotter's Sewer Service than it is to align with a dead-end road that services four residential lots. Maybe sometime in the future could tie into E. 9th or E. 7th. Even at that point, if E. 7th is built out ten years down the road, you still have a safe intersection there where people can come off the subdivision, turn onto E. 8th and down Mullberry and go onto 7th if they want to try and spit traffic on their way into the City of Laurel. There is no real good argument to dispute the fact that it is a safer intersection if we can align our road to the commercial entrance to Cotter's Sewer Service. From our perspective, this is the best situation; it creates a better situation for the existing house that is located in the Southwest corner of that is going to stay. You won't have a residential road coming right down your kitchen window to that house, which ends up staying there. We have put forward what we think/feel is a good safe proposal for the community to consider. And something that frankly is going to help from a traffic standpoint for the residents of the area and the residents of East Laurel. That's the case he guesses he would make on this variance. He thinks this is the best they can do. It fits and meets all the requirements, and he doesn't think it is justified at this stage of the game to try to align this with a road that dead ends and serves four residential lots, on the off chance that maybe someday in the next decade E. 7th ever gets built out.

Mayor Nelson asked three (3) times if there were any opponents. There were none.

Mayor Nelson stated that he would not have Staff respond to questions as there were none.

Mayor Nelson closed the public hearing.

- **Public Hearing – Goldberg Sporting Estate Variance #2 – Right-of-way, Dedication, Road Width.**

Mayor Nelson stated this is the time and place set for the public hearing on the City of Laurel's Goldberg Sporting Estate Variance #2 – Right-of-way, Dedication, Road Width.

Mayor Nelson opened the public hearing and asked Staff to present the item.

Nick Altonaga, Planning Director, read the attached Staff Report.

Mayor Nelson opened the floor for public comment and stated that copies of the rules governing the public hearing were posted in the council chambers.

Mayor Nelson asked three (3) times if there were any proponents.

Scott Aspenlieder, Performance Engineering representing the Developer Goldberg Investments, stated Nick covered a whole lot of ground there, and as you can see, this 10 foot of right-of-way along Yard Office Road can be a little bit confusing. Ten feet to most people doesn't sound like a lot, but as you're taking 10 feet through a commercial corridor. The value of that starts to add up significantly. He stated he wanted to touch on a whole lot of points here with respect to this 10 foot of dedication on Yard Office Road. The first thing he would say is, as a Developer and as an applicant, the only thing they can do is to try to submit to meet your, the City of Laurel, your standards. Yard Office Road, as you annexed it in has 80 feet of right-of-way. Yard Office Road in your Transportation Plan developed in 2014, is designated as a commercial collector requiring 80 feet of right-of-way. When we had this conversation early on, he stated he doesn't want this to be misconstrued or miss represented, but when we had this conversation early on with Forrest Sanderson, the contract planner at the time. What we talked about very, very explicitly and specifically with he and Kurt was that we would considering giving some additional right-of-way along Yard Office Road; however, I don't feel like technically we need to submit a variance because Yard Office Road already has the right-of-way width required by your plans and by your standards. So we would consider it given that there is a disputable you have 30 to 40 feet of that right-of-way that is used for a drainage ditch. We would consider giving you an additional 30 feet, giving you a 70-foot-wide, even considering as stated in Mr. Altonaga's staff report a 40 feet of that 80 feet is used for a drainage ditch, which again is not my issue; we meet your standards as designated in your own documents. We would consider going ahead and dedicating an additional 30 feet to make sure we could incorporate sidewalks, any kind of widening, an additional turn lane on Yard Office Road if it determined that was required by the traffic study as we go through the design on this. That's how we ended up here. I don't feel professionally; technically, we even have this as a variance request because technically, we meet your requirements as stated in your own standards and documents. So as we talk about donating an additional 30 feet, we still give you; if you take that 40 feet off that Mr. Altonaga has said is used for drainage, we still have 70 feet. That road is already built, if we are being honest, Yard Office Road may be widened, and that extra 30 feet would definitely help in the widening of that road. But you are not going to see a complete destruction and reconstruction of Yard Office Road even at an arterial width; in the worst-case scenario, we have to put a center turn lane in to get in and out of the layout we've provided, and we've proposed for Yard Office Road to get into the commercial portion of our development. In the worst-case scenario, we put a turn lane in, a center turn lane. That's a three-lane wide road with a sidewalk on our side that we would be responsible for building. Seventy feet, taking into account for what's already there is more, more, more sufficient width to be able to accomplish that and make that happen. The additional 10 feet, to be able to see it align with what may have been dedicated 50 years ago to the north on a County subdivision which is not going to be annexed into the City of Laurel in anytime in the near future. Should not be the reasoning for asking for an additional 10 feet. Again remember, we are giving you an additional 30 feet that personally and professionally I don't think we necessarily need to dedicate to meet your requirements as they are written in your own documents. But we are willing to dedicate the 30 feet because it will make it a little easier and a little better and more presentable for our own development. But the additional ten feels arbitrary and capricious; it doesn't feel like it is based on any sound math, science, or any firm logic on how that road would ever be developed. So that's why we are here talking about 10 feet of right-of-way. Ten feet on commercial property adds up to a significant amount of money. If we are responsible, and as we develop this out, we are going to be responsible for paying for the improvements to do the things we need to make sure traffic can get in and out sufficiently as dictated by the traffic study as part of the subdivision process. We are confident that if we dedicate another 30 feet of right-of-way, giving 110 feet of right-of-way along the frontage of our development on Yard Office Road, we will easily be able to handle, and guess what? if we can't, we can always dedicate another 10 feet of right-of-way at that time. It seems arbitrary and capricious to be asking for that at this point without any justification and without us, even at this point, to go through the traffic study to say this is what this would look like to safely travel the development. So I guess that's how I would address; there is a lot to unpack there, that's how I would address our variance request number two. The fact that I don't think we should have even been here with a variance request is first and foremost. With respect to the 56-foot right-of-way width internal for commercial on Perazzi Way, 56-foot width for a right-of-way dedication for an interior commercial street is standard in the City of Billings; it's standard in a lot of other jurisdictions. It's more than enough to allow for parking on the street plus allow for two lanes of traffic to traverse that easily; with that being a private road at this point in time, we can easily make sure that the sidewalks are incorporated and fit with a boulevard walk. We are not intending to

deviate from a boulevard development. We also, as the Developer, I guess I would ask you all remember, we also as the Developer want to make this easily traversable. We want to make this user friendly because the business we are trying to attract here are not going to want cars pulling in or pulling over so another car can go by so they can traverse cars parked on the street. These widths are proven their true; they are easily navigable in multiple jurisdictions surrounding the City of Laurel. I think we can that very easily and very comfortably in this development. I don't see this as any kind of hardship, I don't believe it creates any kind of burden for the residents, and I don't see that it is anything that we as a Developer can't navigate to make this a user-friendly development and not only friendly for the residents and citizens but also for the traveling public. So that's the case I would make. The only other thing that I want to make sure that we address and this pertains to variance 1, 2, all three of the variances. There was a note in there with respect to a recommendation coming from the Planning Board that there needs to be a three-month cooling-off period per se. We have talking to Mr. Altonaga offline after the Planning Board. There is nowhere in any kind of statute both at the City level or at the State level that requires a cooling-off period. There is no need for that. If the variances are approved, then we can obviously easily move forward. If anyone of the three, two of the three, or all of the three are denied, we can make the adjustments very quickly and be right back in with our subdivision application. The only thing that we are up against at that point is making the modifications to the plat and get it back in to keep the subdivision process going. I guess I want to make sure that that is not something that is under consideration by the City Council. I would ask Mr. Altonaga to address that as well. We don't feel that is appropriate, nor is it necessary.

The Planning Director stated that, like Scott had mentioned, we had previously discussed that. Those recommendations, I had written those in just as a place holder; I believe both the Public Works Director and Contract Planner had thought that there were caveats in our code. He stated that he had checked and did not see anything. He had just included it as a place holder. As Scott had mentioned, it's not necessary for a cooling-off period, a minimum timeline for resubmittal. Like Scott said, whether denied or approved that we could move forward within the next month or so with the next Planning Board cycle. He thanked both Scott and Tony for calling in tonight. There was a little bit of confusion for Planning Board for the public hearing. Scott and Tony were not in attendance. There was some confusion with the public notice and the correspondence we had back and forth. I am happy they were able to tune in tonight to provide that extra information and response.

Mayor Nelson asked three (3) times if there were any opponents. There were none.

Mayor Nelson asked Staff if they needed to respond to any additional questions.

The Planning Director stated he understands all of Scott's responses, especially to the right-of-way dedication widths. What we have on the books is what we have on the books. Technically that's what we are going off of. They meet a lot of those requirements. From my point of view, looking at futureproofing about getting that 10 feet to make sure it's on the books and we have it ready to go down the line. We have gone back and forth for months on this, on different designs and alternative plans and things like that. That's my one thing I know specifically what is in and on the books is there, and I definitely understand those concerns, that that is what they have gone off of for months prepping their plans and prepping their plats. But just from our point of view, looking at going past that a little bit as to what's going to be adopted soon for our growth policy update and possible future developments along Yard Office, which we see as a major area of the City to seek new development and annexations into the City. I am hoping that at some point in the near future, that High Point Subdivision will annex, but that will be a whole another development process. As Scott said, that's nothing that would happen very soon. We are planning on different situations—Thanked Scott for being here and providing his responses to my findings.

Mayor Nelson closed the public hearing.

CONSENT ITEMS:

- **Claims entered through 11/6/2020 in the amount of \$303,579.97 for October 2020; in the amount of \$3,413.96. for November 2020**
A complete listing of the claims and their amounts is on file in the Clerk/Treasurer's Office.
- **Approval of Payroll Register for PPE 11/1/2020 totaling \$198,495.03.**

The Mayor asked if there was any separation of consent items. There was none.

Council Minutes of November 10, 2020

Motion by Council Member Eaton to approve the consent items as presented, seconded by Council Member Klose. There was no public comment or council discussion. A vote was taken on the motion. All six council members present voted aye. Motion carried 6-0.

CEREMONIAL CALENDAR: None.

REPORTS OF BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS:

- Cemetery Commission Minutes of September 29, 2020.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (THREE-MINUTE LIMIT):

It was questioned if Council would be voting on the three variance requests tonight or if those will come back at a later date. It was clarified that Council would not be voting on those tonight. That those would come back once Staff is not denying those or if Council decides they would like to bring something forward against Staff and City/County Planning Boards recommendation. It was further questioned if no action is taken, the variances are denied. It was stated that was correct. It was further questioned that wasn't the process that was understood as Council was the governing body. It was asked if the Council could give a response, so the Developer knows how to proceed. Mayor Nelson stated he would follow up with the Developer in the morning.

SCHEDULED MATTERS:

- **Resolution No. R20-76: A Resolution Of The City Council Adopting The Updated 2020 Yellowstone County Hazard Materials Response Plan.**

Motion by Council Member Sparks to approve Resolution No. R20-76, seconded by Council Member Klose. There was no public comment or council discussion. A vote was taken on the motion. All six council members present voted aye. Motion carried 6-0.

- **Resolution No. R20-77: A Resolution To Approve The Conditional Use Of The Property Located At 1009 East 6th Street In Laurel For The Construction And Operation Of A Union Meeting Hall At Such Address Within The City Of Laurel.**

Motion by Council Member Klose to approve Resolution No. R20-77, seconded by Council Member Eaton. There was no public comment or council discussion. A vote was taken on the motion. All six council members present voted aye. Motion carried 6-0.

ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA: None.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS (ONE-MINUTE LIMIT): None.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION:

The November Public Works Committee meeting has been canceled.

Veteran's Day is tomorrow. There will be a ceremony at 2:00 p.m. at the Laurel Cemetery by the VFW and American Legion. The ceremony will be brief.

Council Members thanked all veterans for their service.

MAYOR UPDATES: None.

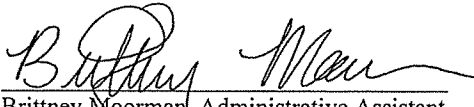
UNSCHEDULED MATTERS: None.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Council Member Eaton to adjourn the council meeting, seconded by Council Member McGee. There was no public comment or council discussion. A vote was taken on the motion. All six council members present voted aye. Motion carried 6-0.

There being no further business to come before the Council at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

DRAFT


Brittney Moorman, Administrative Assistant

Approved by the Mayor and passed by the City Council of the City of Laurel, Montana, this 24th
Day of November 2020.

Thomas C. Nelson, Mayor

Attest:

Bethany Langve, Clerk/Treasurer



LAUREL CITY-COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

STAFF REPORT

TO: Laurel City-County Planning Board / Zoning Commission
FROM: Nicholas Altonaga, Planning Director
RE: Conditional Use Permit – USW Local 11-443
DATE: October 28, 2020

DESCRIPTION OF REQUEST

A Conditional Land Use application was submitted by Steve Jansma on behalf of the United Steelworkers Local 11-443. USW Local 11-443 proposes to demolish the existing union meeting hall and construct a newly designed and updated structure in its place. An approval of a conditional land use is required to rebuild and continue the use of the site as a union meeting hall because this use is not described or defined within the zoning district it resides in.

Owner: Pace Pioneer Local 8-443
Legal Description: NUTTING SUBD, S10, T02 S, R24 E, BLOCK 6, Lot 13 - 24
Address: 1009 East 6th Street
Parcel Size: 42,000 sqft.
Existing Land Use: Union Meeting Hall
Proposed Land Use: Union Meeting Hall
Existing Zoning: Residential Limited Multi-Family

BACKGROUND AND PROCEDURAL HISTORY

- Resolution 13-50 was approved on August 6, 2013 which granted a three-year window for the Union to enlarge, update, and reconstruct the existing Union Hall which was then classified as a nonconforming use within the RLMF zoning district.
- Planning Director met with the Applicant on September 9, 2020 to review the application form and required documentation.
- Planning Director met with the Applicant on September 23, 2020 to receive the Application Fee and conceptual design images of the proposed conditional use.
- A public hearing for the Conditional Land Use took place at the October 21, 2020 Planning Board meeting.

- The Planning Board voted on October 21, 2020 to approve the Conditional Land Use application with the suggested staff conditions.
- A public hearing for the Conditional Land Use has been placed on the November 10, 2020 City Council meeting agenda.
- The public hearing requirements of 1762.030 have been met.

STAFF FINDINGS:

The Applicant is requesting approval of a conditional land use to reconstruct and operate a union meeting hall on the property of 1009 East 6th Street in Laurel. This use is not specifically delineated or defined within Chapter 17 of the Laurel Municipal Code. As such, a Conditional Land Use Application was required to conduct the proposed rebuild of the site and continue to operate the property as its existing use as a union meeting hall. The following findings have been noted by the Planning Department after reviewing the Conditional Land Use application and supplementary documents.

- USW Local 11-443 has operated a union hall at 1009 E 6th Street for many years without an interruption in its use.
- The long-term operation of the union meeting hall at 1009 East 6th Street has had little to no known impact on the quality of life of surrounding residents.
- The reconstruction of the union meeting hall will include improved paved parking areas and landscaping.
- The current meeting hall building dates back to the 1920s and is in dire need of repairs.
- The current Union Hall building would require significant repairs and revitalization to continue functioning as it stands.
- The current Union Hall building and associated parking areas and landscaping are not aesthetically pleasing.
- The current use of the building and its lack of definition under the LMC as a union hall does not allow the Union to perform improvements or upgrades to the site.
- The Applicant has prepared conceptual plans to include adequate access and off-street parking.
- The demolition of the current structure and proposed new union meeting hall will include updated landscaping and parking on site.

PLANNING BOARD AND GOVERNING BODY REVIEW CRITERIA:

“17.62.020 – Requirements” contains the review criteria for the Zoning Commission to discuss and recommend actions on conditional land uses. The text of this subchapter is included below.

No structure or land use may be used for any purpose other than those allowed within a zoning district as specified in the zoning ordinance unless either a variance has been granted (under Chapter 17.60 or 17.64 of this code) or a conditional land use permit therefor has been provided. The zoning commission may recommend and the city can require any information that will allow the decision makers to comprehensively evaluate and decide on applications for conditional uses brought before them. The zoning commission may recommend and the city can require, after consideration of the application for

conditional use, those conditions under which such land use may be allowed to include but not be necessarily limited to the following:

- A. Adequate ingress and egress with concern for vehicular and pedestrian safety and convenience, traffic flow and control, and emergency access as reviewed and approved by the city public works director;
- B. Adequate off-street parking and loading with attention to vehicular and pedestrian safety and traffic flow;
- C. Conditions that control, specify, or plan for the generation of odors, noise, hours of operation, signage, or impact on the neighborhood of natural systems;
- D. Adequate landscaping, screening, mitigation of impact on adjacent property and buffering; and
- E. Compatibility with adjacent and neighborhood land uses and Laurel's GMP.

STAFF SUGGESTED CONDITIONS:

The Planning Director recommends the approval of the Conditional Land Use application to operate a union meeting hall at 1009 East 6th Street in Laurel. The Planning Director suggests the Planning Board/Zoning Commission and City Council consider the following conditions of approval.

Condition seven (7) was added by request of Planning Board members and the applicant was notified of this new condition.

- 1. No land uses shall be established on site that are not specifically included in this approval.
- 2. Any land use not specifically included in this approval shall be considered a violation of the City of Laurel zoning ordinance.
- 3. New construction regarding the approved conditional use shall apply for building permits when applicable.
- 4. The approved land use shall comply with the zoning requirements of the district the property falls within.
- 5. The approved land use shall comply to the City of Laurel Sign Code
- 6. The approved land use shall comply with the City of Laurel off-street parking requirements
- 7. Landowner will work with the city if noise abatement becomes an issue for the surrounding neighborhood

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1. Conditional Land Use Application
- 2. Map of 1009 E 6th Street with 150ft buffer
- 3. List of property Owners within 150ft of 1009 East 6th Street
- 4. Public Hearing Notice
- 5. USW Union Hall Concept Plan
- 6. USW Union Hall Concept Image
- 7. LMC 17.16 – Residential Districts
- 8. LMC 17.62 – Conditional Land Uses
- 9. Resolution R13-50



LAUREL CITY-COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

STAFF REPORT

TO: Laurel City-County Planning Board
FROM: Nicholas Altonaga, Planning Director
RE: Variance 1 – Goldberg Sporting Estates Subdivision
DATE: October 27, 2020

DESCRIPTION OF REQUEST

Three variances to the Laurel Municipal Code are being requested supporting the proposed Goldberg Sporting Estates Subdivision. Performance Engineering is acting as the representative of Tony Golden and Goldberg Investments LLP. Justification letters for the variance requests were submitted on July 31, 2020.

The Applicant has applied for a variance (Variance 1) to Laurel Municipal Code regarding roadway alignment and continuity in order to keep the proposed roadway for Krieghoff Loop as it is currently designed on the proposed subdivision plat. The current design does not conform to Laurel Municipal Code due to a lack of connection and continuation of the existing adjacent roadway. The Applicant would need to redesign the subdivision plat in order to conform to the Laurel Municipal Code unless a variance is approved.

Owner: Goldberg Investments LLP
Legal Description: S10, T02 S, R24 E, Nutting Bros 2nd Filing Lot 18, Nutting Bros 3rd Filing Lots 19-25
Address: Approximately 1850 East 8th Street
Parcel Size: 38.73 Acres
Existing Land Use: Agricultural, single dwelling unit.
Proposed Land Use: Residential and Commercial Subdivision
Existing Zoning: Residential Tracts

BACKGROUND AND PROCEDURAL HISTORY

- Subdivision Preapplication Meeting took place on February 2, 2019.
- Pre-Application Meeting Summary letter provided to Performance Engineering on February 7, 2019

- Annexation Agreement – Major Components email sent to Performance Engineering on February 15, 2019.
- Annexation of Lot 18, Nutting Bros 2nd Filing and Lot 19-25 Nutting Bros 3rd Filing approved by Resolution of Laurel City Council on August 20, 2019
- The Zoning requested during the annexation process will be updated to Residential Limited Multi-Family (RLMF) and Community Commercial (CC) upon filing of the final annexation agreement.
- Preliminary Plat Pre-Submittal comments email sent to Performance Engineering on October 30, 2019.
- Preliminary Plat Meeting Notes 11.08.19 comments follow-up email provided to Performance Engineering on November 21, 2019.
- Preliminary Plat application document Packet submitted to the Planning Department on December 17, 2019.
- Element Review Letter provided to Performance Engineering on December 24, 2019
- Sufficiency Review Letter provided to the Applicant on January 16, 2020.
- The Applicant and City Staff and City Engineers met to discuss the details of the sufficiency review letter on January 31, 2020.
- Submittal of updated documents by Applicant on July 31, 2020.
- Planning Board received public comment, discussed the variances, and made recommendations at the Public Hearing on October 21, 2020.
- Planning Board voted to recommend denial of the variances after the Public Hearings on October 21, 2020.
- A Public Hearing is scheduled at the City Council meeting on November 10, 2020 to receive public comment and approve, approve with conditions, or deny the variance requests.

DETAILS ON MAJOR CORRESPONDENCE DURING PROCESS

Pre-Application Meeting Summary letter provided to Performance Engineering on February 7, 2019. This letter included:

- Project summary
- Current and proposed zoning
- Public review process overview
- Discussion points including:
 - Fire coverage
 - Lot layout
 - Water and sewer systems
 - Right-of-way requirements
 - Solid waste provision
 - Parking
 - Parkland dedication
 - Off-site improvements

Annexation Agreement – Major Components email sent to Performance Engineering on February 15, 2019. This email contained further information regarding:

- Roadway dedication requirements
- Engineering estimates for public infrastructure improvements
- Annexation and plat approval process
- Water rights
- Zoning changes

Preliminary Plat Pre-Submittal comments email sent to Performance Engineering on October 30, 2019. Items identified in pre-submittal review included:

- Street connectivity within the Subdivision
- Street and intersection design
- Road continuity with the adjacent Laurel street system
- Parkland Dedication/Cash-in-Lieu
- Road Dedication
- Phased development

Preliminary Plat Meeting Notes 11.08.19 comments follow-up email provided to Performance Engineering on November 21, 2019. Items identified in this correspondence included:

- Utility and access easements
- Roadway connectivity
- Parkland dedication
- Review and submittal of previously discussed documents (Annexation and Waiver)

STAFF FINDINGS

The Applicant is requesting a variance to LMC 16.04.060.B.8 which states: "Street Continuity. Streets that are a continuation of streets in contiguous territory shall be so aligned as to assure that their centerlines shall coincide and shall have matching names. In cases where straight continuations are not physically possible, such centerline shall be continued by a centerline offset of not less than one hundred twenty-five feet."

A denial of this variance request will require the applicant to redesign the subdivision plat to meet the requirements of the Laurel Municipal Code.

The Applicant has provided a letter with details justifying the Variance request addressing the five (5) findings noted in LMC 16.11.010. These responses, as well as planning department findings are presented below:

- 1) The granting of the variance will not be detrimental to the public health safety, or general welfare or injurious to other adjoining properties**
 - **Applicant Response:** Granting of this requested variance will have no detrimental effects to the public health, safety, or general welfare or injurious to other adjoining properties. Granting this variance will benefit the public health, safety, and general

welfare of the surrounding area by aligning higher volume traffic entrances across from each other. The proposed alignment will minimize traffic conflicts during turning movements along East 8th at both the subdivision and the commercial property located south of the proposed project.

- **Planning Department Response:** The Planning Department accepts the stated reasoning that it will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, or general welfare or injurious to adjoining property owners.
- **Planning Department Finding:** The standard of the Laurel Municipal Code for Chapter 16.11.010.1 has been met.

2) Because of the particular physical surroundings, shape, or topographical conditions of the specific property involved, an undue hardship to the owner would result if the strict letter of the regulations was enforced.

- **Applicant Response:** The proposed development is designed to keep the entrance across from a higher traffic commercial entrance and preserve the existing lot and infrastructure across from the dead-end Mulberry Avenue. This design prevents the offset of the subdivision alignment from conflicting with the higher volume of commercial traffic across the street. Should the road be aligned with Mulberry Avenue it would require modification of the existing property, access, and personal property intended to stay intact throughout the development of the property. This does create an undue and unnecessary hardship on the developer and the resident within the existing residence. Additionally, Mulberry Avenue cannot be developed further to change its status as a dead-end road due to location of commercial businesses along East Main Street at the end of Mulberry Avenue.
- **Planning Department Response:** The Planning Department does not accept the stated reasoning of the applicant's response to the second point.
- **Planning Department Finding:** The standard of the Laurel Municipal Code for Chapter 16.11.010.2 have not been met. The following information supports this claim.
 - Lot 1 and Lot 2, Block 4 of Goldberg Sporting Estates do not currently exist.
 - The existing residential structure is located on the Western portion of the currently platted Lot 18, Nutting Brothers Subdivision 2nd Filing.
 - The existing residential structure and its accessory buildings located on the current Lot 18 Nutting Bros Subdivision 2nd Filing and would be unaffected by the realignment of Mulberry and Krieghoff Loop.

- The existing residential structure on the current Lot 18 Nutting Bros 2nd Filing has multiple points of access to the site which would be unaffected by the roadway alignment.
- The existing access to this parcel that partially aligns with Mulberry Avenue is used to access an undeveloped farm field which includes Lot 18 of Nutting Bros 2nd Filing and Lot 19 of Nutting Bros Subdivision 3rd Filing.
- There is no known access and/or encroachment permit for the lot access located immediately across from Mulberry Avenue filed with Yellowstone County Public Works Department.
- The proposed Goldberg Sporting Estates Subdivision will be changing the use of the current land from agricultural use to residential use.
- There are no permanent structures, infrastructure, or personal property erected on the proposed Lot 2, Block 4 that could not be relocated in case of roadway alignment.
- The alignment of Mulberry Ave and Krieghoff Loop would only require the owner and/or resident of the residential structure on the current Lot 18, Nutting Bros Subdivision 2nd Filing to remove any fencing and stored personal items from the proposed right-of-way.
- Mulberry Avenue is physically a dead-end roadway. Despite this current condition, Mulberry Avenue connects to the currently undeveloped but fully platted East 7th Street at its southern terminus.
- The currently undeveloped but fully platted East 7th Street could be a major east-west connector within the city limits which covers approximately nine (9) blocks of residential-zoned property.
- Conversations have begun between the Planning Department and Public Works Department about this undeveloped roadway and the possibility of development in order to complete a major east-west travel corridor.

3) The variance will not result in an increase in taxpayer burden;

- **Response:** The result of granting the variance for alignment of the proposed western entrance of the subdivision with Mulberry Avenue will have no effect on the taxes of the proposed development, adjoining land or the taxpayers of the town of Laurel and Yellowstone County.
- **Planning Department Response:** The Planning Department accepts the reasoning that the granting of the variance would not increase the tax burden of the adjoining taxpayers and landowners.
- **Planning Department Finding:** The standard of the Laurel Municipal Code for Chapter 16.11.010.3 has been met.

4) The variance will not in any manner place the subdivision in nonconformance with any adopted zoning regulations or growth policy; and

- **Applicant Response:** This requested variance will not in any manner place the subdivision in nonconformance with the adopted zoning regulations.
- **Planning Department Response:** The Planning Department accepts the reasoning that the granting of a variance would not place the rest of the Subdivision in nonconformance with the adopted zoning regulations and growth policies.
- **Planning Department Finding:** The standard of the Laurel Municipal Code for Chapter 16.11.010.4 has been met.

5) The subdivider must prove that the alternative design is equally effective and the objectives of the improvement are satisfied.

- **Applicant Response:** The proposed design still aligns with an ingress/egress directly across the street that experiences higher traffic volumes than the dead-end Mulberry Avenue which only provides access for four (4) residential lots. In addition, the proposed entrance maintains street continuity with the commercial access across the street, preserves the existing Lot 1, Block 4 of the subdivision, and mitigates against potential traffic alignment issues between the subdivision entrance and the commercial access across the street while maintaining more than 125-feet of centerline alignment separation from Mulberry Avenue as set forth in Section 16.04.060.B.8 of the City of Laurel Subdivision Regulations.
- **Planning Department Response:** The Planning Department does not accept the reasoning to the 5th point that the alternative design is equally effective.
- **Planning Department Finding:** The standards of the Laurel Municipal Code for Chapter 16.11.010 have not been met. The following information supports this claim.
 - The proposed Lot 1, Block 4 is currently Lot 18, Nutting Bros 2nd Filing would not be impacted by a roadway alignment of Mulberry Avenue and Krieghoff Loop.
 - The Proposed Lot 2, Block 4 does not currently exist.
 - There are no permanent structures, infrastructure, or affixed personal property present within the proposed aligned right-of-way besides fencing.
 - The code states that “In cases where straight continuations are not physically possible, such centerline shall be continued by a centerline offset of not less than one hundred twenty-five feet.”
 - The Planning Department does not find any physical obstruction to connecting Krieghoff Loop to Mulberry Avenue.

- The terrain and topography is flat and open creating no impediments to the alignment of Krieghoff Loop and Mulberry Avenue
- The existing access to Lot 18 Nutting Bros 2nd Filing and lot 19 Nutting Bros 3rd Filing is to an undeveloped farm field.
- There is no known access and/or encroachment permit for the existing field access immediately north of Mulberry Avenue.
- Mulberry Avenue is connected to the currently undeveloped but fully platted East 7th Street. This undeveloped route traverses up to nine (9) blocks of Laurel.
- East 7th Street would provide a major east-west travel corridor if constructed.
- The alignment of Krieghoff Loop and Mulberry Avenue would provide additional road continuity to the wider road network once East 7th Street is constructed.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Applicant also provided four (4) reasonings for the Variance request in addition to the specific justifications to the Laurel Municipal Code.

1. Mulberry Avenue is a dead-end road with access for only four (4) residential Lots
2. There is approximately 225 feet of separation between centerline alignments for Mulberry Avenue and the proposed western entrance of Goldberg Sporting Estates Subdivision (minimum required offset is 125 feet).
3. The Proposed subdivision entrance is aligned instead with a commercial lot entrance having more traffic volume than the dead-end road along Mulberry Avenue.
4. In addition, Lot 1, Block 4 of Goldberg Sporting Estates Subdivision is an existing lot that physically prevents the alignment of the western entrance (Krieghoff Loop) from aligning across from Mulberry.

Planning Department Response to Point #1.

- Mulberry Avenue is currently a dead-end roadway but is connected to the currently undeveloped but fully platted East 7th Street.
- East 7th Street is a fully platted right-of-way for nine (9) blocks.
- East 7th Street could provide a major improvement to East-West travel within Laurel as well as development opportunities.
- The City is in the process of finalizing the Growth Management Policy which contains goals regarding the installation and improvement of current roadways and important possible roadways adjacent to the city.
- The Planning Department and Public Works Departments have held discussions about how future build-out of East 7th Street could enhance and improve transportation on the East side of Laurel.

Planning Department Response to Point #2.

- The requirements for non-alignment are partially met, but there is no physical, topographic, or geographic reason for the lack of alignment with the existing road network.

Planning Department Response to Point #3.

- The Planning Department agrees that the alignment of a public-right-of-way to a private commercial entrance with higher traffic will reduce traffic conflicts.
- The Planning Department would also like to note that this ignores the need for public right-of-way to connect to existing public right-of-way to ensure road continuation and connectivity.

Planning Department Response to Point #4.

- The Planning Department does not agree that there is a physical obstruction to connecting the proposed Krieghoff Loop to the existing Mulberry Avenue.
- The proposed Lot 2, Block 4 of the Goldberg Sporting Estates is the area in question.
- The proposed Lot 2, Block 4 is not an existing lot.
- The proposed Lot 1 and Lot 2, Block 4 is currently made up of a portion of Lot 18, Nutting Bros 2nd Filing, and Lot 19, Nutting Bros 3rd Filing.
- The stated area is part of an undeveloped farm field.
- The existing residential structure on the current Lot 18, Nutting Bros Subdivision 2nd Filing has an existing driveway access.
- The existing residential structure currently on Lot 18, Nutting Bros 2nd Filing is not located within the area where any proposed right-of-way would be located.
- The existing access to the proposed Lot 2, Block 4 is for field access to the undeveloped parcel.
- There are no physical structures or obstructions which would preclude alignment of the proposed Krieghoff Loop to the existing Mulberry Avenue.

PLANNING BOARD AND GOVERNING BODY REVIEW CRITERIA

LMC 16.11.010 – Variances provides the review criteria for the Planning Board and Governing Body to review, consider, and decide on variances. The text of this subchapter is provided below:

The AGB may grant reasonable variances from only the design and improvement standards of these regulations when strict compliance would result in undue hardship and the result would not negatively affect public health and safety. The granting of a variance shall not have the effect of nullifying the intent and purpose of these regulations. The AGB may not approve a variance that would permit structures within the one hundred-year floodplain, as defined in MCA § 76-5-101.

The planning board shall conduct a public hearing on any variance requested for all subdivisions prior to taking action on the preliminary plat application.

- A. Requesting a Variance. The subdivider shall include with the submission of the preliminary plat a written statement describing the facts of hardship upon which the request for the variance is based. Each requested variance shall be deemed a separate application, for which a fee shall be required, to be processed concurrently with the preliminary plat. Information addressing each of the following findings shall accompany the application to be approved by the AGB. The latter shall not approve variances unless the subdivider has demonstrated that the request satisfies the following findings:
 - 1. The granting of the variance will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, or general welfare or injurious to other adjoining properties;
 - 2. Because of the particular physical surroundings, shape, or topographical conditions of the specific property involved, an undue hardship to the owner would result if the strict letter of the regulation was enforced;
 - 3. The variance will not result in an increase in taxpayer burden;
 - 4. The variance will not in any manner place the subdivision in nonconformance with any adopted zoning regulations or growth policy; and
 - 5. The subdivider must prove that the alternative design is equally effective and the objectives of the improvements are satisfied.
- B. In granting variances, the AGB may require conditions of approval that will, in their judgment, secure the objectives of these regulations.
- C. When any such variance is granted, the motion of approval of the proposed subdivision shall contain a statement describing the variance and the facts and conditions upon which the issuance of the variance is based.
- D. An application for a variance is not necessary where planned neighborhood developments are proposed, as modifications to the standards and requirements of these Regulations may be approved by the AGB.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Planning Director recommends that the Planning Board deny the variance request. The Planning Director has prepared drafted conditions of denial which are presented below.

1. Waive Chapter 16 variance review fee.
2. Waive Chapter 16 requirement to rename any aligned/continued roadways through subdivisions
3. Set the waiting period for Preliminary Plat resubmittal to three (3) months.
4. Applicant submittal of updated subdivision design to Planning Department prior to official resubmittal

ATTACHMENTS

1. Variance Request Letter 1
2. List of Adjacent Property Owners from Parcels Requesting Variance
3. Preliminary Plat for Goldberg Sporting Estates Subdivision
4. Pre-application meeting summary letter dated February 7, 2019
5. Annexation Agreement – Major Components email sent to Performance Engineering on February 15, 2019.
6. Preliminary Plat Pre-Submittal comments email sent to Performance Engineering on October 30, 2019.
7. Preliminary Plat Meeting Notes 11.08.19 comments follow-up email provided to Performance Engineering on November 21, 2019.



LAUREL CITY-COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

STAFF REPORT

TO: Laurel City-County Planning Board
FROM: Nicholas Altonaga, Planning Director
RE: Variance 2 & 3 – Goldberg Sporting Estates Subdivision
DATE: October 27, 2020

DESCRIPTION OF REQUEST

Three variances to the Laurel Municipal Code are being requested supporting the proposed Goldberg Sporting Estates Subdivision. Performance Engineering is acting as the representative of Tony Golden and Goldberg Investments LLP. Justification letters for the variance requests were submitted on July 31, 2020.

The Applicant has applied for a variance (Variance 2) to the Laurel Municipal Code regarding the dedication of right-of-way. The Applicant is applying for this variance in order to retain an additional ten (10) foot portion of property along Yard Office Road within the proposed lots and not dedicated to the public as right-of-way as city staff had previously discussed with the Applicant. The Applicant would need to update the subdivision plat in order to conform with the requirements of Laurel Municipal Code and the many requirements discussed by Laurel staff through meetings and correspondence.

The Applicant is requesting a variance (Variance 3) to the Laurel Municipal Code regarding roadway and right-of-way widths. The design of the proposed Goldberg Sporting Estates subdivision contains a fifty-six (56) foot wide private road which does not meet the right-of-way requirements of the Laurel Subdivision Code. The Applicant would need to redesign the subdivision plat in order to conform to the Laurel Municipal Code

Owner: Goldberg Investments LLP
Legal Description: S10, T02 S, R24 E, Nutting Bros 2nd Filing Lot 18, Nutting Bros 3rd Filing Lots 19-25
Address: Approximately 1850 East 8th Street
Parcel Size: 38.73 Acres
Existing Land Use: Agricultural, single dwelling unit.
Proposed Land Use: Residential and Commercial Subdivision

Existing Zoning: Residential Tracts

BACKGROUND AND PROCEDURAL HISTORY

- Subdivision Preapplication Meeting took place on February 2, 2019.
- Pre-Application Meeting Summary letter provided to Performance Engineering on February 7, 2019
- Annexation Agreement – Major Components email sent to Performance Engineering on February 15, 2019.
- Annexation of Lot 18, Nutting Bros 2nd Filing and Lot 19-25 Nutting Bros 3rd Filing approved by Laurel City Council on August 20, 2019
- The Zoning requested during the annexation process will be updated to Residential Limited Multi-Family (RLMF) and Community Commercial (CC) upon filing of the final annexation agreement.
- Preliminary Plat Pre-Submittal comments email sent to Performance Engineering on October 30, 2019.
- Preliminary Plat Meeting Notes 11.08.19 comments follow-up email provided to Performance Engineering on November 21, 2019.
- Preliminary Plat application document Packet submitted to the Planning Department on December 17, 2019.
- Element Review Letter provided to Performance Engineering on December 24, 2019
- Sufficiency Review Letter provided to the Applicant on January 16, 2020
- The Applicant and City Staff and City Engineers met to discuss the details of the sufficiency review letter on January 31, 2020
- Submittal of updated documents by Applicant on July 31, 2020
- Planning Board received public comment, discussed the variances, and made recommendations at the Public Hearing on October 21, 2020.
- Planning Board voted to recommend denial of the variances after the Public Hearings on October 21, 2020.
- A Public Hearing is scheduled at the City Council meeting on November 10, 2020 to receive public comment and approve, approve with conditions, or deny the variance requests.

DETAILS ON MAJOR CORRESPONDENCE DURING PROCESS

Pre-Application Meeting Summary letter provided to Performance Engineering on February 7, 2019. This letter included:

- Project summary
- Current and proposed zoning
- Public review process overview
- Discussion points including:
 - Fire coverage
 - Lot layout

- Water and sewer systems
- Right-of-way requirements
- Solid waste provision
- Parking
- Parkland dedication
- Off-site improvements

Annexation Agreement – Major Components email sent to Performance Engineering on February 15, 2019. This email contained further information regarding:

- Roadway dedication requirements
- Engineering estimates for public infrastructure improvements
- Annexation and plat approval process
- Water rights
- Zoning changes

Preliminary Plat Pre-Submittal comments email sent to Performance Engineering on October 30, 2019. Items identified in pre-submittal review included:

- Street connectivity within the Subdivision
- Street and intersection design
- Road continuity with the adjacent Laurel street system
- Parkland Dedication/Cash-in-Lieu
- Road Dedication
- Phased development

Preliminary Plat Meeting Notes 11.08.19 comments follow-up email provided to Performance Engineering on November 21, 2019. Items identified in this correspondence included:

- Utility and access easements
- Roadway connectivity
- Parkland dedication
- Review and submittal of previously discussed documents (Annexation and Waiver)

STAFF FINDINGS

The Applicant is requesting a variance to LMC 16.04.060.B.7 which states: “Right-of-Way and Street and Road Developments. In all cases, the right-of-way must be provided when developing the property. If the property is being developed on only one side of an existing or proposed road or street and dedicated right-of-way or a road easement is required, the property owner developing must secure the additional right-of-way or easement from the adjacent property owner. If the additional required right-of-way or easements cannot be secured, the developer must provide the full width of right-of-way on the subject property.”

The Applicant is also requesting a variance to LMC 16.04.060.C.8 which states: “Right-of-Way and Street Widths. Street right-of-way and surface widths for all roads, public or private, including those located in the Laurel zoning jurisdiction with the exception of those zoned Agricultural Open and Residential Suburban shall be provided as shown in Table 16.4.C.1 below.”

The Applicant has provided a letter with details justifying the Variance requests addressing the five (5) findings noted in LMC 16.11.010. These responses, as well as planning department findings are presented below:

1) The granting of the variance will not be detrimental to the public health safety, or general welfare or injurious to other adjoining properties

- **Applicant Response:** Granting of the variance will have no detrimental effects to the public health, safety, or general welfare or injurious to other adjoining properties. Granting this variance will still provide more than the minimum required ROW width for the projected road use along Yard Office Road as classified by the City of Laurel Long Range Transportation Plan.
- **Planning Department Response:** The Planning Department does not accept that the roadway widths will not be detrimental to the general welfare of the City of Laurel.
- **Planning Department Findings:** The standard of the Laurel Municipal Code for Chapter 16.11.010.1 has not been met. The proposed width of Yard Office Road and Perazzi Way will not provide adequate services or provide for the general welfare of the city.
 - The current Yard Office Road right-of-way is made up of approximately fifty (50) feet of area dedicated to a drainage ditch. This area should not be considered as viable for vehicular or pedestrian traffic.
 - The eighty (80) feet of the Yard Office Road west of the Section line was dedicated on Village Subdivision 1st Filing.
 - Village Subdivision First Filing identifies these eighty (80) feet of right-of-way as containing a drain ditch.
 - If the area currently containing a drainage ditch is planned as part of a roadway, the applicant must prepare engineering and construction costs as well as funding to cover the build out of this portion of right-of-way.
 - City staff specified during the Pre-application period that a connection between East 8th Street and Yard Office Road was necessary for the cohesive growth of Laurel.
 - The proposed subdivision contains 88 buildable lots. It is important to ensure traffic coverage with an adequate ingress and egress point to Yard Office Road.
 - The proposed fifty-six (56) foot private road Perazzi Way is not sufficient at meeting the needs of Laurel residents.
 - Adequate traffic connection between East 8th Street and Yard Office Road was specifically mentioned in the Subdivision pre-application meeting on February 2, 2019 and the following email correspondence.

2) Because of the particular physical surroundings, shape, or topographical conditions of the specific property involved, an undue hardship to the owner would result if the strict letter of the regulations was enforced.

- **Applicant Response:** The 30 Feet of proposed ROW aligns with surrounding property and satisfies the required ROW width outlined by City of Laurel Subdivision Regulations while allowing for future development of Yard Office Road that is consistent with long-range planning.
- **Planning Department Response:** The Planning Department does not accept this reasoning for hardship due to topographic conditions.
- **Planning Department Findings:** The standard of the Laurel Municipal Code for Chapter 16.11.010.2 has not been met. There are no topographic or physical conditions present that create an undue hardship to meet roadway standards. The following information supports this claim.
 - There are no physical or topographic conditions which create an undue burden on the applicant to dedicate the additional ten (10) feet of right-of-way to meet the requirements stated by the city.
 - The right of way directly north of the area designated as Yellowstone County parkland makes up approximately 123 feet of right-of-way.
 - This one-hundred-twenty-three (123) foot width was established when High Point Subdivision provided forty (40) feet of dedicated right-of-way west of the section line on its subdivision plat in 1970.
 - The Planning Department and Public Works Department anticipate Yard Office Road to act as a major transportation route for future development on the East side of Laurel as the immediate area develops.
 - It is important that the city obtain a consistent right-of-way width to ensure that future roadway development and improvements have uniform dimensions.
 - The proposed thirty (30) feet of right-of-way is insufficient to align the area of Yard Office Road along the proposed Goldberg Sporting Estates with the right-of-way along High Point Subdivision to the north.

3) The variance will not result in an increase in taxpayer burden;

- **Response:** The result of granting the variance for providing 30 feet of ROW to the west of the section line along Yard Office Road will have no effect on the taxes of the proposed development or adjoining undeveloped land. Keeping the 30-feet under private ownership will increase the tax base for the City and the County providing benefit the taxpayer base.
- **Planning Department Response:** The Planning Department does not accept that the variance would not result in an increase in taxpayer burden.

- **Planning Department Findings:** The standard of the Laurel Municipal Code for Chapter 16.11.010.3 has not been met. The following information supports this claim.
 - Yard Office Road is expected to become a major transportation corridor as properties on the East side of Laurel develop and annex into the city.
 - The dedication of the additional ten (10) feet of right-of-way at the time of subdivision is advantageous for the city of Laurel and its citizens.
 - The purchase of this right-of-way at a later date would represent an astronomically high price for the city and its residents if additional right of way were needed to accommodate an increase in traffic in the future.
 - It was stated in correspondence between the contract planner and engineer that this dedication of right-of-way would be taken care of at the time of SIA and Subdivision. This correspondence is attached.

4) The variance will not in any manner place the subdivision in nonconformance with any adopted zoning regulations or growth policy; and

- **Response:** The requested variance will not in any manner place the subdivision in nonconformance with the adopted zoning regulations.
- **Planning Department Response:** The Planning Department does not accept the stated reasoning that this variance will not place the subdivision in nonconformance with the adopted zoning regulations or growth policy.
- **Planning Department Findings:** The standard of the Laurel Municipal Code for Chapter 16.11.010.4 has not been met. The following information supports this claim.
 - The updated 2020 Laurel Growth Management Policy which will be officially approved in November 2020 highlights the need for consistent roadway widths as a transportation system goal.
 - The current proposed thirty (30) feet of right-of-way dedication does not align with the right-of-way directly north of the Yellowstone County Park.
 - Inclusion of the additional ten (10) feet of right-of-way will align with the roadway adjacent to High Points Subdivision which was established in 1970.

5) The subdivider must prove that the alternative design is equally effective and the objectives of the improvement are satisfied.

- **Response:** The proposed ROW dedication width not only aligns with the surrounding ROW widths, but also provides more total width along Yard Office Road than is necessary for the projected road classification of a collector road as outlined in the City of Laurel Long Range Transportation Plan – 2014 and the

Required ROW as outlined in Table 16.4.C1 within section 16.04.060.C.8 of the City of Laurel municipal code.

- **Planning Department Response:** The Planning Department does not accept that the proposed design is equally effective as the requirements of the Laurel Municipal Code.
- **Planning Department Findings:** The standards of the Laurel Municipal Code for Chapter 16.11.010.5 have not been met. The following information supports this claim.
 - The email dated February 15, 2019 from Interim Planner Forrest Sanderson to Scott Aspenlieder outlined requirements for platting and design that followed from the Pre-Application meeting.
 - This includes “Dedicate additional ROW for Yard Office (Where you can) to the City of Laurel as Commercial Collector (80’) ROW.”
 - The existing right-of-way East of the Section Line is made up of at least forty (40) feet of area dedicated to a drainage ditch identified on the plat for the Village Subdivision First Filing.
 - This portion of right-of-way should only be considered as useable if the developer is willing to prepare and execute the engineering and construction of this portion of right of way.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Applicant also provided Two (2) reasonings for the Variance request in addition to the specific justifications to the Laurel Municipal Code.

The Developer is requesting to dedicate 30 feet of ROW from the section line along Yard Office Road west toward the proposed subdivision in-lieu of a 40-foot-wide ROW width. The variance is requested for the following reasons:

1. A 30-foot ROW dedication on the west side of the section line along Yard Office Road aligns and is consistent with the existing ROW directly to the north of the proposed subdivision.
2. The City of Laurel Long Range Transportation Plan – 2014 classifies Yard Office Road as a collector, which by section 16.04.060.C.8, Table 16.4.C.1 “required Dedications and Street Improvements for Subdivision” only requires an 80-foot ROW. There is already 80 feet of ROW dedicated on the east side of the section line along Yard Office Road and the additional 30 feet of ROW dedicated on the west side would give a total of 110 feet of ROW which is more than required ROW for a collector road, it would even provide more than is necessary for a minor arterial road (100 ft) per Table 16.4.C.1 within section 16.04.060.C.8

Planning Department Response to Point #1:

High Point Subdivision, which is directly north of the Yellowstone County Park, provided a total of forty (40) feet of right-of-way west of the section line to Yard Office Road on its subdivision plat which was created in March 1970. Consistent right-of-way widths are key to ensuring traffic management. Providing this additional road dedication at this time is proper and financially responsible for the City of Laurel. The cost to acquire these ten (10) feet of right-of-way due to increased traffic flow at a later date would be a major financial burden for the city and its taxpayers.

Planning Department Response to Point #2:

It is anticipated that Yard Office Road will be a major transportation route for future development on the east side of Laurel. Approximately fifty (50) feet of the existing right-of-way for Yard Office Road east of the section line is made up of a drainage ditch. This ditch and right-of-way was identified on the plat of Village Subdivision First Filing. This portion of right-of-way should not be considered viable for roadway development unless the developer is prepared to finance and construct adequate infrastructure above the Ditch along its length of the subdivision.

The property directly to the south of the proposed Goldberg Sporting Estates subdivision is unplatted and outside of Laurel city limits. If this situation were to change, either through subdivision or annexation, the City of Laurel would require the dedication of forty (40) feet of right-of-way west of the Section line to provide consistent road widths from East Main Street to the culvert of the Nutting Drain Ditch north of East Maryland Lane.

PLANNING BOARD AND GOVERNING BODY REVIEW CRITERIA

LMC 16.11.010 – Variances provides the review criteria for the Planning Board and Governing Body to review, consider, and decide on variances. The text of this subchapter is provided below:

The AGB may grant reasonable variances from only the design and improvement standards of these regulations when strict compliance would result in undue hardship and the result would not negatively affect public health and safety. The granting of a variance shall not have the effect of nullifying the intent and purpose of these regulations. The AGB may not approve a variance that would permit structures within the one hundred-year floodplain, as defined in MCA § 76-5-101.

The planning board shall conduct a public hearing on any variance requested for all subdivisions prior to taking action on the preliminary plat application.

- A. Requesting a Variance. The subdivider shall include with the submission of the preliminary plat a written statement describing the facts of hardship upon which the request for the variance is based. Each requested variance shall be deemed a separate application, for which a fee shall be required, to be processed concurrently with the

preliminary plat. Information addressing each of the following findings shall accompany the application to be approved by the AGB. The latter shall not approve variances unless the subdivider has demonstrated that the request satisfies the following findings:

1. The granting of the variance will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, or general welfare or injurious to other adjoining properties;
 2. Because of the particular physical surroundings, shape, or topographical conditions of the specific property involved, an undue hardship to the owner would result if the strict letter of the regulation was enforced;
 3. The variance will not result in an increase in taxpayer burden;
 4. The variance will not in any manner place the subdivision in nonconformance with any adopted zoning regulations or growth policy; and
 5. The subdivider must prove that the alternative design is equally effective and the objectives of the improvements are satisfied.
- B. In granting variances, the AGB may require conditions of approval that will, in their judgment, secure the objectives of these regulations.
- C. When any such variance is granted, the motion of approval of the proposed subdivision shall contain a statement describing the variance and the facts and conditions upon which the issuance of the variance is based.
- D. An application for a variance is not necessary where planned neighborhood developments are proposed, as modifications to the standards and requirements of these Regulations may be approved by the AGB.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Planning Director recommends the Planning Board deny variance request 2 and 3 with the following conditions.

1. Set the waiting period for Preliminary Plat resubmittal to 3 months
2. The applicant provide an updated redesign of the subdivision to the City prior to resubmittal
3. Provide for curb, gutter, sidewalk, and stormwater drainage on designs

ATTACHMENTS

1. Variance Request Letter 2 and 3
2. List of Adjacent Property Owners from Parcels Requesting Variance
3. Preliminary Plat for Goldberg Sporting Estates Subdivision
4. Pre-application meeting summary letter dated February 7, 2019
5. Annexation Agreement – Major Components email sent to Performance Engineering on February 15, 2019.
6. Preliminary Plat Pre-Submittal comments email sent to Performance Engineering on October 30, 2019.
7. Preliminary Plat Meeting Notes 11.08.19 comments follow-up email provided to Performance Engineering on November 21, 2019.

File Attachments for Item:

2. Beartooth RC&D November Correspondence.

The background of the cover is a photograph of a cityscape, likely Bozeman, Montana. It features a large, modern glass skyscraper on the right with 'WELLS FARGO' written at the top. To the left of the skyscraper is a large, classical-style building with many columns. The city is nestled in a valley with hills in the background. Overlaid on the top half of the image are several large, semi-transparent, light blue geometric shapes, including squares and rectangles, some of which are tilted. These shapes create a layered, architectural effect.

YELLOWSTONE COUNTY ECONOMIC **RESPONSE & RECOVERY**

An Action Plan for Economic Recovery **and Beyond**

October 2020

**A pessimist sees difficulty in every
opportunity; an optimist sees
opportunity in every difficulty.**

– Winston Churchill

Yellowstone County Residents,

On March 16th of this year the COVID-19 related closures in our community began. This was unlike anything we have experienced before. Day by day we watched what we thought would remain just a challenge abroad, arrive on our doorstep. Our strong economy changed overnight as non-essential businesses were required to close, and essential business were forced to operate in new ways. Workers were made remote overnight and the home suddenly took on the role of office and school. Amidst the chaos created by sudden change, the Yellowstone County Unified Health Command rallied to ensure the proper response to the pandemic. It quickly became clear that supporting the economy was going to be an undertaking that needed a seat at the table. Thus, the Yellowstone County Economic Response and Recovery Team was formed.

This team comprised of over 40 public, private, and non-profit leaders came together to be the conduit between health and business – providing much needed information about health, safety, and how to reopen businesses. From this team effort, this Recover Plan was authored.

This will be a living document that will change with time and circumstance as we collectively navigate the pandemic, the economic challenges, and the systems that have been forever changed by this health crisis.

The team asks that you join us in doing the work to execute this plan with a vision toward not what was on March 16th when this began, but one that is stronger, more resilient, and better positioned to attract economic activity, investment, and talent that will propel Yellowstone County into the next decade.

Sincerely,



Steve Arveschoug

Yellowstone County Economic Response & Recovery Team Lead

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Background

Yellowstone County has encountered and overcome many economic challenges in its history, but the scale, scope, and speed of the economic stress imposed by the current COVID-19 pandemic is unprecedented. Under the duress of this global crisis, the region's solid, growing economy transformed within weeks into a recession of evolving proportions. Civic, business, and community leaders responded immediately, forming the Yellowstone County Economic Response and Recovery Team to react to the immediate needs of businesses; to support, guide, and provide advocacy for their recovery; and to develop a plan that will enable the community to thrive in a post-COVID-19 future.

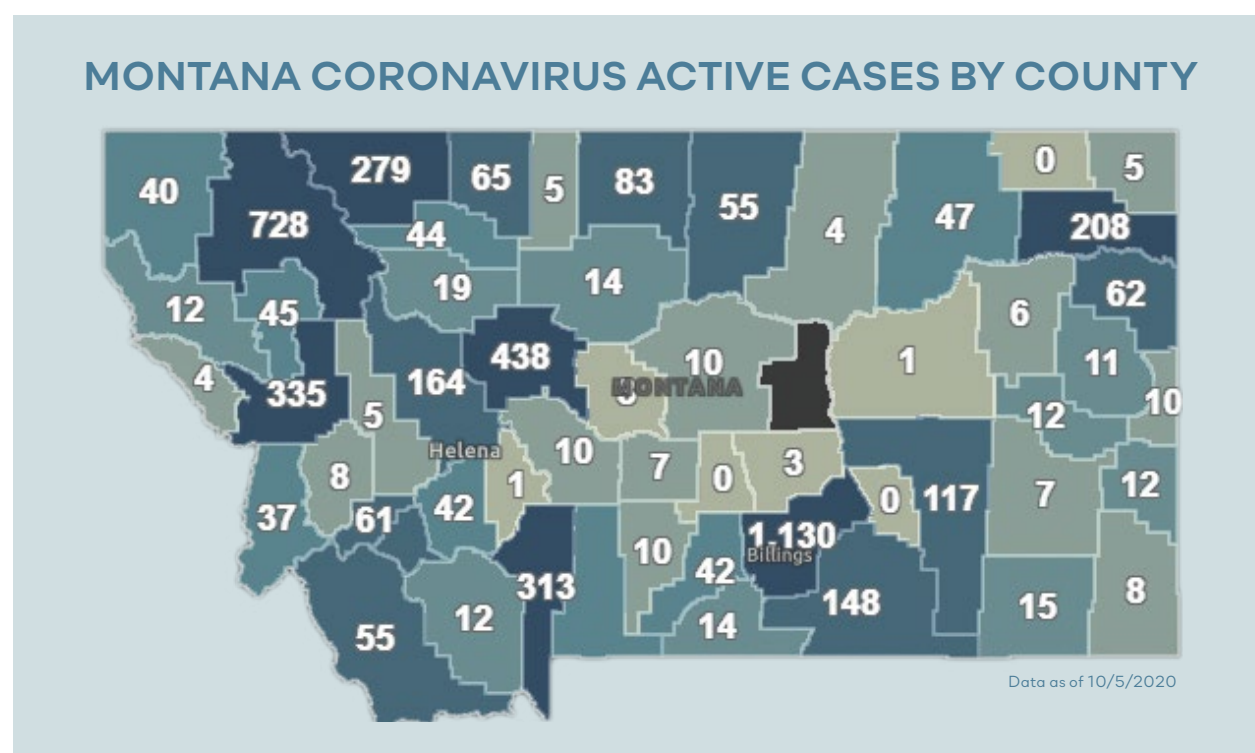
Optimists proclaim that bigger challenges hold greater opportunities, and that will be the case with this challenge. Realizing these opportunities will take a concerted effort by all sectors – businesses, healthcare, local government, education, arts and cultural organizations, nonprofits, and individual citizens– to restore the economy and rebuild the community. These efforts need the support, assistance, and cooperation of all levels of the public and private sectors. It is essential that the people and organizations of Yellowstone County proactively address, plan, and provide the vision for what the county will become when successfully recovered.

On March 28, Governor Steve Bullock, acting on the advice of public health officials, issued a stay-at-home order. This directive shut down large portions of the state's economy to contain the spread of COVID-19. As a public health measure, this effort was a success – COVID-19 peaked early at a relatively low number, hospitals were not overburdened, and the state's death toll from this pandemic has been among the lowest in the nation.

These steps to protect public health have taken a drastic toll on the economy. The inability to gather, shop, and travel during the stay-at-home order caused a severe direct financial hit to many businesses, with ripple effects throughout the economy. Economic output dropped sharply. Unemployment claims soared to record levels, reaching a peak of 11,903 in mid-April. In a survey conducted in late April, 92% of businesses reported somewhat or extremely negative impacts to their business from COVID-19. Programs instituted under the Federal CARES Act – the Paycheck Protection Program, the Economic Injury Disaster Loans, and the various grants and loans offered through Montana's Coronavirus Relief Funds – have helped many businesses retain their workers and alleviate some of their financial stress.

A phased reopening of the state's economy began on April 26, allowing many businesses affected by the stay-at-home order to resume operations with new protocols and reduced capacity. On June 1, Montana entered Phase 2 of reopening, allowing larger group sizes, increasing capacity limits, and removing a 14-day travel quarantine. Phase 2 brought additional economic activity, but much uncertainty remains. Businesses are searching for better solutions and models to help them survive as they adapt to new precautions, limitations, and unexpected expenses.

The resurgence of COVID-19 cases since June is concerning. Though an increase in cases was anticipated with the reopening of the economy, Yellowstone County has become the epicenter for COVID-19 infections in the state. The rise in cases in other parts of the country has resulted in business closures. This serves as a reminder that this virus is highly contagious, and we must take necessary precautions to avoid overwhelming the healthcare system and reversing the steps businesses have taken toward recovery. Regressing in the phased reopening would cause further devastating effects on the local economy.



One important additional precaution is the use of masks or face coverings to stem the spread of the virus. The Economic Response and Recovery Team launched the Masks Mean Business campaign to communicate that mask usage is vital to maintaining and improving both the physical and the economic health of the community. When Governor Bullock subsequently issued the mask mandate on July 15, our message and signs prominently expressed the need to adopt the new measure not only for public health benefits, but also to save the businesses, jobs, and the cultural and recreational institutions that make Yellowstone County unique. With the help of the City of Billings, St. Vincent Hospital and Riverstone Health, the team has distributed 60,000 masks to the businesses of Yellowstone County.

Yellowstone County Economic Response and Recovery Team (ERRT)

Yellowstone County's Economic Response and Recovery Team was formed at the beginning of this crisis with a mission ***to coordinate responses to the immediate needs of the business community, identify and fill gaps in services and resources, guide the development of the community's near-term economic recovery plan, and help define objectives for a comprehensive economic development strategy designed to build the foundation for the future community and economic development growth.*** This team consists of business owners, County and City elected leadership, health care experts, and community and economic developers.

Team Members:

Steve Arveschoug, *Big Sky Economic Development*

John Brewer, *Billings Chamber of Commerce*

Katy Easton, *Downtown Billings Partnership*

Lilly Corning, *(Retail/commercial development) Corning Companies*

Kris Carpenter, *(Retail) Joy of Living/Sanctuary Spa and Salon*

Mike Nelson, *(Hospitality) Northern Hotel*

Luke Kobold, *(Healthcare) Billings Clinic*

Ty Elkin, *(Healthcare) St. Vincent Healthcare*

Dr. David Graham, *(Healthcare) St. Vincent Healthcare*

John Felton, *(Public health) RiverStone Health*

Tom Schlotterback, *(Healthcare) St. John's United*

Taylor Brown, *(Ag) Northern Ag Network*

Courtney Kibblewhite, *(Ag) Northern Ag Network*

Don Jones, *(County leadership/small business owner) County Commissioner*

Shaun Brown, *Billings City Council*

Mike Seppala, *(Banking) Western Security Bank*

Bill Coffee, *(Banking) Stockman Bank*

Brian Brown, *(Banking) First Interstate Bank*

Martin Dewitt, *Small Business Administration*

Steve Simonson, *(Regional ED) Beartooth RC&D*

Leonard Smith, *Native American Development Corp.*

Mary Walks Over Ice, *Native American Development Corp.*

Matt Robertson, *(Commercial real estate) NAI Business Properties*

Kim Jakub, *(Natural resources) ExxonMobil*

Bryan Wood, *(Manufacturing) Wood's Powr-Grip*

George Warmer, *(Commercial real estate) Coldwell Banker, Commercial*

Brad Anderson, *(Restaurants) Anderson Management Group*

Matt Brosovich, *(Restaurants and hospitality) Ciao Mambo, Big Horn Resort*

Alex Tyson, *(Tourism) Visit Billings*

Sean Lynch, *(Event venues) Pub Station*

Tim Goodridge, *(Event venues) MetraPark*

Shelli Mann, *(Hospitality) Boothill Inn*

Ken Lutton, *(IT) Technology by Design/Yellowstone Tech Sector Partnership*

Eric Basye, *(Nonprofits) – Community Leadership & Development, Inc.*

The team is supported by a **Technical Support Group** in the following disciplines:

Economic Impact Analysis

Allison Corbyn – *Big Sky Economic Development*

Andy Zoeller – *City of Billings*

Planning

Wyeth Friday – *City of Billings*

Nick Altonaga – *City of Laurel*

Legislative Liaison

Daniel Brooks – *Billings Chamber*

Communications

Melanie Schwarz – *Big Sky Economic Development*

Kelly McCandless – *Billings Chamber*

Legal

Jeanna Lervick – *Yellowstone County Attorney's Office*

Project Management

Thom MacLean – *Big Sky Economic Development*

The Economic Response and Recovery Team has four project workgroups tasked with executing the unique aspects of its mission.

Response Coordination and Communication

- » Coordinates efforts to support the needs of the business community
- » Identifies and responds to gaps in needed services and support
- » Informs businesses and the community about available resources and information through communication channels, including the website: yceconomicrecovery.org

Economic Impact Assessment

- » Assesses and documents the economic consequences of COVID-19 to the community, especially the hardest hit sectors
- » Provides analysis and data to support funding requests and inform the economic recovery planning process

Strategic Restart Partnership

- » Works with the Public Health Officer to develop guidelines and provide information and training to help businesses safely reopen and adapt to new procedures and protocols

Recovery Planning

- » Guides the development and implementation of a plan that identifies and prioritizes projects and initiatives that will best support the economic recovery of the community in the near term and over the next three years

Yellowstone County - Montana's Economic Hub

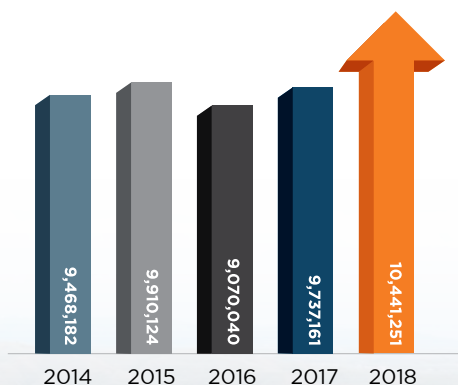
Yellowstone County is home to 15 percent of Montana's population. Its economy is also the state's largest, accounting for 19 percent of Montana's GDP (2018) and 18 percent of all income tax paid in the state (2018). The Billings MSA had a 2018 GDP of 10,441,251 with the Bozeman µSA being the second largest with a GDP of 5,822,537. As the largest community in a 500-mile region, Yellowstone County is the regional business and healthcare hub.

Prior to the COVID-19 disruption, Yellowstone County had a relatively strong economy, the GDP had just surpassed 2015 levels, there was consistent total personal income growth and a well-diversified economy. However, Yellowstone County was lagging regional peers in average annual wages, and in population growth. Even more critical, 22% of our current workforce is 65+ and in 10 years, 40% of our current workforce will reach retirement age.

The top industries in Billings based on a concentration that exceeds the United States average include: Wholesale Trade, Arts/Entertainment & Recreation, Construction, Retail Trade, Transportation and Warehousing, Health Care and Social Assistance, Accommodation and Food Services, Other Services (except public administrations) and Finance and Insurance.

The efforts of the Economic Response and Recovery Team are to respond to the immediate needs of the businesses and to forge a clear plan for the recovery of the economy and the community.

Billings GDP has finally exceeded 2015 numbers



40% of the Billings workforce will reach/exceed retirement age in the next 10 years

22% of our current workforce is 65+



Economic Impact Data

To understand the impact of the COVID-19 disruption in the economy, there are four main areas of consideration.

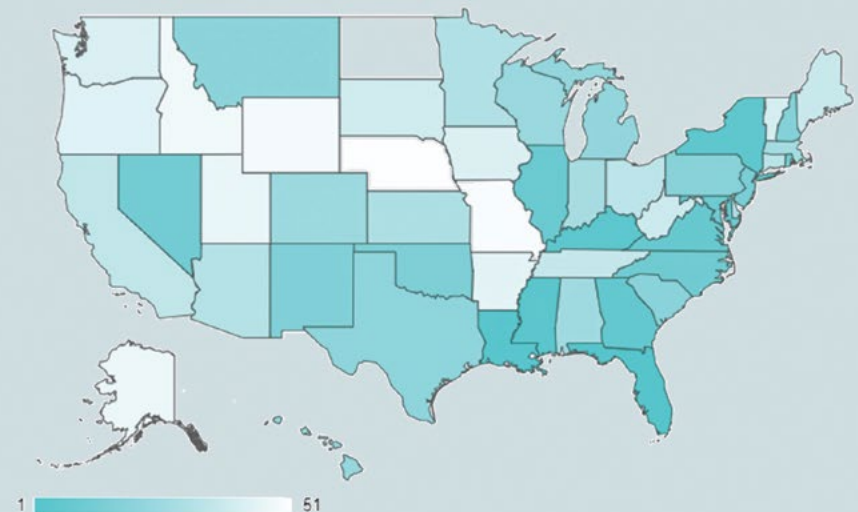
1. Economic Production/Business Activity – This is an overall look at economic performance and will be measured through GDP, business surveys, state and local relief dollars deployed in our community, economic vulnerability and total personal income. The data currently available only includes vulnerability indices, business data, and state and federal program use.

Montana ranks in the middle of the pack (20th) for state economic vulnerability, which is a reflection on the concentration of highly impacted industries as well as the support infrastructure for businesses to cope with the COVID-19 disruption. Contributing to this vulnerability is the fact that Montana has the highest share of employment from small businesses, and while we are in the top five for number of workers working from home, we are in the bottom five for work from home infrastructure.

State Economies Most Exposed to Coronavirus

Overall Rank	State	Total Score	'Highly Affected Industries & Workforce' Rank	'Resources for Businesses to Cope Better with the Crisis' Rank
1	Florida	61.16	1	29
2	Louisiana	54.86	5	4
3	Mississippi	52.04	25	1
4	Kentucky	51.86	20	2
5	New York	51.66	4	23
6	District of Columbia	51.34	2	37
7	Georgia	50.50	3	34
8	Virginia	49.85	6	25
9	Illinois	48.94	24	3
10	Maryland	48.52	10	21
11	North Carolina	48.30	13	20
12	Nevada	47.69	15	22
13	Rhode Island	47.42	19	18
14	New Jersey	46.89	28	8
15	Oklahoma	46.49	17	24
16	New Mexico	45.04	8	38
17	New Hampshire	45.01	7	40
18	Pennsylvania	44.75	30	17
19	South Carolina	44.25	35	12
20	Montana	44.15	18	30
21	Texas	44.07	22	27
22	Michigan	43.47	36	13

<https://wallethub.com/edu/state-economies-most-exposed-to-coronavirus/72631/>



#1
MONTANA HAS THE HIGHEST SHARE OF EMPLOYMENT FROM SMALL BUSINESSES

Highest Share of Workers Working from Home

- 47. New Hampshire
- 48. Montana
- 49. Oregon
- 50. Vermont
- 51. Colorado



Worst Work from Home Infrastructure

- 1. Mississippi
- 2. Arkansas
- 3. West Virginia
- 4. New Mexico
- 5. Montana

Yellowstone County's position as a regional hub makes it more susceptible to the detrimental consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. Chmura Analytics rated Yellowstone County as the 322nd most vulnerable out of 3141 counties nationwide. Chmura's Vulnerability Index measures the negative impact that the coronavirus crisis can have on employment based on the area's mix of industries. Of the top 10 most vulnerable industries in Chmura's analysis, seven have a concentration in Yellowstone County that is higher than the national average, as highlighted below.

ECONOMIC VULNERABILITY - TOP 10 MOST VULNERABLE INDUSTRIES

IMPACT OF CORONAVIRUS - AVERAGE PROJECTED JOB LOSSES, UNITED STATES

- › Accommodation and Food Services
- › Arts, Entertainment and Recreation
- › Other Services (except Public Administration)
- › Transportation and Warehousing
- › Retail Trade
- › Wholesale Trade
- › Information
- › Manufacturing
- › Construction
- › Mining, Quarrying and Oil and Gas Extraction

<http://www.chmuraecon.com/interactive/covid-19-economic-vulnerability-index/>

ECONOMIC VULNERABILITY



YELLOWSTONE COUNTY IS IN THE

TOP 10%

OF MOST VULNERABLE COUNTIES IN THE NATION

Community ▼	Index ▼	Rank ▼
Boise	175.05	51
Rapid City	120.56	257
Bozeman	118.35	285
Billings	116.21	322
Missoula	110.29	450
Great Falls	110.01	460
Casper	105.93	626
Fort Collins	104.31	713
Bismarck	98.84	1059
Cheyenne	92.4	1544

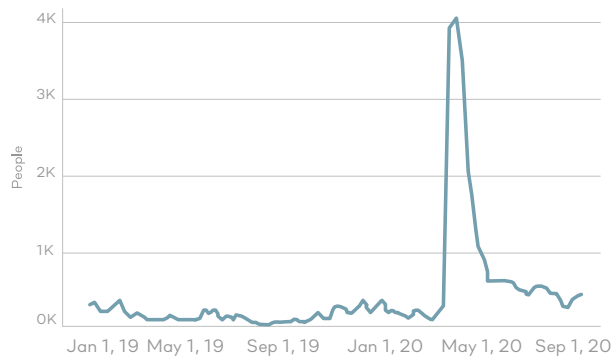
<http://www.chmuraecon.com/interactive/covid-19-economic-vulnerability-index/>

2. Employment – This is a leading indicator with weekly data on the unemployment claims filed by industry along with unemployment rate, labor participation, real time job postings and year to date change comparisons.

People Filing Initial Claims – a measure of all people who started a new unemployment insurance claim

Yellowstone County

Week Ending 8/29/20



Note 1: Previous versions of this chart published prior to May 21, 2020 illustrated claims, but this chart counts the number of people making a claim. Workers making claims, but who are ultimately not eligible, are included in the totals. Pandemic Unemployment Assistance claims are included, with the first week a person files a PUA claim included in the initial week total.

Note 2: Missing data in the line graph indicate nondisclosable data of less than three claims.

People Filing UI Claims – a measure of all people who filed an unemployment insurance claim

Yellowstone County

Week Ending 8/29/20



Source: JobsEQ® Data reflect online job postings, active ads only as of 8/13/2020. Note: data are subject to revision. Time series data can be volatile with trends unrelated to actual changes in demand; use with caution.

There has been a relatively consistent downward trend for unemployment insurance claim filings, which is an encouraging indicator, suggesting that folks are getting back to work. Additionally, as of September 21st, there were 5,329 active job postings in Yellowstone County.

People filing UI claims **peaked the week ending April 18** at 13.7% of the Yellowstone County labor force

Currently, just over **4% of the labor force** is filing UI Claims
As of week ending 9/5/20

5,329

Total

444

Occupations

254

Locations

1.7k

Employers

167

Certifications

825

Hard Skills

100

Soft Skills

4k

Job Titles

5

Education Levels

153

Programs

7

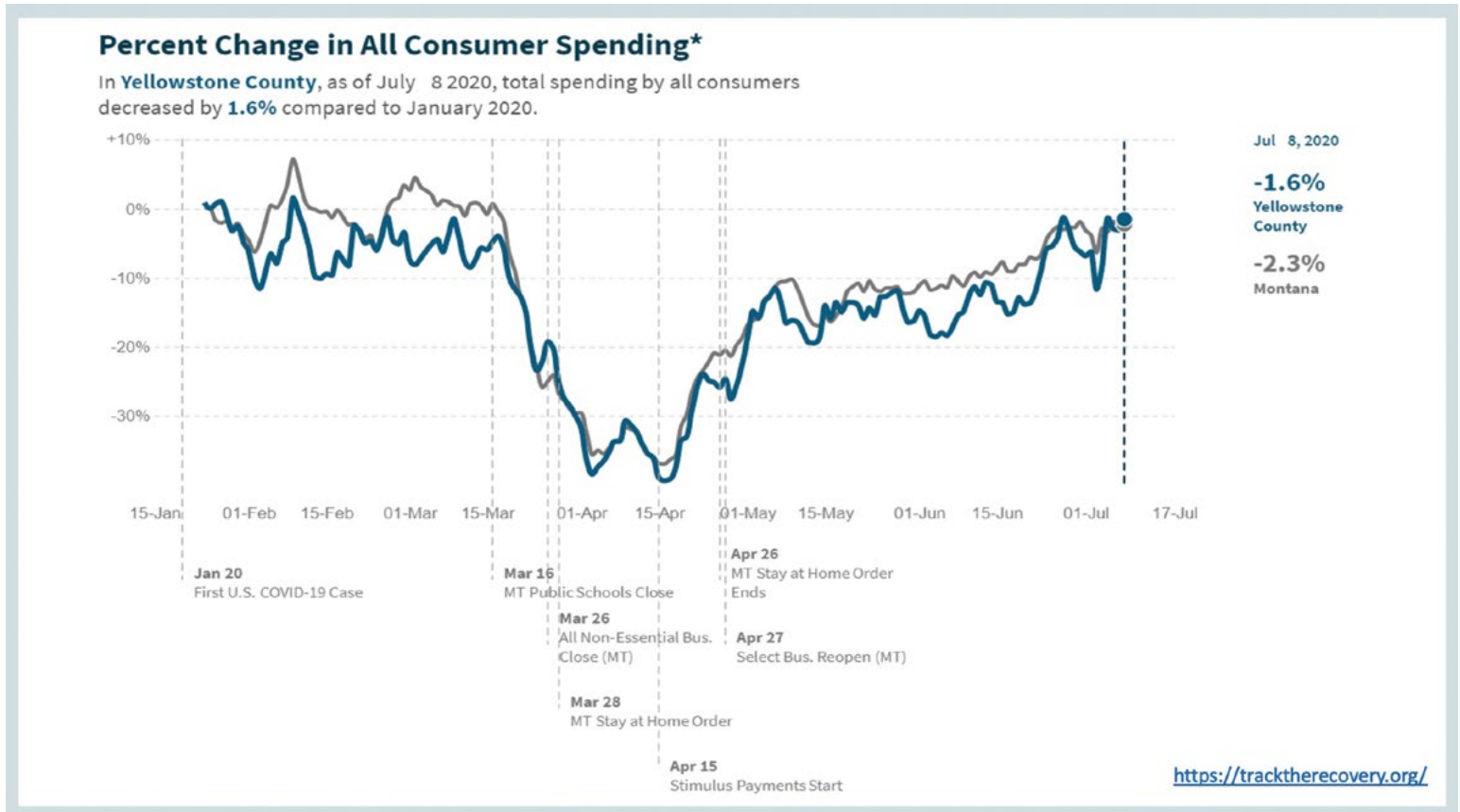
Job Types

OCCUPATIONS

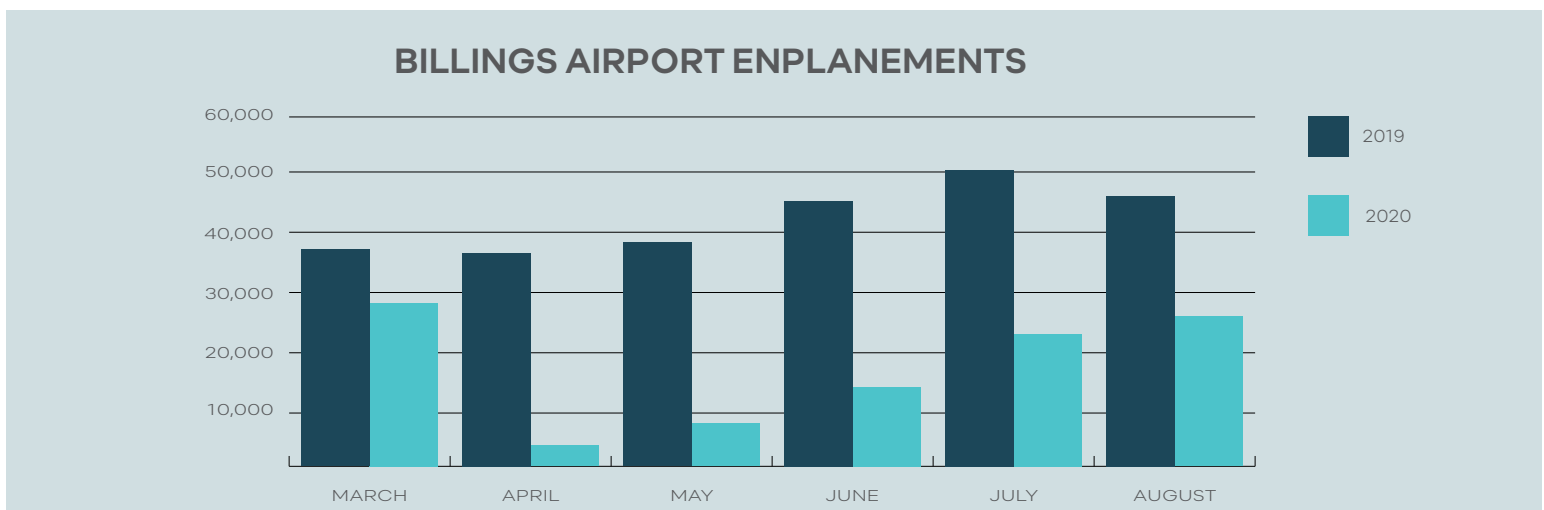
SOC	Occupation	Total Ads	
29-1141.00	Registered Nurses	371	<div></div>
41-2031.00	Retail Salespersons	297	<div></div>
41-1011.00	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	173	<div></div>
53-7065.00	Stockers and Order Fillers	173	<div></div>
41-3091.00	Sales Representative of Services, Except Advertising, Insurance, Financial Services and Travel	146	<div></div>
43-4051.00	Customer Service Representatives	114	<div></div>
35-1012.00	First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	107	<div></div>
11-9111.00	Medical and Health Services Managers	106	<div></div>
53-3032.00	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	106	<div></div>
35-3023.00	Fast Food and Counter Workers	104	<div></div>

Source: JobsEQ® Data reflect online job postings, active ads only as of 9/20/2020. Note: Data are subject to revision. Time series data can be volatile with trends unrelated to actual changes in demand; use with caution.









3. Consumer Behavior – Understanding how consumers have been impacted by the stay-at-home order and how they now prefer to engage in the economy is a critical component to track. This is also a big unknown in the recipe of recovery. Consumer behavior seems to be very regionally driven – with a positive trend since the middle of April. However, small business revenue is still down 10.3% overall in Yellowstone County.



Montana did well this summer and is still doing well, we are the destination that people who are willing to risk flying are choosing. Kalispell is at 83% of last year's screening numbers for September, Bozeman is at 68%, Billings is at 58% and Missoula is at 55%. The national average is at 31%.



4. Community Health – the interdependence of economic health and community health means that community health data, both COVID-19 cases and the burden on the healthcare system, will be a critical part of the economic picture. The Billings hospital referral region includes 650,000 people, so it is critical to keep up to date on the healthcare burden both in our county and those surrounding us. The Unified Health Command has developed a dashboard that benchmarks our community health response.

UNIFIED HEALTH COMMAND DASHBOARD SEPTEMBER 19, 2020		
STATUS KEY: GREEN Operating as expected/normal capacity YELLOW Needs beginning to outpace capacity RED Stressed operations/critical concerns		
CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	STATUS
Health Department Capacity	Sufficient staff for COVID-19 monitoring & follow-up	
Case Investigation	Ability to manage investigations and contact testing for all COVID-19 positive results	
Testing Capacity	Staff & supplies to screen & test all individuals recommended for COVID-19 testing	
Healthcare System Capacity	Sufficient hospital staff, beds, and equipment to treat patients with COVID-19 & all other patients safely	
Disease Surveillance	Monitoring Emergency Department visits for respiratory symptoms	
Regional Impact	Active COVID-19 cases in our regional service area (surrounding counties, Wyoming, North and South Dakota)	
COVID-19 Daily Case Average	Daily new cases of COVID-19 per 10k people (7-day Average, each Sunday through Saturday)	 18/100k
Positive COVID-19 Test Rate	Percentage of positive COVID-19 tests (7-day Average, each Sunday through Saturday)	 6.3%

Yellowstone County Economic Response & Recovery Plan

This Yellowstone County Economic Response & Recovery Plan is a guiding document developed by the Economic Response and Recovery Team. Because the continuing public health crisis is fluid and evolving with many unknowns, this plan must remain flexible, ready to adapt to changing circumstances and timelines. The plan is developed in three parts, based on the primary purpose and the estimated time frame.

1» Stage One – Coordination and Response (0 – 9 months)

GOALS

- › Help businesses overcome immediate challenges
- › Focus on safely and effectively reopening the economy
- › Re-activate the workforce
- › Assist businesses as they learn and adapt
- › Restore consumer confidence and reengage customers

2» Stage Two – Business Recovery and Stabilization (6 – 18 months)

GOALS

- › Sustain response and stabilization momentum
- › Advocate for businesses and restore consumer confidence
- › Support businesses' needs to adapt, grow, and build resiliency

3» Stage Three – Building Economic & Community Resiliency (6 months – 3 years)

GOALS

- › Seek a common vision for our community
- › Cultivate our economic garden – sustain and grow our local businesses
- › Build for economic resiliency
- › Remain committed to workforce development
- › Commit to strategic community infrastructure/assets investment
- › Capture and enhance “small metro” advantages and opportunities
- › Cooperate for regional recovery
- › Recover together – address diversity and inclusion

1» Stage One – Coordination and Response

The sharp and sudden economic disruption caused by COVID-19 related closures and restrictions that began on March 28 created a dramatic impact on businesses of all types. Many businesses and organizations were deemed “non-essential” and forced to close or operate under strict limitations. Their revenue plummeted, often to zero, while expenses continued. Their employees were laid off or furloughed. The impacts rippled throughout the community and economy. Local, state, and federal support programs were developed, trying to fill the gaps and save businesses from permanent closure. These programs have been a vital element of response.

Closing our doors because of the Coronavirus was probably the hardest challenge that I have ever had as a business owner. Not knowing what was coming each and every day was overwhelming! We went from managing, running and growing our business to damage control. More than anything, it was suddenly having to learn to run a business that I didn't create.

*– Kris Carpenter, Owner,
Joy of Living & Sanctuary Spa*

Goals: Coordination and Response

- › Help businesses overcome immediate challenges
- › Focus on safely and effectively reopening the economy
- › Re-activate the workforce
- › Assist businesses as they learn and adapt
- › Restore consumer confidence and reengage customers

Time Frame: 0 – 9 months

Economic Response and Recovery Team Efforts to Date:

Collaborate to eliminate duplication of effort and provide easy access to solutions for businesses.

Efforts to date:

The development of the yceoconomicrecovery.org website as a central source of vetted information and resources for businesses and communities.

Provide direct support services and act as a conduit for businesses to access needed resources to survive the impacts of COVID-19 and reopen.

Efforts to date:

- › Big Sky Economic Development – 11 stabilization loans totaling \$152,000
- › SBDC business consultations – 217 COVID-19 related consultations
- › Billings Chamber and John Felton – 36 industry-specific trainings and information sessions

Act on our Business/Public Health partnership to guide business reopening

Efforts to date:

Open & Safe Campaign

With guidance from the Yellowstone County Public Health Officer, the team developed this campaign to help area businesses safely reopen their doors to the community and reengage consumers. The Open & Safe emblem signifies the businesses' commitment to maintaining a safe and healthy space by adopting appropriate practices related to cleaning, masking, distancing, limiting occupancy and monitoring the health of their employees.

Masks Mean Business Campaign

As cases of COVID-19 increased over the summer, we implemented the Masks Mean Business campaign to advocate mask usage as a simple way to help slow the spread of the virus. We must continue to advocate that wearing masks when social distancing is not possible is an important way to avoid additional economic damage to businesses by protecting the health of the community.

Focus time and resources on the hardest hit industries

Efforts to date:

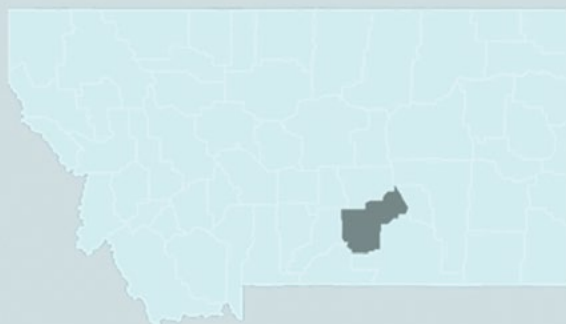
Communications with the Governor and Congressional Delegation

- › Recommendations for use of Coronavirus Relief Funds
- › Letters of Support
 - » St. John's United
 - » Event Venue Relief
 - » "Save Our Stages" Federal Legislation

Along with these efforts, the team continues to focus on providing the resources businesses and organizations need to navigate the changed environment. We will advocate for solutions that meet their needs and provide relief until they are able to return to more normal operations. Also, there will be continued assistance in the interpretation of and compliance with guidelines as the county moves through the various COVID-19 response phases – helping guide businesses as clearly and concisely as possible.

The PPP program saved our business and helped us recover our pre-COVID balance sheet

– Billings Restaurant Owner



\$51,499,238

Dollars to YC from the State
Coronavirus Relief Programs
13.4% of awarded funds statewide

\$525,767,100

9,422 Businesses in MT
Received EIDL
Through August 24

\$1,780,415,878

23,908 Businesses in MT Received PPP
Over 3,119 businesses in Yellowstone County have received PPP
through August 8

Measures of Success:

- › Track participation in learning sessions and information forums provided by the Billings Chamber, BSED, SBDC, SBA and other partners
- › Track website usage data – clicks, page views, downloads, etc. – to monitor business and community engagement
- › Gather regular feedback from a representative cohort of businesses, distinguished by phases, to determine status and any needs or gaps
- › Develop baseline data – including existing metrics (SBDC, PTAC, loan fundings, SBA, CRF money deployed in Yellowstone County) and periodic surveys – to evaluate progress
- › Partner with the Public Health Officer to monitor public health data and consider responses

Montana Coronavirus Relief Fund Programs

The State of Montana received \$1.25 billion from the CARES Act to help offset direct impacts and costs related to COVID-19. To date, the state has deployed over 18 programs offering grants, reimbursements or loan deferments.

- » Montana Adaptation Program
- » Montana Innovation Grant Program
- » Montana Meat Processing Infrastructure Grant
- » Montana Business Stabilization Program
- » Montana Food and Agriculture Adaptability Program
- » Public Health Grants
- » Stay Connected Grants for Seniors
- » Social Service Non-Profit Grants
- » Food Bank and Food Pantry Assistance
- » Telework Assistance Grants
- » Montana Loan Deferment Program
- » Emergency Housing Assistance Program
- » Local Government Reimbursement Program
- » Childcare Support Program
- » Live Entertainment Grant Program
- » East Glacier Park Tourism Grant Program
- » Big Sky Trust Fund Workforce Recovery Program
- » Montana Working Capital Program

As of September 25, over \$1.045 billion of the Coronavirus Relief Funds had been allocated. All funds must be spent by December 31, 2020.

2» Stage Two – Business Recovery and Stabilization

Transitioning from response to recovery, there remains much work to be done. There will be an ongoing need to communicate with and assist businesses– to identify new and evolving challenges; to provide resources to support growth, diversification, and resilience; to advocate for their needs; and to help them reengage their customers and regain their market. The recent uptick in COVID cases provides a reminder that vigilance and responsiveness will be required because the situation is ever-changing. **Public health and economic health are tightly intertwined.** We must monitor and protect both and continue to partner with local health professionals. We will monitor businesses and organizations in the most vulnerable sectors to inform decisions and actions while acknowledging that needs will vary by industry and sector.

Goals: Business Recovery and Stabilization

- › **Sustain coordination and response momentum**
- › **Advocate for businesses and restore consumer confidence**
- › **Support businesses' needs to adapt, grow and build resiliency**

Time Frame: 6 – 18 months

- › **Sustain the Economic Response and Recovery Team structure.** Identify a smaller Steering Committee to monitor and report back to the overall team.
- › **Provide ongoing resources for businesses during the adaptation phase.** Local businesses will need continuing support and assistance as they progress toward recovery. Response and Recovery efforts will provide ongoing resources and guidance to businesses as they adapt and improve. We must continuously monitor changing needs and adjust our efforts appropriately.
- › **Facilitate “learning from each other” as we collectively adapt.** Given the new and evolving environment, businesses will need to adapt and learn new procedures/practices, and business models to survive and thrive. The Economic Response and Recovery Team, through partnerships, will facilitate a collective learning environment where businesses can teach each other new best practices learned through experience. We can also assist their efforts to incorporate and use new technology to better operate in these changed circumstances, including expanding their web presence and capability and exploring unique ways to deliver their products or services.

- › **Advocate for businesses by promoting “Buy Local/Click Local” campaigns.** The Economic Response and Recovery Team will also work with businesses to **promote Buy Local and Click Local campaigns.** One concerning aspect of the early stages of this pandemic is that it has driven many more people to large online retailers. We need to remind people of the importance of supporting local businesses and make it easier and more comfortable for consumers. This means helping businesses cost-effectively expand the ways that consumers can connect and shop with them. It also requires restoring consumers’ confidence and making them feel safe and comfortable in local businesses.
- › **Continue to build consumer confidence through the Open and Safe and Masks Mean Business campaigns.**
- › **Assist Cultural Institutions.** People do not live in a community for office towers and big box stores, but for the leisure and cultural amenities offered by arts and cultural institutions. These institutions are essential to the economic vitality of the region. Yellowstone County has numerous museums, theaters, galleries, music venues, and other cultural institutions and organizations that contribute to the vibrancy, life, and fun of the community. Without these assets to make this a great place to live, work, learn, play, and visit, the economy will suffer. These organizations have been hit hard by the effects of the pandemic. Understanding their unique needs will be critical.
- › **Assist Nonprofit Service Organizations.** Nonprofits in Yellowstone County provide many essential services, especially in uncertain and unstable economic times. It is important to assist these organizations’ recovery efforts so they can continue to serve their vital role in the community.
- › **Assess and Respond to Workforce Needs.** Work force needs have changed because of the COVID-19 disruption. Many lost jobs will not return. We must work with businesses to determine how employment will evolve, where new job growth may occur, and what education and skills will be needed by the future workforce. Then, educational providers can align training and education to meet current and future needs.

Throughout the recovery process, continued monitoring will take place to assess business and community needs through outreach and surveys to inform and improve these plans and actions. The Economic Response and Recovery Team will continue to educate the community of its important role and responsibility to follow and promote proper protocols to sustain a safe reopening and realize a quicker recovery.

Measures of Success:

- › Track the number of businesses engaged on an ongoing basis to facilitate collection of quantitative data
- › Develop benchmarks (e.g., # of businesses prior to COVID-19) to measure results (# of businesses retained, # of new businesses/business licenses)
- › Maintain a sample group of impacted businesses and monitor their progress (employment base, sales, supply chain challenges, etc.)
- › Evaluate the initial economic response and recovery plan/progress through communication and comparison with the peer communities.

3» Stage Three – Build Economic & Community Resiliency

What We've Learned...

Economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic will be a unique challenge, but we must look beyond recovery and position the community and region for the future. Innovative methods and solutions will help build a robust and resilient economy and create a more attractive and vibrant community.

All crises create opportunity – chances to learn, grow and change for the better. Many of the opportunities emerging in Yellowstone County are related to its location, size and role as a regional hub for commerce, healthcare, and arts and culture. Yellowstone County has tremendous potential to capitalize on emerging opportunities initiated or accelerated by COVID-19.

Yellowstone County offers an outstanding quality of life – the urban amenities of Downtown Billings, the suburban comfort of the West End and the Heights, the small-town charm of Laurel and Lockwood, the country feel of the Yellowstone Valley, and the Trailhead to outdoor recreation and adventure. The trend of remote working has been enhanced and amplified by this pandemic. Many more workers will no longer be tethered to a specific location by their jobs or employers. **They will seek a better quality of life – a vibrant community that they can afford and that offers them opportunities.** With the right investments and effort, Yellowstone County can be that place.

MEDIAN HOUSE VALUE BY COMMUNITY

Community (by MSA/μSA)	Current Median House Value
Great Falls	\$171,700
Rapid City	\$180,027
Casper	\$202,600
Cheyenne	\$214,000
Boise	\$214,482
Billings	\$220,191
Bismarck	\$236,297
Missoula	\$271,400
Bozeman	\$330,400
Fort Collins	\$336,200

Source: JobsEQ® Median values for certain aggregate regions (such as MSAs) may be estimated as the weighted averages of the median values from the composing counties.

Data as of September 2020

Yellowstone County has long been the commercial center of Montana and the region by virtue of its strong and diverse economy; its talented, skilled, and determined workforce; and its strategic location midway between Minneapolis, Denver, Seattle and Calgary. Failures and vulnerabilities exposed by this global pandemic will lead many corporations to re-shore manufacturing and shorten supply lines. This will provide Yellowstone County the opportunity to expand its role as a center for distribution and manufacturing. As a prime crossroads with a strong commercial/industrial base and great access to road, rail and air

transportation networks, Yellowstone County is an excellent location for manufacturing facilities, processing facilities and distribution hubs.

To position Yellowstone County for the future, it is vital to understand the economic impacts and business trends that have affected the region and consider new opportunities and strategies to build a strong, resilient, and vibrant regional economy. In our research and our conversations with other communities and national economic development professionals, some common themes were developed based on the new knowledge we have gained. These themes have guided our efforts, and include:

- › Incentivize and support entrepreneurship
- › Employ new tactics and models to support small businesses
- › Invest in critical infrastructure, especially broadband
- › Develop quality of place and talent attraction initiatives
- › Support workforce re-skilling and re-employment efforts
- › Create manageable goals and embrace incrementalism
- › “Move to where the puck will be.” – Develop for what will be, not what was.

After thoughtful consideration of the various ways that the COVID-19 pandemic has altered and affected society – globally, nationally, regionally and locally – the Economic Response and Recovery Team, applying the lessons learned over the past six months, proposes the following goals to effectively rebuild and enhance the economy and community and create a strong foundation for a prosperous post-COVID-19 future.

Goals: Build Economic and Community Resiliency

- › **Seek a common vision for our community**
- › **Cultivate our economic garden – sustain and grow our local businesses**
- › **Build for economic resiliency**
- › **Remain committed to workforce development**
- › **Commit to strategic community infrastructure/assets investment**
- › **Capture and enhance “small metro” advantages and opportunities**
- › **Cooperate for regional recovery**
- › **Recover together – address diversity and inclusion**

Time Frame: 6 months – 3 years

Seek a Common Vision for Our Community

We all share a boat that we call our community. And we all have an oar. Where we take this vessel, and how swiftly, will be determined by how well we agree on objectives and work collectively to achieve them. If we all row together in a common direction, we can produce amazing results. **The first step toward a better future is the development of a common vision for the community.** We must create a shared set of goals and strategies for investing in and building our economy and community.

Cultivate Our Economic Garden

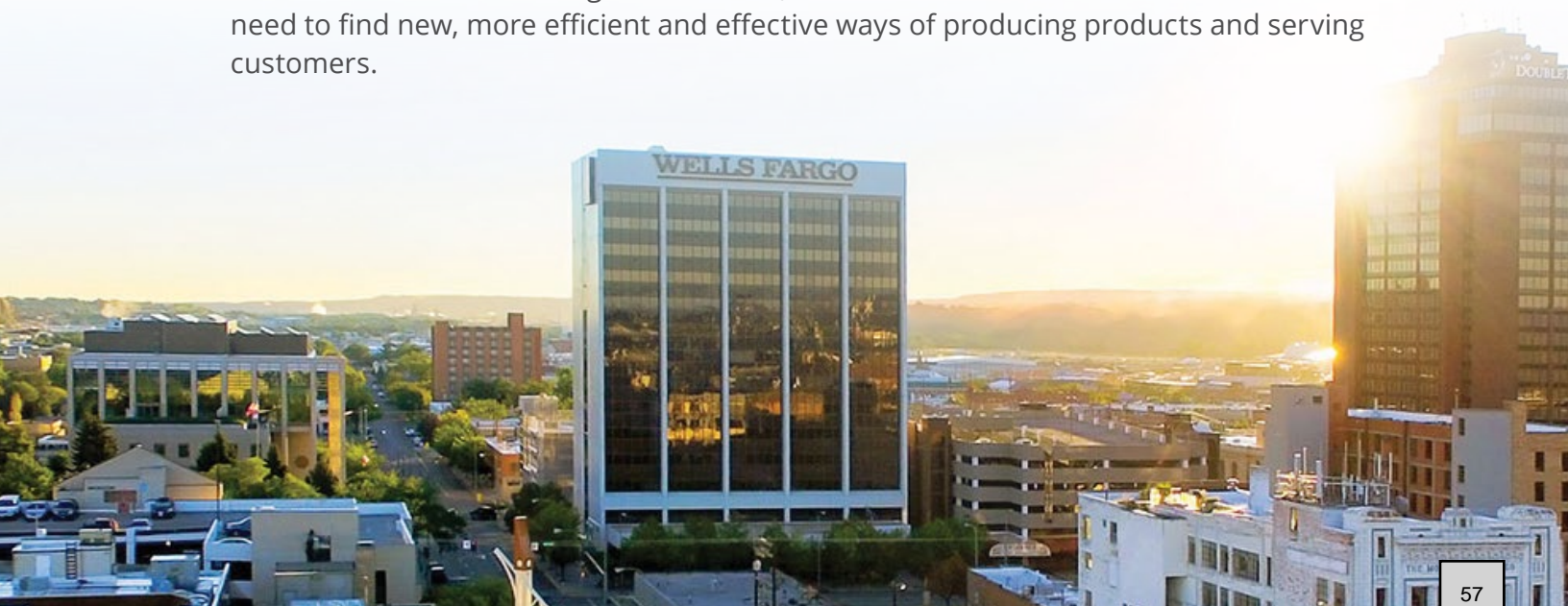
Economic gardening is the concept of growing the local economy from within, helping local entrepreneurs launch and build new companies and supporting existing small businesses as they grow. Local businesses are the lifeblood of a community – especially in Montana, which has the highest share of employment from small businesses of any state in the nation. These businesses have an organic connection to the community that cannot be duplicated by big box national chains, and they provide the distinctive local flavor that makes each community unique. These businesses bring new jobs, wealth and revenue to Yellowstone County and create a vigorous, resilient economy. Cultivating them involves:

Incentivize and Support Entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurs solve problems, and this pandemic has caused many. These problems present opportunities for innovation for new and existing local businesses. If we provide the proper incentives to catalyze their efforts and the necessary support to guide and facilitate their journey, we can enhance their reach and success.

Develop New Tactics and Models to Support Small Businesses.

Small businesses are crucial to a local economy. They are currently facing a formidable challenge. Some will not survive. Those that do will need to change and adapt to new realities. In this still-evolving environment, businesses and those that serve them will need to find new, more efficient and effective ways of producing products and serving customers.



Build for Economic Resiliency

Great stress exposes the cracks. It shows where weaknesses exist. COVID-19 has highlighted many regional weaknesses. Deficiencies must now be addressed. As we mend the cracks and help restore the economy, adaptability and resilience must be at the core of the strategy.

Enhance Broadband Service.

The need for fast, reliable broadband internet has been highlighted and magnified by this pandemic. Stay-at-home orders forced many to work from home, greatly accelerating a trend that will likely continue. Transactions and meetings have been transformed into virtual interactions, encouraging the adoption of verbs like “venmo,” “zoom” and “skype” into the vernacular. Most have adjusted to the protocols of these new mediums, but it is frustrating, inconvenient and unproductive when a Zoom meeting freezes because kids are watching Netflix in the next room. Developing better broadband to serve the needs of businesses is essential to thrive in a globally connected economy. The role of e-commerce has been amplified by COVID-19. Businesses must have the network capacity to compete. Superior broadband service is also needed to benefit from expanding telehealth and distance learning opportunities. Furthermore, the opportunity to attract remote workers to Yellowstone County as well as our residents’ ability to work remotely for distant companies cannot be fully realized without an effective broadband network. We must work with broadband providers and with local and statewide partners to plan and implement an effective and affordable network that can facilitate economic growth.

Sustain Air Transportation.

Airline transportation is one of the industries hardest hit by COVID-19. People are too concerned about virus transmission to fly. Business and recreational travel has been drastically curtailed. Flights have been cut. Planes have been parked. Recovery of the airlines will be slow and will require federal assistance. Yellowstone County has made tremendous progress in the past few years working with air carriers to expand service to the airport. Eventually, air service will again be essential in a globally connected economy. We believe air service is essential infrastructure and will focus on supporting the recovery of the industry.

Pay Attention to Local and State Government Finances.

Local and state governments are expected to face fiscal stress and uncertainty for the next few years. Possible loss of revenue due to the economic consequences of the pandemic combined with increased expenses related to the response to its health and social effects will squeeze already tight budgets. It will be important to work with local leaders and area legislators to explore new methods of funding and new models for providing services in an efficient and effective manner.

Sustain and Enhance Our Position as a Regional Healthcare Hub.

The COVID-19 disruptions to the healthcare industry nationally have contributed greatly to economic loss in that sector. In April alone, 1.4 million healthcare workers lost their jobs nation-wide. During a pandemic, most would assume that healthcare would be spared from losses, but non-essential procedures were canceled, and people remained at home. Many others were too scared of COVID exposure to seek help for health issues. Many highly qualified individuals, who just a month before were in one of the most sought-after professions, found themselves with reduced hours or reduced pay or both. Some even lost their jobs. This trend played out in places like Kalispell, Montana, where 600 healthcare staff lost their jobs. In Billings, the largest employers, Billings Clinic and SCL Health, prioritized keeping staff engaged on other projects to maintain their workforce. However, a combination of increased costs and decreased revenues has stretched capacity thin. Yellowstone County must support the innovation of the regional healthcare delivery system as we seek business growth and educational partnership opportunities in this sector.

Support Public Safety Efforts.

The safety and security of people and businesses are vital to the survival and prosperity of any community. Current needs include adequate police protection for the City of Billings, improved fire service coverage for the Heights and the West End, and better EMS service in Laurel and rural communities. Yellowstone County municipalities must find ways to adequately fund and explore new methods to efficiently provide the public safety services needed to secure, maintain and enhance this area's quality of life.

Advocate for New Economic Development Tools.

Montana's economic development toolbox has not been updated in 20 years. Especially in difficult times, it is vital to have effective methods to help leverage economic tools to attract private investment. States throughout the West have developed new methods and mechanisms for economic development that put Montana communities at a distinct disadvantage in the competition for businesses and talent. It is vital to work with area legislators and local leadership to develop new tools to resolve this disparity.

Remain Committed to Workforce Development

This pandemic caused an unprecedented spike in unemployment with claims in late-March and April far eclipsing any previous economic event. Those statistics have recovered some, in part due to federal programs like the Paycheck Protection Program. The immediate goal has been to get as many workers as possible back on the job through an effective restart. However, the future remains uncertain, especially in hard hit industries like travel and tourism, hospitality and entertainment. Many pre-COVID jobs will not return as businesses in all industries adjust to new circumstances. Just as businesses need support to adapt to economic changes, the workforce will need training for new positions in the emerging economy.

Identify New and Emerging Workforce Needs.

We need to anticipate and respond to the changes in employment trends. What jobs may disappear? What new jobs will emerge and what knowledge and skills will be needed to excel at them? How can we help the workforce transition to meet these changing circumstances? These are some of the unknowns in the recovery.

Retrain and Re-educate the Future Workforce.

It will be important to continue collaborations with high schools, adult education programs, colleges and trade schools to develop and retrain workers for the jobs of the future. Apprenticeship programs must expand to assist the transition of displaced workers into new and growing fields. Times are changing and the workforce must respond and adapt.

Support the Adaptation of Post-Secondary Educational Institutions.

City College, Montana State University Billings, and Rocky Mountain College face major operational changes as a result of this pandemic. They will need to adapt to new learning environments and business needs. Smaller class sizes to accommodate physical distancing requirements and more remote learning are just two of many new procedures and protocols they must incorporate.

Address Childcare.

Childcare issues were a major concern prior to the pandemic. COVID-19 has exacerbated this problem, causing additional challenges for working families. The shortage that existed in Montana has gotten worse, and the gap in care for school age kids is wider and of greater impact than ever before.

In June 2020, the U.S. Chamber Foundation surveyed working parents to understand the impact that childcare has on their ability to return to work. Seventy-five percent of working parents have children staying at home with them during work hours. A majority report flexible schedules and the ability to work remotely as the most important employer-provided benefits. As parents decide how to educate their children this school year, employers must determine how they're going to accommodate their workforce.

The majority of childcare in this country is provided by small businesses. Nearly 700,000 childcare businesses across the country are experiencing significant financial stress as a result of COVID-19 and are at risk of closing permanently. Yellowstone County is at risk of losing critical childcare capacity at a time when demand is higher than ever.

Successful recovery must include childcare as part of the equation. Childcare businesses need support to keep their doors open, and employers need guidance on how to accommodate new unavoidable demands from their workforce. The recently announced Childcare Support Grants offered by the state with the Coronavirus Relief Funds can be an important first step to solving this issue.

Commit to Strategic Community Infrastructure/Assets Investment

Yellowstone County has a long list of exciting and important projects at various stages of planning, development, or implementation. These projects range from enhancing the transportation network to fortifying the municipal infrastructure to improving the area's quality of life. If past economic crises suggest a pattern, it is that federal funds may be made available for infrastructure projects to help stimulate economic recovery. It is important to be prepared if this pattern continues.

Investment in infrastructure and community assets augments a solid foundation upon which we can build a stronger economy and a vibrant community.

Develop and Prioritize a List of Strategic “Shovel-Ready” Projects.

If federal stimulus funds are made available, it will be important to be ready to act quickly and decisively on the projects most important and most beneficial to the community. Some projects to consider include the Inner Belt Loop, the Westend reservoir and park project, the Lockwood TEDD industrial area, Coulson Park, and the Marathon Loop/Skyline Trail/Stagecoach Trail project.

Consider Downtown and Community Redevelopment Projects Consistent with Existing Concepts and Plans.

Utilize existing plans, including master plans already developed for many of the Tax Increment Finance districts, transportation corridors, parks and trails to build creative public private, partnerships that can deliver needed development. Some of the plans already in place include Coulson Park, the Expo Gateway and the Expo and 1st Avenue North project, MetraPark master plan, Castlerock Park, One Big Sky District (Catalyst Projects), DBA Strategic Plan, and the Billings Bypass.

Develop Incrementally.

Like physical health, civic and economic health will not happen overnight. Local communities should approach development as a series of small steps to be undertaken in a fiscally responsible manner. Grand master plans should be implemented one piece at a time. This process is more adaptable, more responsible and more resilient.

Capture “Small Metro” Advantages/Opportunities

Yellowstone County is an outstanding place. Citizens choose to live here for the variety of opportunities and amenities it offers – good jobs in a stable economy, urban attractions, arts and culture, access to education, parks and trails and other outdoor recreation. It affords a host of “small metro” advantages that many more are starting to recognize and covet. Highlighting and enhancing these assets will help the economy expand and grow by making Yellowstone County even more attractive as many people and businesses seek to relocate for a better quality of life in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Develop for Enhanced Quality of Place.

The importance of assets that provide an outstanding quality of life for residents has been emphasized by this pandemic. People flocked to parks, trails, open spaces and outdoor recreational opportunities as other fitness and entertainment options became unavailable or limited. Neighborhood streets and sidewalks were flooded with new pedestrians, accentuating the importance of walkable neighborhoods. Pet, especially dog, ownership has soared during the past few months, indicating that these new lifestyle trends will have staying power. We must champion and facilitate investments and actions that will sustain and augment the livability of Yellowstone County.

Restore, Revitalize, and Expand the Arts, Culture, and Entertainment Assets.

Art, music, theater, history, culture – these form the foundation of civilization. They inject life and spirit into communities and make cities important, special and unique. They have a huge economic impact through the workers they employ, the revenue they generate and the people they draw into the community. Without these organizations and venues, restaurants, hotels, taverns and shops will suffer and close.

Focus on Talent Attraction.

Even before the onset of COVID-19, Yellowstone County faced an uphill struggle to fill jobs created by an expanding economy and vacated by an aging workforce. The estimated shortfall was around 50,000 over the next decade. Those numbers may have shifted due to current circumstances, but what hasn't changed is that 22 percent of the county's current workforce is 65 or older, and 40 percent will reach or exceed retirement age in the next 10 years. We need to attract knowledgeable and skilled workers to allow businesses to grow their operations. Talented workers can often choose to live anywhere. In addition to investments to enhance quality of place, we must expand efforts to recruit these workers. We must sustain and amplify the Better Off in Billings talent attraction initiative to promote Yellowstone County as a vibrant, affordable urban opportunity in beautiful Big Sky Country.

Encourage Business Attraction and Expansion Efforts.

Update the target-industry analysis to determine the industries that fit best in the regional economy. This will help focus the efforts to attract and support new businesses.

Advocate and Facilitate Additional Workforce Housing.

The efforts to retain and attract the workforce we need to allow businesses to grow and prosper will be hindered if Yellowstone County lacks adequate workforce housing.

Cooperate for Regional Recovery

Yellowstone County must embrace its responsibility as a regional hub and support the economic recovery of communities throughout the trade area. We must build upon relationships with the Crow and Northern Cheyenne Reservations and with the many communities throughout eastern Montana and northern Wyoming. Strengthening communications and economic ties can foster greater connections between civic and business leaders in the regional partner communities. Some partnerships that may exist for economic recovery and growth throughout the trade area include:

- › Cultivate value-added agricultural opportunities
- › Support efforts to sustain critical access hospitals and medical services in the rural communities
- › Support the regional energy industry as it addresses new and continuing challenges
- › Establish a regional workforce development strategy to retain and reengage workers and enhance employee versatility.

Recover Together

A comprehensive plan for recovery must address diversity and inclusion. Studies show that recovery from the last major economic shock, the Great Recession of 2008-2009, applied only to those with a college education. Our goal is to create the opportunity for economic prosperity for all and to build a stronger foundation that will support a more resilient economy into the future. To attain this goal, we need to incorporate the ideas of fairness, diversity and inclusion into every aspect of our effort. We must account for and address the additional challenges faced by disadvantaged groups and ensure they have access to the resources and assistance needed to overcome them.

Implementation

Since March, the Yellowstone County Economic Response and Recovery Team (ERRT) has responded to the needs of our businesses and community by providing resources, guidance and assistance through the COVID-19 economic disruption. This critical work will continue. Economic conditions are still in flux and the duration of the impacts are unknown. As such, our team must continue to monitor and meet the needs of our businesses and community.

As we move forward, the structure of our effort will change. A steering committee will be formed, composed of those organizations already devoted to economic development – Big Sky Economic Development, the Billings Chamber, the Downtown Billings Alliance, Beartooth RC&D, etc., along with private-sector leaders and community service organizations.

The steering committee will work to execute and implement the various aspects of this recovery plan. The steering committee will continue to partner with ERRT members, other businesses, city and county government, and other organizations– especially when specific expertise and experience are needed. The steering committee will report to the Economic Response and Recovery Team regularly.

This plan was developed by our community, for our community. It is a list of the actions and issues that the leaders, businesses, organizations, and citizens of Yellowstone County need to heed , consider, and implement as we strive to fully recover from this pandemic and prepare for a better future. Many of the items on this list are not new to our community, but our new situation demands more urgency, more resolve and more cooperation.

Conclusion

**“Move to where
the puck will be.”**

– Wayne Gretzky

Wayne Gretzky is considered the greatest hockey player ever. A lot of his success can be attributed to years of practice and competition to hone his skills. But some must be ascribed to his attitude, his mindset. Gretzky did not dwell on the past or react to the present. He anticipated the future. He moved to where the puck would be. We must do the same.

Crises are potent reminders that the future is always uncertain. We must have the courage to set bold goals, even if we're initially unsure of how to achieve them. Though our ultimate goals may be hidden beyond the horizon, we will be able to see and take each next step. And we must have faith that we will succeed, one step at a time.





YELLOWSTONE COUNTY ECONOMIC **RESPONSE & RECOVERY**

Beartooth RC&D Area, Inc.
Board of Director's Meeting Agenda
1:00 P.M. – Zoom Meeting



Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6579752514>

Meeting ID: 657 975 2514

One tap mobile

+12532158782,,6579752514# US (Tacoma)

+13462487799,,6579752514# US (Houston)

Regional Roundup

Our goals for the Roundup are to find out what's happening in the area, keep the conversations focused, inform the others attending the meeting, and to tie it all back to and reinforce the importance of the CEDS. Please help us identify the projects in their area that fit into our CEDS categories:

- Infrastructure
 - Housing
 - Transportation
 - Broadband
- Economy
 - Upturns or downturns in industry sectors
 - New business openings (or closures)
- Communication
 - Marketing and outreach
- Services
 - Health care
- Natural Resources
 - Agriculture
 - Energy
- Human Capital
 - Workforce
 - Education

NOTES:

[illegible]

Beartooth RC&D Area, Inc. Board of Director's Meeting MINUTES September 17, 2020

Agenda

<p>1:00 pm</p> <p>2:30 PM</p>	<p><u>Meeting Called to Order</u></p> <p>Pledge of Allegiance, Introduction of Members and Guests</p> <p>Welcome- Discussion and presentation on Bridger Wind Farm</p> <p>Review July Board Minutes</p> <p><u>Congressional Updates</u> Molly Bell (Sen. Tester) Dan Stusek (Sen. Daines) Casey Collins (Rep. Gianforte)</p> <p><u>Treasurer/Financial Reports</u> 4. Treasurer Update 5. RC&D Financials 6. RLF Financials</p> <p><u>Executive Committee</u> 2. Executive Committee Activity Report</p> <p><u>Brownfields</u></p> <p><u>EDA Cares Act</u></p> <p><u>Space X Broadband</u></p> <p><u>Staff Reports – Program/Project updates</u> 4. Food/Ag Program – Joel Bertolino 5. Revolving Loan Fund – Jillann Knutson 6. Economic Development/ CRDC – Steve Simonson</p> <p><u>Regional Roundup</u> – <i>News and updates from regional members on projects and activities in key CEDS categories.... (see topics on next page)</i></p> <p><u>Next Beartooth RC&D Area, Inc. Board of Directors Meeting</u> <i>November 19th, 2020 - Big Timber, MT</i></p> <p>Adjourn</p>	<p>Chair</p> <p>Chair, All</p> <p>Chair, All</p> <p>Chair, All</p> <p>Knutson Knutson Knutson</p> <p>Van Ballegooyen</p> <p>Simonson</p> <p>Simonson</p> <p>Simonson</p> <p>Bertolino Knutson Simonson</p> <p>Carter et al</p>	<p>Action</p> <p>Information</p> <p>Information Action Action</p> <p>Information</p> <p>Information</p> <p>Action</p> <p>Action</p> <p>Information Information Information</p> <p>Information</p> <p>Information</p>
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ATTENDANCE

<p>Board Members Present</p> <p>Ryan VanBallegooyen, Billings Job Service , Chair (by phone)</p> <p>Jeffrey McDowell, Two Rivers Authority</p> <p>Melanie Roe, Sweet Grass County</p> <p>Don Jones-Yellowstone County Commission</p> <p>Dan Lowe, Big Horn Conservation District</p> <p>Maddie Alpert, Sen Jon Tester’s Office (By Phone)</p> <p>Marvin Carter, City of Laurel, Vice Chair</p> <p>Lorene Hintz, Big Sky EDA, SBDC</p> <p>Stephanie Ray –Stillwater County Economic Development</p> <p>Bill Foisy- City of Red Lodge</p> <p>Randy Weimer, Sibanye-Stillwater Mining</p> <p>Casey Collins, US Rep Greg Gianforte’s Office</p> <p>Bob VanOosten, Stillwater Conservation District</p> <p>Liz Ching- MT Dept of Labor and Industry (by phone)</p> <p>Barb Wagner, Yellowstone County Cons. Dist</p> <p>Scott Blain- Carbon County Commissioner</p> <p>Scott Miller- Carbon County Commissioner Elect</p> <p>Ex-Officio/Staff/Additional Attendees:</p> <p>Joel Bertolino- FADC/ED</p> <p>Jillann Knutson-RLF</p> <p>Steve Simonson- Beartooth EDD</p> <p>Myrna Lastusky- Operations Support Specialist</p>	<p>Board Members Not Present</p> <p>Clinton Giesick, Carbon Cons. District</p> <p>Page Dringman, City of Big Timber</p> <p>Sidney (Chip) Fitzpatrick, Big Horn Co. Commissioners</p> <p>Chris Mehus, Sweet Grass Co. Conservation District</p> <p>Patty Sundberg, City of Columbus</p> <p>Clayton Greer, Hardin City Council</p> <p>Emily Ringer, Town of Joliet</p> <p>Patrick Hill-Crow Tribe</p> <p>Mike Waters- Greg Gianforte’s Office</p> <p>Dan Stusek, Sen. Daines’ Office</p> <p>Frank Ewalt, Billings City Council</p> <p>Ty Hamilton, Stillwater County</p> <p>Holly Higgins- Hardin First Interstate Bank</p>
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Meeting called to order by Chairman Ryan Van Ballegooyen at 1:00 pm in the Bridger Civic Center Bridger, MT.

Introductions/Welcome: Ryan VanBallegooyen gave a welcome and began introductions followed by the pledge of allegiance.

1. Nevin Fenstermacher, Mortenson (Bridger Wind Farm rep) was here to report. Also, Bob Van Engelenhoven of Pacificorp was on the phone. They reported that they have got through foundations, wrapped up in July. 114 concrete foundations done. Turbine components coming in now. 35-40 on the ground. Trying to finish erection this year – dependent on weather. Substation will go online this year and start producing power. 114 turbines, 240 megawatts power production, 1 substation, 3 towers . . . Commercial building is going in and all roads are in. 200 people onsite between craft and office staff. Staying between Billings and Cody and in between. All love working out here.
 - Bill Foisy asked how housing was for the crew. Most are staying in Powell & Lovell.
 - Jeff McDowell asked about the trucks coming from Laurel. They are transporting two full sets of turbines each day.
 - Most power will go into northern WY. Bob (on phone) verified that it's going into WY – tie into line out of Sheridan, loops into Fort Smith area dam, and back down into WY near Frannie. General flow of power will be south into WY.
 - Jillann asked how many crew members will still be around: At least 2 full-time plus a maintenance contractor – plus 3-5 people. Total of 5-10 people.
 - Steve asked about Broadband issues – their staff hasn't had any issues with communication, although cell service is spotty.
 - What contributions does it make toward the tax base? Carbon County Commissioner Scott Blain responded that in first year with partial buildout, it's been significant – most revenue increases attributed to wind farm as of end of 2019. \$410 million. Put all other businesses in county combined minus utilities and pipelines, it would all equal about \$400 million, so this one thing is very important to county (taxable value). School system received 1.2 million.
 - How much was impact payment? Close to 6 million. When full amount is in there it will be 50-60 thousand/year. Use some to work on roads impacted, possibly will use interest earned for a radio repeater (black hole for emergency people).

Review of Minutes: Minutes from the July 2020 Board Meeting were available for review (and had already been acted on by the Executive Committee). Motion- Jeff McDowell; Second- Melanie Roe, CARRIED.

Congressional Updates:

Casey Collins (Rep. Gianforte's Office): St. Mary's irrigation project went out 2 months ago. Recently got National Suicide Hotline through - a big deal here in MT.

Maddie Alpert (Sen. Tester's Office): Unable to hear most . . . There has been a low response to the 2020 census. Remind everyone to do that.

Treasurer/Financial Reports: Jillann Knutson presented the updated financials and discussed the current figures.

No big changes. September is typically the month we complete the audit, but it's been delayed due to Covid. Auditor was present last month to do some RLF stuff. Hoping to finish by end of year.

RLF Books: Getting many calls these days. Banks breathing down people's throats. 6 we are working pretty hard on. Seeing a decrease in what the banks are willing to do. We haven't lost any clients due to Covid. One client moved to a commercial building and had to move it back home, but he's still in business.

Still have funding available – just have to find ones that qualify. 7 of our loan clients were able to receive some form of special funding from the grant.

Motion Jeff McDowell, Seconded- Melanie Roe, CARRIED.

Executive Committee Report:

- Discussed moving meeting to Civic Center in Bridger.
- Discussed hiring an admin asst.
- Covid updates from Jillann on our clients.
- Gave Steve permission to move forward on some bids.
- Need to look at policies for future decisions/bids – maybe approve through Exec Com rather than waiting for entire Board (any policy changes will be voted upon).
- General housekeeping

Brownsfields: Steve Simonson reported that EPA attorneys are still hashing out if intermediaries can also be recipients. Stay tuned and we'll keep you posted. A number of targeted Brownsfields apps have come in. Costs for cannery could be \$500K – asbestos, lead paint, etc. that needs to be fixed. If we are the intermediary, we could sell the building down the line & proceeds would go to BRCD. Ryan mentioned opportunities and risks of owning a building – Joel said to trigger the dollars for remediation, we need to act as intermediary. Steve said existing owner may not need us as an intermediary, but it's a possibility. Ideally, someone will buy and trigger the dollars and make it into a commercial building. We got the Big Sky Trust Fund but not the USDA Grant. Montana DEQ pledged a grant to help with costs. We have been in talks with BSTF.

- **EDA CARES Act: Will cover in his regular report**
- **SpaceX Broadband:** 4x faster than existing broadband. People in remote areas would have access to it. Request in to Sibanye-Stillwater Mine to help us. Have discussed with Stillwater & Carbon county commissioners. More broadband opportunities coming out of this new working environment. Ryan said it's an amazing opportunity for MT. Steve mentioned the telemedicine piece and how important this will be.

Staff Reports – Program/Project updates

Food and Ag Director Report: Joel Bertolino presented

Referred us to page 10. Mentioned things Myrna does.

- Staff Project Update – Covid dollars have given us a little more funding to keep these afloat. Dec. 1st deadline for Growth through Ag. Many good projects.
- Wind farm – had update already
- 406 Bovine LLC – decided to go a different direction & use some of own dollars
- Midland Bull Test – applied & received \$10K Ag Adaptability grant. They will be applying for more funds.
- Stillwater Packing/Emmett's Meats – worked with on MT Meat Processing Infrastructure Grant. Working with them to get another app out.
- Pioneer Meats – applied and received over \$100K
- Miller's Custom Processing – received grant for \$100K+
- Restoration Beef Project & Controlled Environments Construction – both might take a little longer to put together. Looking at larger meat processing operations: 500-1000/week type projects.

- Yellowstone Region Ag Sustainability Project RCPP – Nearing completion. Very successful, even more than we anticipated. Mostly irrigation projects applied and received funding. Pivot sprinklers, drip irrigation, etc. Very effective.
- Becky’s Berries – applied and received Ag Adaptability grant & Stephanie Ray helped her apply for a Business Stabilization grant.

RLF Report – Jillann. Bridger School District put out bond for new school gym. Passed by a large margin and they will be moving forward on this. One of biggest concerns is no handicap accessibility, along with fire issues and dungeon locker rooms.

Economic Development/ CRDC – Steve Simonson directed us to page 15. Brownsfields app was submitted on behalf of Joliet and Laurel.

Need for 700 affordable housing projects in Yellowstone County. Huge need in YC.

- Trust fund grants – discussed earlier.
- Working on final phases of economic recovery plan. EDA Cares grant money allowed us to offer bid to Big Sky EDA to help with recovery efforts and another group to help with tourism and entertainment sector (SaveYour.Town will be doing that and will be in the area first week of October). Steve will keep us posted.
- Four Big Horn County commissioners have asked for help in developing housing authority. Already have a tribal housing authority, so determining if a second housing authority would be helpful. They have \$86K from CDBG and could possibly use that.
- Still working on business assistance throughout the region.
- Jeff McDowell asked what is defined as affordable housing: 1/3 of your gross income should be able to go toward housing. Housing projects in Yellowstone County are based on income. Sliding scale based on income.

Regional Roundup: Marvin Carter announced that we will do Roundtable discussion:

1. Dan Lowe (Big Horn Conservation District): Not much to report. Aquatic Station has been very active.
2. Randy Weimer: (Stillwater Mine) – coming out of Covid a bit. Let all contractors go in March. Started bringing them back in late July. Put about 4 new buildings up. \$600 million investment for expansion. Employment approximately 1200 people. Metal prices are good. Budgeting for 85 additional people next year. Have an attrition rate of 8-10% and lose about 120 each year.
3. Stephanie Ray (Stillwater Economic Development Office): Continuing to work with commissioners on capital facilities project. Hope to turn dirt in spring 2021. Put in Brownsfield application for school. They got a big grant from EDA – will be presenting check on Sept. 29th to repair roads impacted by flooding.
4. Jeff McDowell (Two Rivers Authority): Has had his eye on project for vacant property near the detention facility that he feels is perfect for multi-family housing (four-plexes, etc). Housing situation in Hardin has been an issue for years. 40% of housing is “poor” according to a rating scale they developed. Many look like miniature junkyards. 1st Interstate Bank is moving along. USDA center is just about done. Shiptons is moving into old Shopko Hometown building.
5. Yellowstone County Commissioner Don Jones reported, putting in a parking lot. Of 95 charts reviewed that had no known contact – only 5 were from public events. Most were from parties, meetings, etc.

6. Lorene Hintz (Big Sky EDA): Lorene is filling Dena Johnson's position. Virtual meeting on the 22nd. P-Tac is having some training on how to do business in the state. Go to www.montanaptac.org/events Three different trainings in October. Community development – South side grocery is moving forward - doing market analysis. Closer to agreement with city council for sewer service into Lockwood TEDD (Targeted Economic Development District). They have hired an architect.
7. Bill Foisy (Red Lodge) – Liquor is the only sector that stayed stable in April-June. Community foundation is doing Habitat for Humanity. 9th annual e-recycle is Saturday. High school bond issue passed 2 to 1 for \$10 million. Wayfinding signs are going up in RL. This was done with state tourism grant (Chamber project). A couple USDA grants still outstanding. Since the Beartooth Rally – no one is talking to each other; it's been toxic.
8. Ryan VanBallegooyen (Billings Job Service): Elder Grove opened up a new middle school. Billings passed a safety levy. Drugs, domestic violence, etc. went up during Covid. Lack of reporting of child abuse since no mandatory reporters in schools – so we're glad school is in session. Good construction in Riverside Park in Laurel. Hopefully be able to camp at some point.
9. Melanie Roe (Sweet Grass County): Had a weekly rodeo and was hugely successful. Had a drive-in movie at fairgrounds. Farmers Market and Brewfest were good. Lots of out-of-town folks. County is doing a CIP. Putting in new golden bridge – old one has been torn down. Housing is still a huge problem with no houses on the market. Someone is considering a 65-unit complex, but they are going to be small. Heritage Farms is buying a lot of things. Losing all family-type restaurants. Lost Frosty Freeze and Crazy Jane's. Civic Center is getting a new floor.
10. Bob VanOosten (Stillwater Conservation District): completed project on Stillwater Headgate for farm ditch. Headgates all up and down Stillwater need help and tough to get funding. They have another one coming up. \$100K+ is cost for typical headgate projects. Must have feasibility study done first.
11. Carbon County Commissioner Scott Blain- Carbon County school levies passed. Jail was on ballot for August but postponed. Sometime next spring – wait for next commissioner to put back on ballot. 13-acre project near Joliet. Huge population of Amish moving in and have started new businesses and storage sheds, furniture, deli. Over 100 have moved in and more to come. Planning to build a school and church. More buggy traffic on Hwy 212. Red Lodge Area community foundation received some funds from MT DOT for a county-wide transportation project to make the loop around for business needs. Businesses are struggling to keep employees. Real estate is booming. MANY people moving here. More put on the market in last 6 months than in last 6 years.
 - a. Ryan mentioned that the influx of people gives some good opportunities.

Next Meeting: November 19th, 2020 - Big Timber, MT (Stillwater Lodge)

Meeting adjourned at 2:20 pm.

APPROVED:

Date

Beartooth Books- Reporting Ending August 2020

	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>% of budgeted</u>
Income			
AG-FOOD AND AG CENTER	85,007	62,311	73%
AG-MCDC	1,000	0	0%
BOARD - EDA SPONSOR DUES	51,072	42,768	84%
BOARD-INTEREST INCOME	400	204	51%
BOARD-FOUNDATION MONEY	3,700	3,390	92%
RLF-STAFF REIMBURSE	18,000	0	0%
RLF-ORIG FEES	5,000	0	0%
CRDC	71,907	46,795	65%
FUELS-TOTAL	-	0	#DIV/0!
EDA - GRANT	70,000	35,000	50%
NOT BUDGED INCOME	-	1,875	0%
TOTAL INCOME	306,086	192,342	63%

Expense			
TOTAL STAFF EXPENSE	233,104	138,142	59%
COMMUNICATIONS	6,000	4,288	71%
EQUIPMENT & VEHICLE	8,520	5,181	61%
CONTRACTUAL	20,000	2,355	12%
SUPPLIES	12,900	12,817	99%
TRAVEL	11,080	3,705	33%
OTHER	10,420	14,752	142%
RESERVE	-		
EXPENSE TOTAL	302,024	181,240	60%

Account Balances

Bank of Joliet-Building Account	\$4,470.74
Bank of Joliet- Savings Account	\$75,235.84
Bank of Joliet- Checking Account	\$98,361.83

Revolving Loan Fund Books- August 2020

Loan Client Review

<u>County</u>	<u># of loans</u>	<u>\$ Loaned out</u>
Big Horn	2	\$174,703
Stillwater	3	\$437,353
Yellowstone	8	\$400,195
Carbon	4	\$144,281
Sweet Grass	2	\$182,686

- I have 5 potential loans in various stages to get to committee. July-August-September I worked with 23 potential loan clients. Many of the clients I am seeing right now are large deals that are having trouble getting their primary funding set.
- We are still expecting to receive the money from Big Horn County, but that process has been stalled due to Covid.
- Overall, most of my clients have weathered the Covid storm so far! At this point, we have not lost any loans. One client has moved business back to home to decrease on expenses, but still in business.
- One Stillwater Co. loan was paid in full!!

<u>Bank Balances as of August 31, 2020</u>		<u>Total available for lending</u>
Bank of Joliet- EDA	\$25,131	25,131
Bank of Joliet-CDBG	\$182,841	182,841
Bank of Joliet- IRP	\$383,805	264,315
Bank of Joliet-Fromberg	\$29,756	<u>29,756</u>
		\$502,043

2020 Beartooth Resource Conservation and Development Budget

Income

ITEM	Income
AG-FOOD AND AG CENTER	85,007
AG-MCDC	1,000
BOARD - EDA SPONSOR DUES	51,072
BOARD-INTEREST INCOME	400
BOARD-FOUNDATION MONEY	3,700
RLF-STAFF REIMBURSE	18,000
RLF-ORIG FEES	5,000
CRDC	71,907
FUELS AND CGWG	-
EDA - GRANT	70,000
TOTAL INCOME	306,086

Expense

TOTAL STAFF EXPENSE	233,104
COMMUNICATIONS	6,000
EQUIPMENT & VEHICLE	8,520
CONTRACTUAL	20,000
SUPPLIES	12,900
TRAVEL	11,080
OTHER	10,420
RESERVE	
EXPENSE TOTAL	302,024

4,062

PROJECTED NET INCOME 12/31/2020

Beartooth Books- Reporting Ending September 2020

	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>% of budgeted</u>
Income			
AG-FOOD AND AG CENTER	85,007	62,311	73%
AG-MCDC	1,000	0	0%
BOARD - EDA SPONSOR DUES	51,072	42,768	84%
BOARD-INTEREST INCOME	400	204	51%
BOARD-FOUNDATION MONEY	3,700	3,390	92%
RLF-STAFF REIMBURSE	18,000	0	0%
RLF-ORIG FEES	5,000	0	0%
CRDC	71,907	46,795	65%
FUELS-TOTAL	-	0	#DIV/0!
EDA - GRANT	70,000	35,000	50%
NOT BUDGED INCOME	-	6,900	0%
TOTAL INCOME	306,086	197,367	64%

Expense			
TOTAL STAFF EXPENSE	233,104	156,201	67%
COMMUNICATIONS	6,000	4,375	73%
EQUIPMENT & VEHICLE	8,520	6,299	74%
CONTRACTUAL	20,000	9,325	47%
SUPPLIES	12,900	14,665	114%
TRAVEL	11,080	3,793	34%
OTHER	10,420	14,752	142%
RESERVE		-12,043	#DIV/0!
EXPENSE TOTAL	302,024	197,367	65%

Account Balances

Bank of Joliet-Building Account	\$4,471.87
Bank of Joliet- Savings Account	\$75,300.66
Bank of Joliet- Checking Account	\$74,820.63

Revolving Loan Fund Books- October 2020

Loan Client Review

<u>County</u>	<u># of loans</u>	<u>\$ Loaned out</u>
Big Horn	2	\$173,049
Stillwater	3	\$436,746
Yellowstone	8	\$396,603
Carbon	3	\$142,100
Sweet Grass	2	\$180,935

- A \$200K loan has been approved for Yellowstone County. This will not be funded until spring.
- Our loan clients (so far) are weathering the COVID storm.
- I have 3 applications in various forms that will hopefully head to the RLF meeting.

Bank Balances as of October 31, 2020 Total available for lending

Bank of Joliet- EDA	\$29,783	29,783
Bank of Joliet-CDBG	\$189,481	189,481
Bank of Joliet- IRP	\$388,787	152,413
Bank of Joliet-Fromberg	\$29,783	<u>29,783</u>
		\$401,460

****DRAFT****2021 Beartooth Resource Conservation and Development Budget**

Income

ITEM	Income
AG-FOOD AND AG CENTER	85,007
AG-MCDC	1,000
BOARD - EDA SPONSOR DUES	55,907
BOARD-INTEREST INCOME	400
BOARD-FOUNDATION MONEY	3,700
RLF-STAFF REIMBURSE	18,000
RLF-ORIG FEES	5,000
CRDC	71,907
FUELS AND CGWG	-
MISC GRANT ADMIN \$	10,750
EDA - GRANT	70,000
TOTAL INCOME	321,671

Expense

TOTAL STAFF EXPENSE	256,044
COMMUNICATIONS	6,000
EQUIPMENT & VEHICLE	8,520
CONTRACTUAL	21,220
SUPPLIES	9,800
TRAVEL	10,140
OTHER	8,430
RESERVE	
EXPENSE TOTAL	320,154

1,517

PROJECTED NET INCOME 12/31/2021

FOOD AND AG CENTER MANAGER PROJECTS

Beartooth FADC

Beartooth FADC Staff has been working to assist businesses with administering and completing Emergency Ag Adaptability grant and MT Meat Processing Infrastructure grant projects. Beartooth FADC has also been in contact with the Montana Ag Marketing staff on FADC conference calls discussing their activities through the Made in Montana and efforts by the Montana Ag Extension offices. The deadline currently to spend the money received for the Montana Meat Processing Infrastructure Grants is December 30th.

On Going Projects

Montana Meat Processing Infrastructure Grants

Millers Custom Processing- Roberts, MT

Stillwater Packing- Columbus, MT

Pioneer Meats- Big Timber, MT

Growth Through Ag

Beartooth FADC has responded to five inquiries about the upcoming Growth Through Ag deadline, the registration information and applications guidelines have been provided and we are working with applicants to navigate the application process. They are expecting a large volume of applicants so there will most likely be a prescreening process.

Yellowstone Valley Food Hub-Billings

Black Brew Coffee/ Meat Processing Business- Columbus and Joliet

Hardin Apiary-Hardin, MT

Vineyard- Laurel, MT

Buds Catering and Meat Processing- Hardin

Millers Beef- Absarokee, MT

Green House- Roberts, MT

Toews Grain Corn- Hardin, MT

Yellowstone Valley Farms- Laurel, MT

Millers Custom Meats – Roberts, MT

Distillery – Columbus, MT

Micro Brewery- Columbus, MT

Carbon County Pryor Mountain Wind Farm

Location- Warren, MT

Contact- Pacificorp

The wind development South of Bridger, MT began construction on schedule in March and are working towards having the construction completed by the Spring 2021 time frame. Beartooth Staff observed the progress in constructing the wind towers November 3rd and it appeared there were over 100 towers erected.



Midland Bull Test

Location-Columbus, MT

Contact- Melissa Kramer

Midland Bull Test has been an client of Beartooth FADC over the years as their business of testing and marketing beef seedstock is one of the best in the nation at providing excellent data on registered bulls from all over the nation covering multiple breeds and test carcass data and weight statistics feed consumption and efficiency statistics. Beartooth FADC was able to assist their business with a successful Ag Adaptability Grant for \$10,000.00 in increased marketing to make the business more resilient in this new business environment, they have since been approved for Business Stabilization funds and invited to apply again for additional funds.



Stillwater Packing Co/ Emmett's Meats

Location- Columbus, MT

Contact- Jason Emmett

Stillwater Packing has been working through an increase in business due to the COVID 19 having shut down some large national meat plants shifting some buyer interest to smaller plants like theirs. Beartooth FADC staff assisted them with a proposal for funding to expand their business through the Montana Meat Processing Infrastructure grants initially it was not funded, however the Dept of Ag requested more money to fund additional projects and they ended up being funded in September.



Pioneer Meats

Location- Big Timber, MT

Contact- Brian Engle

Pioneer Meats received a Montana Meat Processors Infrastructure grant of over \$100,000.00 which will allow them to expand their meat processing business, they have purchased another meat processing business in Big Timber that will allow them to process wild meat at one location while expanding their beef, pork, bison and lamb processing at their main facility.



Millers Custom Processing

Location- Roberts, MT

Contact- Tom Miller

Tom Miller became a custom exempt meat processor approximately three years ago and has experienced an increase in demand every year and a dramatic increase in demand lately for processing Beef and Pork. We assisted him with a GTA grant two years ago that was not funded, since then he invested \$30,000.00 to expanding his cooler and freezers and is now looking to build even more cooler space and processing space as well as upgraded equipment which would allow him to more than triple the number of animals he can

process in a week. Beartooth FADC staff has assisted him with the development of a Montana Meat Processing Infrastructure Grant for business expansion that would help him upgrade and potentially apply for full state inspection. Their application has been approved for \$104,000.00 in expanded cooler and processing space as well as new larger more efficient equipment that will allow them to increase the number of beef processed in a week four fold as well as increasing their pork processing. This expansion is on pace to be completed by December 30th, the construction is in the final phase and the equipment has all been ordered.

Restoration Beef Project

Contact- Jess Peterson

Restoration beef has developed a feasibility study around building a high quality beef plant that processes between 300-500 per day, they are in the process of developing interest and funding but are interested in the Yellowstone Valley area.

Controlled Environments Construction

Contact- Gary Guesman

Gary Guesman is working with Big Sky EDA the Department of Ag and Beartooth FADC on their potential 300-500 head a day meat processing project they are interested in developing in the Yellowstone County area. Beartooth FADC staff met August 21st to discuss the project and initial steps and potential barriers to the project with Allison Corbin, Ty Thompson, Joe Goggins, Weston Merrill from Montana Department of Ag as well as Gary Guesman. We will continue to meet with the group and be available to assist in the project as needed.

Yellowstone Region Ag Sustainability Project- RCPP

Location- Huntley,

Contact- Dave Dougherty

The group had their last meeting September 10th virtually to discuss reporting, there was discussion about the potential for field tours next summer and potential future funding opportunities. The final reporting for this project is being completed by MillerCoors and we will provide that information as it becomes available.



Becky's Berries- Absarokee, MT

Location-Absarokee

Becky Stahl has been a client of Beartooth for several years and we last assisted her with development of an expansion plan for her Jams, Jellies and Barbeque sauce business. She has completed construction of the facility. Beartooth FADC staff assisted in developing a successful Ag Adaptability Grant for \$9,000.00 for the addition of a makeup air system and a commercial food processor for her new facility. Funding was also requested for the development of labels for a new line of products and improvements to her on line ordering presence. Stephanie Ray of Stillwater County Economic Development assisted Becky in applying for a Business Stabilization grant as well. Becky has already had her marketing consultant develop the new labels and review her website for updates and ordered and installed her new commercial food processor.

Becky's Berries Website <http://www.beckysberries.com/>



Beartooth Economic Development Director Report November 19, 2020

The new CARES ACT grant funding Beartooth RCD received this July is well underway. Following the Beartooth RCD procurement policy, the “best” bid for the economic recovery regional recovery efforts was submitted by Big Sky EDA. Contracts are executed and the first payment has been made. A draft of the Yellowstone County Economic Recovery plan is attached.

The “best” bid for the targeted industry study was submitted by Save Your Town. The contract is in place and first payment has been made. Deb Brown from the company and I recently completed an eight day tour of the region which included meetings with civic, community, business and local elected officials. Meetings were held in Lodge Grass, Crow Agency, Hardin, Billings, Laurel, Red Lodge, Joliet, Columbus, Fishtail, Big Timber and Absarokee.

The third and final scope of work in the CARES ACT funding is an affordable housing study. Cushing Terrell was determined to be the best bid to complete the project. Also I am very pleased with the assistance Myrna Lastusky is providing me with the CARES ACT grant and the other grants and activities that I administer. Hiring her as administrator has made for much more efficient and effective use of my time.

The Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA) held their fall conference last month and discussed several of the economic programs we use to grow the State’s economy. Expanding broadband speed and service is a common area of concern as more of us are working and attending classes remotely. Remote workers and families are choosing to relocate to Montana for remote work as well. MEDA also presented its Next Gen Toolkit and discussed the need to strengthen our partnership with the Department of Labor regarding the apprentice program.

To that end, the Starlink low altitude high speed internet project has been rolled out in across the region, without needing fiber lines laid to each home or business. This may be a solution to assist rural areas and serve islands that exist in urban areas with better access to broadband.

Three projects were funded by the Montana Board of Housing through the Low Income Tax Credit program that we supported. The Laurel Depot, Jackson Court (Billings south side), and Crow Agency received over \$20M in funds to support affordable housing in the region.

Action Requested: Business assistance services continue and a possible reuse of the historic Absarokee sandstone school is underway. A Big Sky Trust Fund (BSTF) grant will need your approval in order to be submitted in mid-December. Also an EDA planning grant and a BSTF grant to bring critical infrastructure to the new west Laurel will need your approval. I’d like to ask also for approval to submit a SPRINT grant to EDA for assisting and expanding the regional data centers to build resiliency into our economy.

Frequently Used Acronyms

BEAR – Business Expansion and Retention
BIA – Bureau of Indian Affairs
BLM – Bureau of Land Management
BRCD – Beartooth RC&D
BSEDA – Big Sky Economic Development Association
BSTF – Big Sky Trust Fund
CDBG – Community Development Block Grant
CRDC – Certified Regional Development Corporation
CEDS – Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
CTEP – Community Transportation Endowment Program
EDA – Economic Development Administration
EDD – Economic Development District
ESRI – Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc.
GIS – Geographic Information Systems
GPS – Global Positioning System
HOME – Montana Home Investment Partnerships Program
HUD – US Department of Housing and Urban Development
IRP – Intermediary Relending Program
LESA – Land Evaluation Site Assessment
MBI – Montana Board of Investments
MDOC – Montana Department of Commerce
MDOL – Montana Dept. of Labor
MDOT – Montana Dept. of Transportation
MDFWP – Montana Dept. of Fish, Wildlife and Parks
MEDA – Montana Economic Developers Association
NADO – National Association of Development Organizations
NCOC – National Carbon Offset Coalition
NHS – Neighborhood Housing Services
NRCS – Natural Resource Conservation Service
RBEG – Rural Business Enterprise Grant
RBOG – Rural Business Opportunity Grant
RC&D – Resource Conservation & Development Area, Inc.
RCDI – Rural Community Development Initiative
RD – Rural Development (a division of USDA)
RCPP- Regional Conservation Partnership Program
RLF – Revolving Loan Fund
RTA – Resource Team Assessment
SBA – Small Business Administration
SBDC – Small business Development Center
TIFD – Tax Increment Finance District
TSEP - Treasure State Endowment Program
USDA – United States Department of Agriculture
USFS – United States Forest Service

File Attachments for Item:

3. Laurel 2021 Urban Allocation Correspondence



VISION ZERO

zero deaths
zero serious injuries

Montana Department of Transportation

2960 Prospect
PO Box 201001
Helena MT 59620-1001

Steve Bullock, Governor
Michael T. Tooley, Director

October 23, 2020

Kurt Markegard, Public Works Director
City of Laurel
115 West 1st St.
Laurel, MT 59044

Commissioners
Yellowstone County
P.O. Box 35000
Billings, MT 59107

Subject: Laurel 2021 Urban Allocation

Per MCA 60-2-127, each year, out of federal-aid highway funds available for construction purposes, the commission shall allocate a portion of the funds for projects located on the urban highway system.

Attached for your information is a copy of the latest Urban Highway Construction Program Summary, which reflects current funding balances through FFY 2025, annual allocation, and existing priorities. Please share this information with your transportation committee members, city and county officials, and others as appropriate.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call me at (406) 444-9240.

Carol Strizich
Multimodal Bureau Chief

Attachment

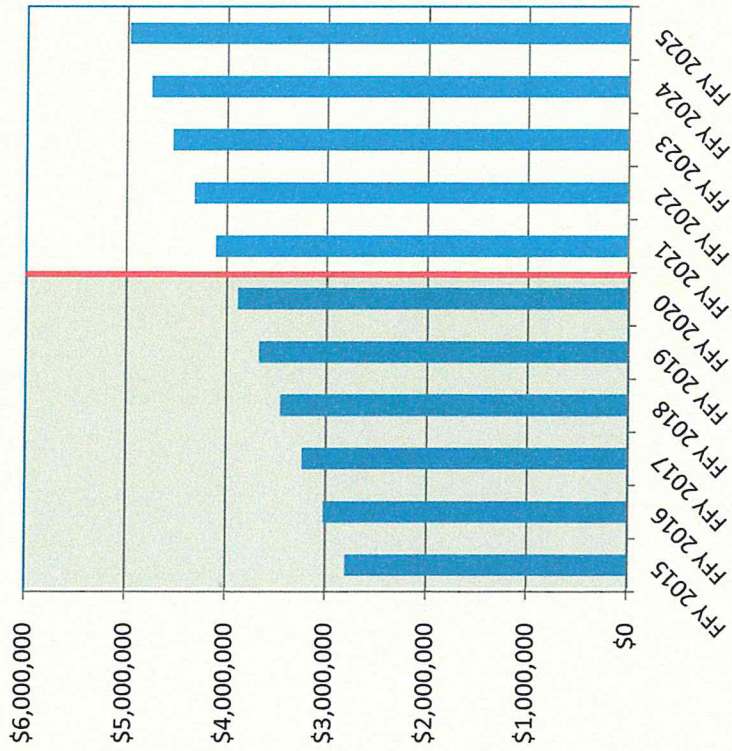
CC: Rod Nelson, MDT Billings District Administrator
Parker Osterloh, MDT Planner

LAUREL

Urban Highway Construction Program Summary

Estimated Annual Allocation – STPU - \$217,402

Estimated Balances



Project Priorities

- None Currently Selected

- Estimated Annual Allocations are subject to MDT Transportation Commission approval
- Funding projections are based on best available information and are subject to change given current funding uncertainties and unknown impacts of future congressional or other federal actions. Federal program funding availability may impact the scheduling of projects

10/26/2020

File Attachments for Item:

8. Council Workshop Minutes of November 17, 2020.

**MINUTES
CITY OF LAUREL
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2020**

A Council Workshop was held in Council Chambers and called to order by Council President Eaton at 6:30 p.m. on November 17, 2020.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Emelie Eaton	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Heidi Sparks
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bruce McGee	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Richard Herr
<input type="checkbox"/> Scot Stokes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Irv Wilke
<input type="checkbox"/> Richard Klose	<input type="checkbox"/> Don Nelson

OTHERS PRESENT:

Nick Altonaga, Planning Director
Kurt Markegard, Public Works Director
Steve Simonson, Beartooth RC&D
Joel Bertolino, Beartooth RC&D

Public Input:

There were none.

General Items:

Executive Review:

1. Resolution - A Resolution of the City Council Authorizing the submission of a Big Sky Economic Development Trust Fund Planning Project Grant Application and to Commit the Matching Funds Required by the Creating Agency.

Nick Altonaga, Planning Director, briefly reviewed the attached memo.

Council thanked the Planning Director for moving forward with this.

2. Resolution - Resolution Authorizing The Mayor To Execute An Agreement With Beartooth RC&D Economic Development District.

Steve Simonson and Joel Bertolino from Beartooth RC&D briefly reviewed their 2020 projects, see attached, which includes the trust fund grant discussed in the previous agenda item. The goal is to grow the tax base. There is the revolving loan fund. Local banks can call to help fill the gap for new business loans. That may be via a cash loan or additional collateral. It has been a useful tool. A few people in Laurel have used this fund.

Beartooth RC&D and the Planning Director are both part of the Yellowstone County Economic Recovery Team. They are working to grow businesses through this pandemic. Their voices are very important to represent voices in Yellowstone County outside of Billings. Recently received a grant, 400k of that went to Big Sky EDA to assist in economic recovery, and 100k went towards affordable housing study in a five-county radius. They are also working on a targeted industry study.

3. Resolution - Resolution Of Intent By The City Council To Adopt The 2020 City Of Laurel Growth Policy Creating A Thirty (30) Day Public Comment Period. (Public Hearing on 11.24.2020)

Nick Altonaga, Planning Director, stated that the final Growth Management Plan was included in the packet. KLJ has gone through and cleaned up this document. There will be a 30-day comment period before this plan is adopted. It has taken about a year to put all of this together.

A Council Member noted that they had read through the plan over the weekend. They wanted to recognize the Planning Director for all their hard work on this plan. It is an excellent document. A few things stood out as the next steps, creating a Capital Improvements Plan and an Annexation Plan. It was questioned what the timeline for those two plans to get started was. It was clarified that Public Works has already begun work on a Capital Improvements Plan. The Annexation Plan might come along soon if the City is awarded the grant discussed in the previous agenda item. Those things might be included in the feasibility study. It should be in the next year or so.

Council Issues

Other Items

Review of Draft Council Agendas

5. Draft Council Agenda of November 24, 2020.

There were no changes made.

Attendance at Upcoming Council Meeting

Council Member McGee will be gone from the next meeting.

Announcements

Council President Eaton read the attached memo and attached vacancy list.

The council workshop adjourned at 6:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Brittney Moorman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Brittney Moorman
Administrative Assistant

NOTE: This meeting is open to the public. This meeting is for information and discussion of the Council for the listed workshop agenda items.

CITY HALL
115 W. 1ST ST.
PLANNING: 628-4796
WATER OFC.: 628-7431
COURT: 628-1964
FAX 628-2241

City Of Laurel

P.O. Box 10
Laurel, Montana 59044



Office of the City Planner

November 17, 2020

Regarding the Approval of an Application to the Big Sky Economic Development Trust Fund Planning Grant Program

Mayor and City Council,

The Planning Department and Public Works Department would like to apply to the Big Sky Economic Development Trust Fund for a Planning Grant to study the feasibility and options available to the City for extending infrastructure to the newly established West Laurel Interchange. The Planning Department, Public Works Department, and Mayor have previously met with members of Big Sky Economic Development (Big Sky EDA) and Beartooth Resource Conservation & Development (Beartooth RC&D) about possible options for scenarios to accomplish this goal.

Expanding infrastructure to the West Laurel Interchange would help to encourage annexation into the city, stimulate development, and help to expand the City. The Big Sky Trust Fund can award up to \$25,000 to eligible applicants with a 1:1 local match. The Planning Department and Public Works Department would like to apply for the Big Sky Trust Funding Planning Grant at one of the upcoming funding deadlines. These deadlines are:

- December 16, 2020
- March 17, 2021

It is anticipated that the planning grant would be used to cover staff and contractor time in studying development options, creating cost estimates, and establishing the best course of action to accomplish an expansion of infrastructure to the West Laurel Interchange. Please let me know if you have any comments, questions, or concerns regarding this request for approval. Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,

Nicholas Altonaga

Planning Director



2020 Laurel Projects

- Revolving Loan Fund
 - Eight loans totaling \$400,195.52 (plus one approved but not funded for \$200K)
- Yellowstone Valley Food Hub
- Yellowstone Valley Farms
- Yellowstone County Sports Facilities Feasibility Study
 - LARC planning
- Exploring options for infrastructure expansion at new interchange
 - Researching Scope of Work and/or grant opportunities for City expansion westward.
- LURA
 - Joint meetings with Big Sky EDA to assist City and planning board.
- Laurel Chamber of Commerce
 - Pryor Mountain Wind Farm outreach
- Exchange Club
 - Healing Fields
- 406 Bovine LLC
 - BTSF grant funding

Calculation of 2021 EDA dues:						
	Est Census (as of 07/2019)	Per Capita	Base		Total	Share
	% share	Per Capita	Base Fee		Assessment	% of County
	County	(Population x .19)				Assessment
Big Horn	13,319	\$2,530.61	\$2,250.00		\$4,780.61	
Big Horn County	1/3	\$843.54	\$750.00			\$1,593.54
City of Hardin	1/3	\$843.54	\$750.00			\$1,593.54
Two Rivers Authori	1/3	\$843.54	\$750.00			\$1,593.54
Carbon	10,725	\$2,037.75	\$2,250.00		\$4,287.75	\$4,287.75
Stillwater	9,642	\$1,831.98	\$2,250.00		\$4,081.98	\$4,081.98
Sweet Grass	3,737	\$710.03	\$2,250.00		\$2,960.03	\$2,960.03
Yellowstone	161,300	\$30,647.00	\$4,500.00		\$35,147.00	
Big Sky EDA	34.00%	\$ 10,419.98	\$1,530.00			\$11,949.98
City of Billings	36.00%	\$ 11,032.92	\$1,620.00			\$12,652.92
City of Laurel	6.00%	\$ 1,838.82	\$270.00			\$2,108.82
Yellowstone County	24.00%	\$ 7,355.28	\$1,080.00			\$8,435.28
Total					\$51,257.37	\$51,257.37
(Est Census Population x .19 c Base Assessment Fee) + Base Assessment Membership = Total Dues to County						

A
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between

**Yellowstone County Commissioners, Big Sky Economic Development Authority,
City of Billings, City of Laurel**

And

Beartooth Resource Conservation & Development Area, Inc.

THIS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING is made and entered into this ____ day of _____, 202__, by and between **Beartooth Resource Conservation & Development Area, Inc.**, whose principal business address is P.O. Box 180, Joliet, Montana 59041, hereinafter referred to as “Beartooth RC&D” and **Yellowstone County Commissioners (in cooperation with the City of Billings, City of Laurel, and Big Sky EDA)**, and hereinafter referred to as “**the Entity**”.

WHEREAS, The Beartooth RC&D has been formally recognized by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA) as a designated Economic Development District (EDD), and as a District, the Beartooth RC&D has been awarded funding to carry out its Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). This funding will provide a staff person, administrative support and operating costs. This is a continual grant, renewable based on successful program operation and availability of federal funds. Local match is required.

WHEREAS, Each entity participating in the District will designate a representative and an alternate to the regional Beartooth RC&D Board. This individual will convey the needs and economic development goals of the community to the Beartooth RC&D board meetings. Regular board meetings will be held every two months to assess project status and evaluate regional economic development needs.

NOW THEREFORE IT IS UNDERSTOOD AS FOLLOWS:

ARTICLE 1: SCOPE OF WORK:

Beartooth RC&D employs an Economic Development Director to assist in the completion of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the five county region. The Director’s time will be allocated consistent with the goals in the CEDS by the Beartooth RC&D board of directors. The board is composed of one representative and an alternate from business partners, county and local elected officials and local economic development partners from our five county region. Input from this board is essential for meeting the needs of the communities in our region.

Priority will be assigned projects of regional scope or projects with strong local leadership. Grant funding for this position is from EDA, therefore, emphasis will be on regional economic development planning and projects which have a correlation to job creation, economic diversification and increased tax base. Matching funds are from participating entities and emphasis will be placed on their specified projects.

Annual Evaluation:

The performance of the Economic Development District will be evaluated annually by local entities participating on the regional Beartooth RC&D Board. Progress and/or accomplishments on each program/project will be reported and evaluated to ensure resources are being utilized in the most effective and efficient manner possible. Annual Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy updates and an annual plan of work will be developed with input from the Beartooth RC&D staff and board. Annual reports on projects and economic development activities will be provided to the board and participating entities along with the renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding.

ARTICLE 2: PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE:

The term of this Memorandum of Understanding shall be from the date it is signed through **December 31, 2021**, unless extended by mutual agreement by both parties. Such extension must be in writing, signed by authorized representatives of both parties, and made a part of the original Memorandum of Understanding by modification reference. This Memorandum of Understanding supersedes the prior Memorandum for participation in the Economic Development District.

ARTICLE 3: PAYMENT:

The Entity's annual contribution will be **\$4,500.00** as a "Membership" fee plus a per capita assessment of **.19** cents per person. These funds will provide the necessary match to obtain the \$70,000.00 in federal funds. Entities who do not participate financially in the match requirement will not receive services from the Economic Development Coordinator. The calculated fee for **Yellowstone County** is **\$34,926.03**. This figure is a total of the **\$4,500.00** county fee plus **\$30,647.00** per capita formula using a population of **161,300** as per the 2019 Census data. Yellowstone County's full payment will be separated into a four-way payment system. Each entity within the county will pay a percentage (%) similar to the previous year. Big Sky EDA- 34% or **\$11,949.98**, City of Billings- 36% or **\$12,652.92**, City of Laurel- 6% or **\$2,108.82** and Yellowstone County- 24% or **\$8,435.28**.

Annually, the Beartooth RC&D/EDD staff will provide a comprehensive report of the past year's activity. A new Memorandum of Understanding will be prepared and a request for the following year's match submitted. Entities will be billed for match funds after January 1, 2021, for the current year's assessment.

Payment as provided in this section shall be full compensation for work performed, services rendered and for all materials, supplies, equipment, and incidentals necessary to complete the work.

ARTICLE 4: EXAMINATION OF RC&D RECORDS:

The Entity or its representatives shall have the right to examine any books, records, or other documents of the Beartooth RC&D, directly relating to costs when such costs are the basis of compensation hereunder.

ARTICLE 5: OWNERSHIP AND USE OF DOCUMENTS:

Reproducible copies of all documents and other materials produced by the Beartooth RC&D in connection with the services rendered under this memorandum of understanding shall be provided to the Entity for the Entity's use whether the project for which they are made is executed or not. The Beartooth RC&D shall be permitted to retain originals, including reproducible originals, of drawings and specifications for information, reference and use in connection with Beartooth RC&D endeavors.

ARTICLE 6: WARRANTY:

The Beartooth RC&D warrants that all services performed herein shall be performed using that degree of skill and care ordinarily exercised in and consistent with generally accepted practices for the nature of the services and shall conform to all requirements of this Memorandum of Understanding.

ARTICLE 7: SAFETY:

The Beartooth RC&D agrees to fully comply with the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, all regulations issued there under and all state laws and regulations enacted and adopted pursuant thereto. The Beartooth RC&D shall take all necessary precautions in performing the services hereunder to prevent injury to persons or damage to property.

ARTICLE 8: CONFIDENTIALITY AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:

The Beartooth RC&D agrees to hold in strict confidence any proprietary or other data, findings, results, or recommendations deemed to be confidential by the Entity and obtained or developed by the Beartooth RC&D in connection with the work under this memorandum of understanding. The Beartooth RC&D warrants and agrees they do not and will not have any conflicts of interest regarding the performance of services hereunder.

ARTICLE 9: APPLICABLE LAW:

This Memorandum of Understanding shall be governed in all respects by the laws of the State of Montana. No changes, amendments or modifications of any of the terms and conditions hereof shall be valid unless agreed to in writing. Venue of any proceeding arising hereunder shall be the Twenty-second Judicial District.

ARTICLE 10: COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS:

The Beartooth RC&D shall in performing the services contemplated by this Memorandum of Understanding, faithfully observe and comply with all federal, state, and local laws, ordinances and regulations, applicable to the services to be rendered under this Memorandum of Understanding.

ARTICLE 11: CHANGES:

The parties, by mutual agreement, may, at any time during the term of this Memorandum of Understanding and without invalidating the Memorandum of Understanding, make changes within the general scope of the Memorandum of Understanding. The Beartooth RC&D to perform such changed services. The Entity's priority list for project work within their county can be changed at any time. In such case, the District will be informed of this change at the Entity's earliest convenience.

ARTICLE 12: TERMINATION:

This Memorandum of Understanding may be terminated in whole or in part, in writing, by either party in the event of substantial failure by the other party to fulfill its obligations under this Memorandum of Understanding through no fault of the terminating party, provided that no termination may be effected unless the other party is given: (1) not less than ten (10) days written notice (delivered by certified mail, return receipt requested) of intent to terminate, and (2) an opportunity for consultation with the terminating party prior to termination.

Upon such termination the Entity shall pay the Beartooth RC&D amounts due and unpaid for services rendered as of the effective date of termination, and the Beartooth RC&D shall provide to the Entity all materials, surveys, reports, data, and other information performed or prepared as of such date.

ARTICLE 13: INDEMNIFICATION:

The Beartooth RC&D agrees to and does hereby indemnify and save the Entity, its officers, officials and employees, harmless against and from:

1. Any and all claims and liabilities, including but not limited to costs, expenses, and attorney fees arising from injury to, or death of, persons (including claims and liabilities for care or loss of services in connection with any bodily injury or death) and including injuries, sickness, disease, or death to Beartooth RC&D employees occasioned by a negligent act, omission, or failure of the Beartooth RC&D;

2. Any and all claims and liabilities, including costs and expenses, for loss or destruction of or damage to any property belonging to the Beartooth RC&D or the Entity caused by a negligent act, omission, or failure of the Beartooth RC&D and;

3. Any fines, penalties, or other amounts assessed against the Entity by reason of the Beartooth RC&D failure to comply with all health, safety, and environmental laws and regulations applicable to the services; resulting directly or indirectly from, or occurring in the course of the Beartooth RC&D performance of the services. However, this indemnity shall not extend to claims

and liabilities for (i) injury or death to persons or (ii) loss of or damage to property to the extent that these claims and liabilities result directly from the Entity's negligence or willful misconduct.

ARTICLE 14: INSURANCE:

The Beartooth RC&D shall maintain and demonstrate the following types of insurance:

1. The Beartooth RC&D agrees that its employees and particularly the employees designated to work on this memorandum of understanding are covered by applicable Worker's Compensation provisions. The Beartooth RC&D further agrees that if the Entity should legally incur any costs whatsoever under the Worker's Compensation laws by reason of the Beartooth RC&D employees' injury or death while engaged in the contract work, the Beartooth RC&D will indemnify and hold harmless the Entity for such costs which the Entity may be legally be required to pay to employees of the Beartooth RC&D.

2. Comprehensive general liability insurance for bodily injury, death, or loss of or damage to property of third persons or other liability due to the negligent acts of the Beartooth RC&D in the minimum amounts of \$500,000 per occurrence and \$1,000,000 aggregate for personal injury; and \$500,000 per occurrence/aggregate for property damage. Proof of coverage as required by this section shall be delivered to the Entity within fifteen (15) days of execution of this Agreement.

3. Professional liability errors and omissions insurance in a minimum amount of \$100,000.00.

ARTICLE 15: NONDISCRIMINATION:

The Beartooth RC&D will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment relating to this project on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, political ideas, sex, age, marital status, physical or mental handicap or national origin. All hiring associated with any project shall be on the basis of merit and qualifications related to the requirements of the particular position being filled.

ARITCLE 16: INDEPENDENT CONTRATOR:

The Beartooth RC&D and the Entity agree that the Beartooth RC&D is an independent contractor with respect to the services provided pursuant to this Memorandum of Understanding. Nothing in this Memorandum of Understanding shall be considered to create the relationship of employer and employee between the parties hereto. Neither the Beartooth RC&D nor any employee of the Beartooth RC&D shall be entitled to any benefits accorded Entity's employees by virtue of the services provided under this Memorandum of Understanding. The Entity shall not be responsible for withholding or otherwise deducting federal income tax or social security or for contributing to the state Worker's Compensation program, nor shall the Entity be deemed in any way to assume the duties of an employer with respect to the Beartooth RC&D, or any employee of the Beartooth RC&D.

ARTICLE 17: ASSIGNMENT:

The Beartooth RC&D shall not sublet or assign any of the services covered by this Memorandum of Understanding without the express written consent of the Entity.

ARTICLE 18: NON-WAIVER:

Waiver by the City of any provision of this memorandum of understanding or any time limitation provided for in this memorandum of understanding shall not constitute a waiver of any other provision.

ARTICLE 19: NOTICES:

Any Notice to be served hereunder may be served upon the parties personally or served by certified mail, return receipt. Notice served by mail shall be deemed complete upon deposit of said notice in any United States Post Office, postage prepaid, directed to the party to be served, at the following addresses:

ENTITY: City of Laurel
P.O. Box 10
Laurel, MT 59044

RC&D: Beartooth RC&D
P.O. Box 180
Joliet, MT 59041

ARTICLE 20: INTEGRATED AGREEMENT:

This Memorandum of Understanding together with attachments or addenda represents the entire and integrated Agreement between the Entity and the Beartooth RC&D and supersedes all prior negotiations, representations, or agreements, written or oral. This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended only by written instrument signed by both the Entity and the Beartooth RC&D.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have hereunto set their hands and seals to this Memorandum of Understanding the day and year in this instrument first above written.

CITY OF LAUREL

BEARTOOTH RC&D/EDD

Tom Nelson
Mayor

Ryan VanBallegooyen
Chairman

ATTEST: _____

Date: _____

CITY HALL

115 W. 1st. St.

PUB WORKS: 628-4796

PWD FAX: 628-2241

WATER OFFICE: 628-7431

WTR FAX: 628-2289

MAYOR: 628-8456

City of Laurel

P.O. Box 10

Laurel, Montana 59044



MAYOR

DEPARTMENT

November 11, 2020

MEMORANDUM

To whom it may concern,

Due to the high rate of cases of COVID-19 in Yellowstone County and due to the nature of the difficulty of trying to maintain proper social distancing during meetings especially when the public wants to attend, all City meetings must temporarily change. Beginning today, all City public meetings will be conducted on Zoom. Public meetings will continue to be noticed as they always have, and the zoom link will be provided to all members of the public. The City Council Workshop and Business Meetings will be broadcast on the City of Laurel's Facebook page and public comments will be allowed through that medium during the Audience Participation portion of the meeting and under Public Comments under the Scheduled Matters portion of the City Council Agenda.

The City will continue utilizing virtual meetings until further notice.

Sincerely,

Thomas C. Nelson

Mayor

Board/Committee/Commission Vacancies December 2020

Meeting Name	When	Term Expiration	
Cemetery Commission	2 nd Tuesday @ 5:00 p.m.	6/30/2022	
City/County Planning Board	2 nd Wednesday @ 5:35 p.m.	6/30/2022	City Rep.
City/County Planning Board	2 nd Wednesday @ 5:35 p.m.	6/30/2022	Yellowstone County Conservation District Rep
Laurel Urban Renewal Agency	3 rd Monday @ 11:00 a.m.	12/31/2023	
Laurel Urban Renewal Agency	3 rd Monday @ 11:00 a.m.	12/31/2024	
Laurel Urban Renewal Agency	3 rd Monday @ 11:00 a.m.	12/31/2024	
Laurel Urban Renewal Agency – Advisory	3 rd Monday @ 11:00 a.m.	12/31/2024	
Park Board	1 st Thursday @ 5:30 p.m.	12/31/2022	
Park Board	1 st Thursday @ 5:30 p.m.	12/31/2024	
Police Commission	As needed	4/30/2023	
Public Works Committee	3 rd Monday @ 6:00 p.m.	No Term	
Tree Board	3 rd Tuesday @ 9:30 a.m.	6/30/2022	
Yellowstone Historic Preservation Board		12/31/2022	

The City of Laurel is accepting letters of interest from City of Laurel residents to fill positions on the following boards/committees/commissions. If interested, send your name, address, telephone number, and a brief description of your experience and/or background to:

City of Laurel
C/O: Council Secretary
P.O. Box 10
Laurel, MT 59044

Letters of interest are due by December 8, 2020, at 5:00 p.m.

File Attachments for Item:

9. Budget/Finance Committee Minutes of October 27, 2020.

Budget/Finance Committee Minutes of November 10, 2020.

Tree Board Minutes of October 15, 2020.

Public Works Committee Minutes of October 19, 2020.

**Minutes of City of Laurel
Budget/Finance Committee
Tuesday, October 27, 2020**

Members Present: **Emelie Eaton**
 Bruce McGee
 Richard Klose
 Scott Stokes

Public Input: *Citizens may address the committee regarding any item of business that is not on the agenda. The duration for an individual speaking under Public Input is limited to three minutes. While all comments are welcome, the committee will not take action on any item not on the agenda.*

General Items

1. Review and approve the October 13, 2020 Budget and Finance Committee meeting minutes. Scott Stokes moved to approve the minutes as presented. Richard Klose seconded the motion, all in favor, motion passed.
2. Review and Approve purchase requisitions. There were none presented to the committee.
3. Review and recommend approval to Council, Claims entered through 10/23/2020. Emelie Eaton reviewed the Claims Detail report and the check register for accuracy. She had four issues which had come up for discussion. Since there was no staff available, these matters would be submitted to the Clerk/Treasurer as were the matters from the October 13, 2020 meeting. Emelie Eaton made a motion to recommend approval of the claims entered through 10/23/2020. Scott Stokes seconded the motion, all in favor, motion passed.
4. Review and approve Payroll Register for pay period ending 9/18/2020 totaling \$913.64. Scott Stokes made a motion to recommend approval of this claim totaling \$913.64. The committee questioned why there were two claims two days apart. Since there was no one to answer the question, it would have to be put off to the next meeting where staff was able to answer. Since the amount matched the register, Bruce McGee seconded the motion, all were in favor and the motion passed.
5. Review and approve Payroll Register for Pay Period ending 9/20/2020 totaling \$184,819.75. The register was signed. Scott Stokes moved to recommend approval of this claim totaling \$184,819.75. Bruce McGee seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed.
6. Review and approve the Payroll Register for Pay Period Ending 10/04/2020 totaling \$193,399.51. There was an error on the date of this item and Richard Klose moved to recommend approval of the claim dated **October 9, 2020** in the amount of \$193,399.51. Bruce McGee seconded the motion; all were in favor and the motion passed.
7. Review and approve the Payroll Register for the Pay Period Ending 10/04/2020 totaling \$7,626.14 for Union 316 Retro Pay. The committee appreciated that this entry had an explanation attached to it. There was an error on the date of this item and Richard Klose moved to recommend approval of the claim dated **October 9, 2020** in the amount of \$7,626.14 for Union 316 Retro Pay. Bruce McGee seconded the motion, all were in favor and the motion passed.
8. Review and approve the Payroll Register for Pay Period Ending 10/18/2020 totaling \$191,064.85. Richard Klose moved to approve the Payroll Register for 10/18/2020 totaling \$191,064.85. Bruce McGee seconded the motion; all were in favor and the motion passed.

New Business – none

Old Business –

9. Fund 4000 Discussion – since there was no staff in attendance, this matter would have to be put off to the November 10 or 24, 2020 meeting. Chair Eaton stated she would like to know which issues were being acted on in 2020-2021 and which were not, as it looked as if there were items not discussed when the budget was reviewed. She wanted clarification on what was moving forward.

10. Fire Department Meal Pay – Drill Pay discussion. Since there was no staff in attendance, this matter would have to be put off to the November 10 or 24, 2020 meeting. Chair Eaton expressed frustration over this item continually being put on the agenda, continually being put off, with suggestions and motions being made but never acted upon. She inquired of each member individually and in full discussion of the other members, whether it would be worth continuing to pursue this matter. The consensus of all individuals was that, while it was acknowledged that the Mayor did not appear to wish to resolve this matter; and while it may continue to be a source of frustration; staff had indicated there was a limited level of documentation that **may** trace the origins of this continual monthly \$600+ payment to the Fire **Association** against the direct recommendations of the Auditors; the committee members would **all** like to have answers to the questions that had been posed and a resolution offered.

Other Items –

11. Clerk Treasurer Update – not in attendance, no update available.

12. Mayor Update – not in attendance, no update available.

Announcements –

13. The next Budget and Finance meeting will be held on November 10, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. via zoom.

14. Scot Stokes will be reviewing the claims for the next Budget & Finance meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Emelie Eaton
Budget and Finance Chair

NOTE: This meeting is open to the public. This meeting is for information and discussion of the Council for the listed workshop agenda items.

**Minutes of City of Laurel
Budget/Finance Committee
Tuesday, November 10, 2020**

Members Present:	Emelie Eaton	Bruce McGee
	Scot Stokes	
Others Present:	Mayor Nelson	Bethany Langve
	Stan Langve	

Public Input: *Citizens may address the committee regarding any item of business that is not on the agenda. The duration for an individual speaking under Public Input is limited to three minutes. While all comments are welcome, the committee will not take action on any item not on the agenda.*

General Items -

1. Review and approve the October 27, 2020 Budget and Finance Committee meeting minutes. Bruce McGee moved to approve the minutes as presented. Scot Stokes seconded the motion, all in favor, motion passed.
2. Review and Approve purchase requisition from the Police Department for a K-9 Unit Vehicle. The Clerk/Treasure briefly presented the purchase requisition and introduced Chief Langve to go over the request in detail. Chief Langve stated the department was requesting approval from the Budget and Finance Committee for the purchase of a K-9 vehicle. The vehicle in question did receive emergency approval from the Mayor as the previous two vehicles found sold within 24 and 48 hours. The Chief explained the vehicle was being purchased with the money raised through donations. The Chief explained this vehicle in is Madison WI, has approximately 50,000 miles on it and no previous accidents. The original asking price for the vehicle was \$48,000 but Beartooth Ford got the price down to \$22,449.95. The Committee wanted to verify the vehicle had already been purchased. The Chief stated the vehicle had been purchased using the Mayor's emergency authority as the other vehicles had been purchased so quickly. The Committee asked why Laurel Ford wasn't used. The Chief stated Beartooth Ford only helped Officer Booth locate the vehicle and he didn't believe they were receiving any profit from the sale.
3. Review and recommend approval to Council, Claims entered through 11/06/2020. The Claims Detail report and the check register had previously been reviewed for accuracy. The Clerk/Treasurer answered several questions that had been sent to her via email regarding the claims. The Committee had no further questions or comments regarding the claims. Scot Stokes made a motion to recommend approval of the claims entered through 11/06/2020. Bruce McGee seconded the motion, all in favor, motion passed.
4. Review and approve Payroll Register for pay period ending 11/01/2020 totaling \$198,495.03. Bruce McGee made a motion to recommend approval of this claim totaling \$198,495.03. Scot Stokes seconded the motion, all in favor, motion passed.

New Business – none

Old Business –

5. Fire Association Meal Pay – Drill Pay discussion. The Chair stated she had made a motion previously to create a resolution regarding the Fire Association Meal Pay/Drill Pay. There had been no movement forward since then regarding the creation of a resolution. There was discussion providing the history of events with these payments. The Committee discussed providing the drill pay directly to the firemen so they can do what they want with the funds,

instead of giving the money to the Fire Association. It was also discussed eliminating the meal pay and having the Department provide meals for the Firemen during training and posting those meals directly to the line item under the Fire Department budget. The Mayor stated it would be best to draw up a draft resolution for Sam to review with a list of any questions. The Mayor stated he doesn't legislate but he would be more than willing take the ideas to full Council. The Chair stated she would draw up a draft resolution to review for the next meeting.

6. Discussion regarding the 4000-fund summary – The Clerk/Treasurer went over the budgeted appropriations listed in the 4000-fund summary. There were no questions or comments regarding the explanation.

Other Items –

7. The Committee reviewed the Comp OT report for pay periods ending 10/04/2020 and 10/18/2020 and had no questions or comments.
8. Clerk/Treasurer Update – The Clerk/Treasurer stated the City had been approved by the State to receive \$883,510.00 in CARES funding. She explained the City should be seeing those funds deposited in approximately 7 days. The Clerk/Treasurer stated she wanted to thank her employees for making the process easier for her. She thanked her Accounts Payable Clerk, Amber Hatton, for keeping all the COVID-19 claims together. She thanked Brittney Moorman for assisting her with putting together the almost 600-page document, and she thanked her payroll clerk, Kelly Strecker, for answering the State's payroll questions incredibly fast. The Committee was very pleased with this news.
9. Mayor Update – The Mayor stated he was still going to contact our Senator and State Representatives and make a final push to get the State share for the intake.

Announcements –

10. The next Budget and Finance Committee meeting will be held on November 24, 2020. The meeting will be held at 5:15pm via ZOOM or 5:30pm in person, method is yet to be determined.
11. Richard Klose will be reviewing the claims for the next meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Bethany Langve
Clerk/Treasurer

NOTE: This meeting is open to the public. This meeting is for information and discussion of the Council for the listed workshop agenda items.

MINUTES
CITY OF LAUREL
Tree Board
10/15/2020 09:30 AM
City Council Chambers

A Tree Board was held in the City Council Chambers and called to order by LuAnne Engh at 09:30 AM on 10/15/2020.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LuAnne Engh, Chairman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Richard Herr
<input type="checkbox"/> Aaron Christiansen, Vice-Chairman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Matt Wheeler
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Walter Widdis, Secretary	<input type="checkbox"/> Kurt Markegard
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dale Ahrens	<input type="checkbox"/> Phyllis Bromgard

OTHERS PRESENT:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

1. Public Input

- a. Nick Altogona, City Planner was in attendance

2. General Items

- a. September 2020 minutes approved
- b. Arbor Day - highlights Great weather until the wind picked up 125 4th grade public school students attended in the morning and Megan Hoyer and Pam Schwend. At 1:00 the homeschoolers and First Baptist and New Life students (32 total) visited our 4 presenters.

- c. Our vendors were Megan Hoyer, Sherry Kisch, James Prchal and Jeff Herman - each had 20 minutes to explain their topic. All of them were outstanding and didn't mind the wind and heat.
- d. After the presenters the kids helped finish planting the 2 trees
- e. Dale had granola bars for all the students. We had water and a sub sandwich for the presenters.
- f. Money spent on this year. \$190 for food \$1300 trees with warranty
- g. We still have \$500 in Walmart funds with the school. We'll apply next February for another grant.
- h. Walt will put in an article in the Laurel Outlook about Arbor Day 2020
- i. Next Spring Arbor Day will be set for May 4th. Location to be determined according to the construction of the dock. We will need to find new artists. Dale said he would ask the Public School 4th grade to advertise for the theme.

3. New Business

- a. Rotary has 6 benches they would like to put in the smaller parks
- b. Triangle parks that were affected by the new street paving have been leveled and trees removed that were not supported. Looks great.
- c. Concern over dead trees in the LURA district. - downtown area. Nick explained that there are funds available to help replace trees through the TIFF money.
- d. Dead trees on 8th are not in LURA and therefore the owners responsibility. LuAnne will contact the manager and explain they should use a company to plant trees with a warranty plus locate a water source.
- e. Steve Zabawa owner of the Burger King lot took out the row of Pine trees due to pine beetle disease. Laurel could apply for a landscaping grant to replace those to beautify the entrance to Laurel. Nic will report next month.

4. Old Business

- a. Replacing 5 dead ash trees at South Pond - with Hackberry, elm, maple or linden and one juniper. This will remain on our list of concerns
- b. Lions Dock -Everything is ready for bids for the dock. Construction could begin as soon as next Spring.
- c. Riverside Park campground is done but not open until next Spring when the water is on.. 25 new trees are planted.

5. Other Items

- a. All members should keep track of their hours and turn them in by the end of the year. Kurt will circulate the forms. This is important for the Tree USA distinction

- b. Grace Bible church is working with the city to repair Kids Kingdom -Meetings have happened to fundraise and see that the playground is set for next summer. We may be looking at adding trees to this project.

6. Announcements

- a. Next meeting November 19, 9:30am...

The Tree Board adjourned at 10:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

LuAnne Engh
Committee Chairman

NOTE: This meeting is open to the public. This meeting is for information and discussion of listed agenda items.

**MINUTES
CITY OF LAUREL
PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE
MONDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2020**

The Public Works Committee meeting was called to order at 6:00pm on October 19, 2020.

Members Present: Bill Mountsier, K Dan Koch, Richard Herr, Don Nelson, Marv Carter, Heidi Sparks- Chair, Irv Wilke- Co-Chair, Kut Markegaard- Public Works Director

Others Present: Ryan Welsh- KJL, Nathan Herman- Laurel WTP

Public Input: None

General Items

1. Approval of Public Works Committee minutes of September 21, 2020. Motion by Irv Wilke, Seconded by Richard Herr, motion carried

New Business

2. Engineering Report from KLJ
 - Engineering Report attached. Items to note:
 - Richard requested a sign stating the funds for the EDII project came from the TIFF funds
 - Council passed campground rules at the October 13, 2020 Council Meeting
3. Discussion of 2021 Pavement Maintenance Plan
 - Proposed project attached

Old Business: None

Other Items: None

Announcements

- . Next Meeting Monday, November 16, 2020 at 6:00pm



East Downtown Infrastructure Improvements (KLJ #1804-01309)

Reason for Project: Reconstruction and rehabilitation of streets, utilities and various other infrastructure improvements including Washington Ave., Idaho Ave. and Ohio Ave. generally bound between E. Main Street and E. 1st Street, as well as E. 1st Street generally bound between Washington Ave. and Alder Ave.

Project Scope: Preliminary engineering, design, bidding and construction.

Current Status:

- Substantial Completion Inspection September 17, 2020
- Final Completion October 22, 2020

Riverside Park Campground (KLJ # 1904-00634)

Reason for Project: New campground in Riverside Park

Project Scope: Work consists of surveying and designing a new campground within Riverside Park.

Current Status:

- Seeding after October 19, 2020
- Final Inspection October 22, 2020

Sanitary Sewer H₂S Remediation (KLJ #1804-00122)

Reason for Project: Buildup of H₂S within the WW collection system has led to deterioration of manholes and other system components.

Project Scope: Complete design and construction administration to address H₂S build-up in the system.

Current Status:

- KLJ preparing scope of work.
- Construction to begin Spring 2021

Data and Asset Management (KLJ # 1804-00461)

Reason for Project: Consolidate infrastructure information

Project Scope: Assemble city infrastructure data into a single source, which can be used to track and manage assets

Current Status:

- Draft Atlas Maps completed



City of Laurel Project Status Update
October 15, 2020



Design Standards & Rules Update (KLJ # 1804-02569)

Reason for Project: Update old standards

Project Scope: Develop a set of cohesive and concise design standards for public improvements to help facilitate reviews of new developments and ensure the public improvements are designed in the City of Laurel's best interest.

Current Status:

- Drafts of the all sections of the manual are complete
- Final sections of streets, water and sewer are complete

Laurel Planning Services (KLJ #1804-00554)

Reason for Project: KLJ has been retained to provide City of Laurel planning services as needed.

Project Scope: Planning services may include; subdivision, zoning, development, floodplain hazard management, miscellaneous reviews and other related work. KLJ will prepare staff reports, recommendations, and attend meetings upon request.

Current Status:

- Floodplain Management – Joint Application for improvements at Riverside Park has been approved
- Subdivision Review – **Goldberg Sporting Estates Oct 21, 2020**
- Growth Policy Update – This project is continuing with coordination between the Laurel City Planner and KLJ. Anticipated Completion December 15, 2020
 - Public hearing October 21, 2020

On-Call Professional Services (KLJ #1804-00347)

Project Scope: Services may include engineering, surveying, planning or government relations.

Current Status:

- None



Other Notes and Information

Other potential projects have been identified during recent conversations between City staff and KLJ. City Public Works staff and KLJ task leaders meet bi-weekly to discuss current and future projects. As these are tentative, the timing and extent of KLJ's services are TBD, unless noted otherwise.

Anticipated FY21 Projects

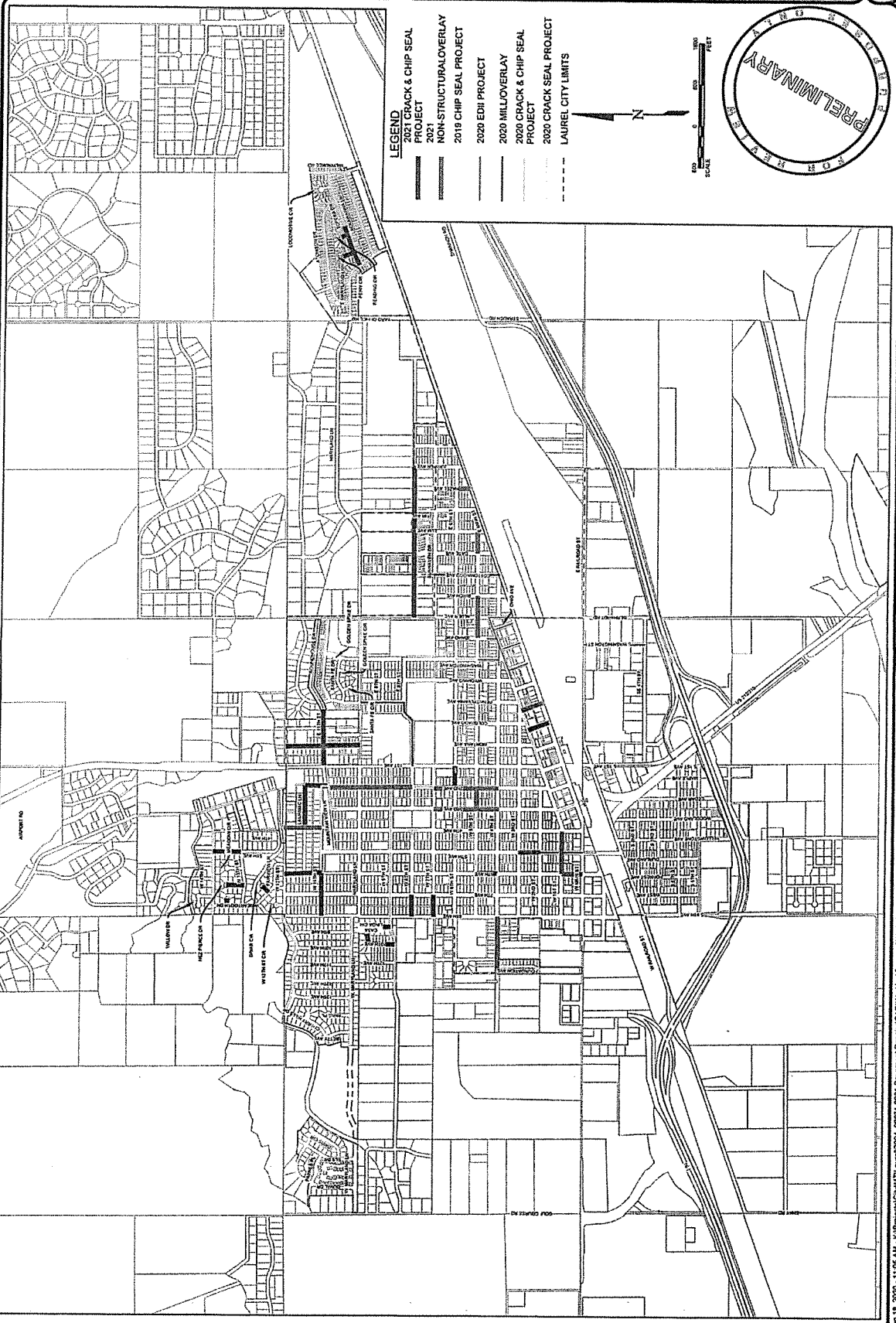
1. West Railroad Street Reconstruction- Proposal submitted
2. South Side Drainage Plan and Traffic Study
3. Water Storage Tank Recoat - 2021
4. Water System Planning
 - a. Master Plan Update (potentially update PER concurrently)
 - b. Booster station rehabilitation or replacement (task order forthcoming)
 - c. Water storage tank Preliminary Engineering Report
5. Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) assistance – CDBG Grant Applied.
6. Water Line/Yellowstone River Crossing
7. Sewer Main Repair of Elm Lifts station
8. WWTP Archimedes Screw Rehabilitation
9. 7th Street reconstruction from 1st Street to
10. Replace Water main located under houses in 12 Street

Other Potential Future Projects

1. West Side TIFF

Street	Length of Street (ft)	Width of Street (ft)	Crack Seal (ft)	Non-Structural Overlay Streets	Crack and Chip Seal Streets	Fog Seal (GAL)	Asphalt Mill (SY)	*Mill (\$2.20/SY)	Fabric (SY)	*Fabric (\$1.25/SF)	2" Overlay (TN)	*Overlay (\$83.50/TN)	Adjust MH (EA)	Adjust Value (EA)	Cost per Street
W 1st St (6th Ave. to 4th Ave.)	753	46.5													\$ 41,066.74
W 4th St (West End to 8th Ave.)	1000	29													\$ 33,922.54
E 5th St (Dale Ave. to Elm Ave.)	385	48													\$ 21,616.85
E 5th St (Dale Ave. to Birch Ave.)	750	48													\$ 42,110.74
W 5th St (3rd Ave. to 2nd Ave.)	380	48													\$ 21,336.11
Hazel Ave. (Main to E. 6th St.)	250	48													\$ 14,036.91
2nd Ave. (W. 8th St. to Mountain View)	1500	48													\$ 84,221.48
2nd Ave. (W. 4th St. to W. 7th St.)	1150	48													\$ 64,569.80
6th Ave. (Main St. to W. 1st St.)	380	48													\$ 21,336.11
5th Ave. (W. 2nd St. to W. 3rd St.)	400	48													\$ 22,459.06
4th Ave. (W. 11th St. to W. 12th St.)	400	48													\$ 36,038.08
3rd Ave. (W. 4th St. to W. 7th St.)	1200	48													\$ 67,377.18
Pennsylvania (E. Main St. to E. 1st St.)	400	50													\$ 12,493.33
Colorado Ave. (E. Main St. to E. 1st St.)	400	58													\$ 14,070.67
10th Ave. (W. 9th St. to Cul de Sac)	640	36													\$ 15,308.80
Casa Linda Circle (W. 9th St. to End)	400	30													\$ 8,340.00
6th Ave. (W. 11th St. to W. 12th St.)	660	48													\$ 19,839.60
5th Ave. (W. 4th St. to W. 5th St.)	400	48													\$ 12,024.00
5th Ave. (W. 13th St. to W. 14th St.)	700	48													\$ 21,042.00
2nd Ave. (Main View to Laumac)	422	48													\$ 12,685.32
W. 6th St. (2nd Ave. to 1st Ave.)	400	48													\$ 12,024.00
W. 7th St. (8th Ave. to Juniper Ave.)	2650	48													\$ 79,659.00
E. 8th St. (Alder Ave. to Juniper Ave.)	400	48													\$ 12,024.00
W 8th St. (8th Ave. to 7th Ave.)	1000	33													\$ 22,385.00
E. 11th St. (1st Ave. to East End)	750	38													\$ 18,707.50
W 11th St. (8th Ave. to 6th Ave.)	400	48													\$ 21,592.00
Laumac Lane (4th Ave. to 2nd Ave.)	800	42													\$ 9,104.33
Beartooth Circle (W. Beartooth Dr. to Cul de Sac)	125	44													\$ 4,482.13
Nez Pierce Dr. (W. 13th St. to Cul de Sac)	325	44													\$ 3,501.67
Brar Circle (W. Beartooth Dr. to Cul de Sac)	160	44													\$ 5,142.80
Penn Circle (Trapeka Cr. to Cul de Sac)	215	36													\$ 2,631.20
Reading Circle (Trapeka Cr. to Cul de Sac)	110	36													\$ 35,087.00
Montana Ave. (E. Maryland to W. 12th St.)	1300	42													\$ 17,700.80
Lackawanna (E. Maryland to Reading Cr.)	740	36													\$ 71,523.50
Eleanor Roosevelt Dr. (Alder to Juniper)	2650	42													\$ 913,414.26

totals 88258.5 \$ 88,258.50 2544.505 \$ 155,214.83 77106.22 \$ 165,778.38 10023.809 \$ 34,080.95 0 \$ - 44651.94 \$ 55,814.93 4961.278 \$ 414,266.68 0 \$ 0 \$
 MDT Urban Routes are not included
 * Costs of Each Item, are per the 2020 Pavement Repairs Project Costs
 † Length of Crack Seal assumes 5.5 ft of crack per 1 ft. of street length (average from 2020 PMAP)
 # Patches assumes 0.033 SY of patch per SY of Street Area (average from 2020 PMAP)



PRELIMINARY - NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

Aug 18, 2020 - 11:55 AM - X:\Projects\CityMT\Laurel\2004_00031_2021 Pavement Repair\CAD\Working\Scope of Work.dwg

File Attachments for Item:

10. Resolution No. R20-78: A Resolution of the City Council Authorizing the submission of a Big Sky Economic Development Trust Fund Planning Project Grant Application and to Commit the Matching Funds Required by the Creating Agency.

RESOLUTION NO. R20-78

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL AUTHORIZING THE
SUBMISSION OF A BIG SKY TRUST FUND PLANNING PROJECT GRANT
APPLICATION AND TO COMMIT THE
MATCHING FUNDS REQUIRED BY THE CREATING AGENCY.**

WHEREAS the City of Laurel is applying to the Montana Department of Commerce, Office of Tourism and Business Development for financial assistance from the Big Sky Trust Fund Grant Program to complete an infrastructure expansion project.

WHEREAS, the City of Laurel agrees to comply with all State laws and regulations and the requirements described in the Big Sky Trust Fund Application Guidelines and those that will be described in the Big Sky Trust Fund Project Administration Manual;

WHEREAS, the City of Laurel commits to provide the amount of matching funds as proposed in the Big Sky Trust Fund application; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the City Council hereby authorizes the Mayor and/or Authorized Representative to submit a Big Sky Trust Fund application to the Montana Department of Commerce, Office of Tourism and Business Development on behalf of the City of Laurel, to act on its behalf and to provide such additional information as may be required.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the City Council on November 24, 2020 by Council Member _____.

PASSED and APPROVED by the City Council of the City of Laurel this 24th day of November 2020.

APPROVED by the Mayor this 24th day of November 2020.

CITY OF LAUREL

Thomas C Nelson, Mayor

ATTEST:

Bethany Langve, Clerk/Treasurer

Approved as to form:

Sam S. Painter, Civil City Attorney

CERTIFICATION BY CRDC, ELIGIBLE EDO, LOCAL or TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS

As the responsible authorized agent of _____,
I hereby submit this Big Sky Economic Development Trust Fund Application, and will comply with
all requirements set out in the BSTF program guidelines in the implementation of this project.

The information presented in this application is, to the best of my knowledge, true, complete and
accurately represents the proposed project. I understand that additional information and
documentation may be required. In addition, I understand that the applicant and the assisted
business receiving BSTF financial assistance are liable for the full amount of the award that is
advanced by the Department if the assisted business: misrepresents itself or its claims, fails to
inject the required amount of match into the project as specified in the executed contract. I
understand that additional information and documentation may be required.

_____ will accept
responsibility for management of the project and compliance with Big Sky Economic Development
Trust Fund regulations, and is the authorized contact for the release of additional information
and/or documentation regarding this application.

Project Title: _____

Name (typed): _____

Title (typed): _____

Authorized Representative

Signature: _____ X

Date: _____

CERTIFICATION BY ASSISTED BUSINESS

We acknowledge and understand that the CRDC/EDO/LOCAL or TRIBAL GOVERNMENT is
submitting a funding application to the Montana Department of Commerce – Big Sky Economic
Development Trust Fund Program (BSTF) on our behalf to assist with the proposed planning
efforts.

We acknowledge and understand that any document prepared with public funds is subject to
public's right to know (Article II, Section 9 of Montana Constitution).

ASSISTED BUSINESS

Name (Typed)

Title (Typed)

Authorized Representative

Signature | X

Date

File Attachments for Item:

11. Resolution No. R20-79: Resolution Authorizing The Mayor To Execute An Agreement With Beartooth RC&D Economic Development District.

RESOLUTION NO. R20-79

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT
WITH BEARTOOTH RC&D ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT.**

WHEREAS, the City of Laurel desires to retain the services of Beartooth RC&D Economic Development District for services relating to a regional economic development planning program; and

WHEREAS, Beartooth RC&D Economic Development District provided such services for the City of Laurel in the past and desires to continue the provision of such services for the City in accordance with the terms and conditions of the attached Memorandum of Understanding, including a membership contribution of \$2,108.82; and

WHEREAS, the City of Laurel is satisfied with the services provided to date and desires a continuation of its relationship with Beartooth RC&D Economic Development District.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Laurel, Montana,

That the Mayor is authorized to execute the attached Memorandum of Understanding with Beartooth RC&D Economic Development District.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the City Council on November 24, 2020, by Council Member _____.

PASSED and APPROVED by the City Council of the City of Laurel this 24th day of November 2020.

APPROVED by the Mayor this 24th day of November 2020.

CITY OF LAUREL

Thomas C. Nelson, Mayor

ATTEST:

Bethany Langve, Clerk-Treasurer

Approved as to form:

Sam S. Painter, Civil City Attorney

A
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
Between
Yellowstone County Commissioners, Big Sky Economic Development Authority,
City of Billings, City of Laurel
And
Beartooth Resource Conservation & Development Area, Inc.

THIS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING is made and entered into this ____ day of _____, 202__, by and between **Beartooth Resource Conservation & Development Area, Inc.**, whose principal business address is P.O. Box 180, Joliet, Montana 59041, hereinafter referred to as “Beartooth RC&D” and **Yellowstone County Commissioners (in cooperation with the City of Billings, City of Laurel, and Big Sky EDA)**, and hereinafter referred to as “**the Entity**”.

WHEREAS, The Beartooth RC&D has been formally recognized by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA) as a designated Economic Development District (EDD), and as a District, the Beartooth RC&D has been awarded funding to carry out its Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). This funding will provide a staff person, administrative support and operating costs. This is a continual grant, renewable based on successful program operation and availability of federal funds. Local match is required.

WHEREAS, Each entity participating in the District will designate a representative and an alternate to the regional Beartooth RC&D Board. This individual will convey the needs and economic development goals of the community to the Beartooth RC&D board meetings. Regular board meetings will be held every two months to assess project status and evaluate regional economic development needs.

NOW THEREFORE IT IS UNDERSTOOD AS FOLLOWS:

ARTICLE 1: SCOPE OF WORK:

Beartooth RC&D employs an Economic Development Director to assist in the completion of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the five county region. The Director’s time will be allocated consistent with the goals in the CEDS by the Beartooth RC&D board of directors. The board is composed of one representative and an alternate from business partners, county and local elected officials and local economic development partners from our five county region. Input from this board is essential for meeting the needs of the communities in our region.

Priority will be assigned projects of regional scope or projects with strong local leadership. Grant funding for this position is from EDA, therefore, emphasis will be on regional economic development planning and projects which have a correlation to job creation, economic diversification and increased tax base. Matching funds are from participating entities and emphasis will be placed on their specified projects.

Annual Evaluation:

The performance of the Economic Development District will be evaluated annually by local entities participating on the regional Beartooth RC&D Board. Progress and/or accomplishments on each program/project will be reported and evaluated to ensure resources are being utilized in the most effective and efficient manner possible. Annual Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy updates and an annual plan of work will be developed with input from the Beartooth RC&D staff and board. Annual reports on projects and economic development activities will be provided to the board and participating entities along with the renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding.

ARTICLE 2: PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE:

The term of this Memorandum of Understanding shall be from the date it is signed through **December 31, 2021**, unless extended by mutual agreement by both parties. Such extension must be in writing, signed by authorized representatives of both parties, and made a part of the original Memorandum of Understanding by modification reference. This Memorandum of Understanding supersedes the prior Memorandum for participation in the Economic Development District.

ARTICLE 3: PAYMENT:

The Entity's annual contribution will be **\$4,500.00** as a "Membership" fee plus a per capita assessment of **.19** cents per person. These funds will provide the necessary match to obtain the \$70,000.00 in federal funds. Entities who do not participate financially in the match requirement will not receive services from the Economic Development Coordinator. The calculated fee for **Yellowstone County** is **\$34,926.03**. This figure is a total of the **\$4,500.00** county fee plus **\$30,647.00** per capita formula using a population of **161,300** as per the 2019 Census data. Yellowstone County's full payment will be separated into a four-way payment system. Each entity within the county will pay a percentage (%) similar to the previous year. Big Sky EDA- 34% or **\$11,949.98**, City of Billings- 36% or **\$12,652.92**, City of Laurel- 6% or **\$2,108.82** and Yellowstone County- 24% or **\$8,435.28**.

Annually, the Beartooth RC&D/EDD staff will provide a comprehensive report of the past year's activity. A new Memorandum of Understanding will be prepared and a request for the following year's match submitted. Entities will be billed for match funds after January 1, 2021, for the current year's assessment.

Payment as provided in this section shall be full compensation for work performed, services rendered and for all materials, supplies, equipment, and incidentals necessary to complete the work.

ARTICLE 4: EXAMINATION OF RC&D RECORDS:

The Entity or its representatives shall have the right to examine any books, records, or other documents of the Beartooth RC&D, directly relating to costs when such costs are the basis of compensation hereunder.

ARTICLE 5: OWNERSHIP AND USE OF DOCUMENTS:

Reproducible copies of all documents and other materials produced by the Beartooth RC&D in connection with the services rendered under this memorandum of understanding shall be provided to the Entity for the Entity's use whether the project for which they are made is executed or not. The Beartooth RC&D shall be permitted to retain originals, including reproducible originals, of drawings and specifications for information, reference and use in connection with Beartooth RC&D endeavors.

ARTICLE 6: WARRANTY:

The Beartooth RC&D warrants that all services performed herein shall be performed using that degree of skill and care ordinarily exercised in and consistent with generally accepted practices for the nature of the services and shall conform to all requirements of this Memorandum of Understanding.

ARTICLE 7: SAFETY:

The Beartooth RC&D agrees to fully comply with the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, all regulations issued there under and all state laws and regulations enacted and adopted pursuant thereto. The Beartooth RC&D shall take all necessary precautions in performing the services hereunder to prevent injury to persons or damage to property.

ARTICLE 8: CONFIDENTIALITY AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:

The Beartooth RC&D agrees to hold in strict confidence any proprietary or other data, findings, results, or recommendations deemed to be confidential by the Entity and obtained or developed by the Beartooth RC&D in connection with the work under this memorandum of understanding. The Beartooth RC&D warrants and agrees they do not and will not have any conflicts of interest regarding the performance of services hereunder.

ARTICLE 9: APPLICABLE LAW:

This Memorandum of Understanding shall be governed in all respects by the laws of the State of Montana. No changes, amendments or modifications of any of the terms and conditions hereof shall be valid unless agreed to in writing. Venue of any proceeding arising hereunder shall be the Twenty-second Judicial District.

ARTICLE 10: COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS:

The Beartooth RC&D shall in performing the services contemplated by this Memorandum of Understanding, faithfully observe and comply with all federal, state, and local laws, ordinances and regulations, applicable to the services to be rendered under this Memorandum of Understanding.

ARTICLE 11: CHANGES:

The parties, by mutual agreement, may, at any time during the term of this Memorandum of Understanding and without invalidating the Memorandum of Understanding, make changes within the general scope of the Memorandum of Understanding. The Beartooth RC&D to perform such changed services. The Entity's priority list for project work within their county can be changed at any time. In such case, the District will be informed of this change at the Entity's earliest convenience.

ARTICLE 12: TERMINATION:

This Memorandum of Understanding may be terminated in whole or in part, in writing, by either party in the event of substantial failure by the other party to fulfill its obligations under this Memorandum of Understanding through no fault of the terminating party, provided that no termination may be effected unless the other party is given: (1) not less than ten (10) days written notice (delivered by certified mail, return receipt requested) of intent to terminate, and (2) an opportunity for consultation with the terminating party prior to termination.

Upon such termination the Entity shall pay the Beartooth RC&D amounts due and unpaid for services rendered as of the effective date of termination, and the Beartooth RC&D shall provide to the Entity all materials, surveys, reports, data, and other information performed or prepared as of such date.

ARTICLE 13: INDEMNIFICATION:

The Beartooth RC&D agrees to and does hereby indemnify and save the Entity, its officers, officials and employees, harmless against and from:

1. Any and all claims and liabilities, including but not limited to costs, expenses, and attorney fees arising from injury to, or death of, persons (including claims and liabilities for care or loss of services in connection with any bodily injury or death) and including injuries, sickness, disease, or death to Beartooth RC&D employees occasioned by a negligent act, omission, or failure of the Beartooth RC&D;
2. Any and all claims and liabilities, including costs and expenses, for loss or destruction of or damage to any property belonging to the Beartooth RC&D or the Entity caused by a negligent act, omission, or failure of the Beartooth RC&D and;
3. Any fines, penalties, or other amounts assessed against the Entity by reason of the Beartooth RC&D failure to comply with all health, safety, and environmental laws and regulations applicable to the services; resulting directly or indirectly from, or occurring in the course of the Beartooth RC&D performance of the services. However, this indemnity shall not extend to claims

and liabilities for (i) injury or death to persons or (ii) loss of or damage to property to the extent that these claims and liabilities result directly from the Entity's negligence or willful misconduct.

ARTICLE 14: INSURANCE:

The Beartooth RC&D shall maintain and demonstrate the following types of insurance:

1. The Beartooth RC&D agrees that its employees and particularly the employees designated to work on this memorandum of understanding are covered by applicable Worker's Compensation provisions. The Beartooth RC&D further agrees that if the Entity should legally incur any costs whatsoever under the Worker's Compensation laws by reason of the Beartooth RC&D employees' injury or death while engaged in the contract work, the Beartooth RC&D will indemnify and hold harmless the Entity for such costs which the Entity may be legally be required to pay to employees of the Beartooth RC&D.

2. Comprehensive general liability insurance for bodily injury, death, or loss of or damage to property of third persons or other liability due to the negligent acts of the Beartooth RC&D in the minimum amounts of \$500,000 per occurrence and \$1,000,000 aggregate for personal injury; and \$500,000 per occurrence/aggregate for property damage. Proof of coverage as required by this section shall be delivered to the Entity within fifteen (15) days of execution of this Agreement.

3. Professional liability errors and omissions insurance in a minimum amount of \$100,000.00.

ARTICLE 15: NONDISCRIMINATION:

The Beartooth RC&D will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment relating to this project on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, political ideas, sex, age, marital status, physical or mental handicap or national origin. All hiring associated with any project shall be on the basis of merit and qualifications related to the requirements of the particular position being filled.

ARITCLE 16: INDEPENDENT CONTRATOR:

The Beartooth RC&D and the Entity agree that the Beartooth RC&D is an independent contractor with respect to the services provided pursuant to this Memorandum of Understanding. Nothing in this Memorandum of Understanding shall be considered to create the relationship of employer and employee between the parties hereto. Neither the Beartooth RC&D nor any employee of the Beartooth RC&D shall be entitled to any benefits accorded Entity's employees by virtue of the services provided under this Memorandum of Understanding. The Entity shall not be responsible for withholding or otherwise deducting federal income tax or social security or for contributing to the state Worker's Compensation program, nor shall the Entity be deemed in any way to assume the duties of an employer with respect to the Beartooth RC&D, or any employee of the Beartooth RC&D.

ARTICLE 17: ASSIGNMENT:

The Beartooth RC&D shall not sublet or assign any of the services covered by this Memorandum of Understanding without the express written consent of the Entity.

ARTICLE 18: NON-WAIVER:

Waiver by the City of any provision of this memorandum of understanding or any time limitation provided for in this memorandum of understanding shall not constitute a waiver of any other provision.

ARTICLE 19: NOTICES:

Any Notice to be served hereunder may be served upon the parties personally or served by certified mail, return receipt. Notice served by mail shall be deemed complete upon deposit of said notice in any United States Post Office, postage prepaid, directed to the party to be served, at the following addresses:

ENTITY: City of Laurel
P.O. Box 10
Laurel, MT 59044

RC&D: Beartooth RC&D
P.O. Box 180
Joliet, MT 59041

ARTICLE 20: INTEGRATED AGREEMENT:

This Memorandum of Understanding together with attachments or addenda represents the entire and integrated Agreement between the Entity and the Beartooth RC&D and supersedes all prior negotiations, representations, or agreements, written or oral. This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended only by written instrument signed by both the Entity and the Beartooth RC&D.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have hereunto set their hands and seals to this Memorandum of Understanding the day and year in this instrument first above written.

CITY OF LAUREL

BEARTOOTH RC&D/EDD

Tom Nelson
Mayor

Ryan VanBallegooyen
Chairman

ATTEST: _____

Date: _____

File Attachments for Item:

12. Resolution No. R20-80: Resolution Of Intent By The City Council To Adopt The 2020 City Of Laurel Growth Policy Creating A Thirty (30) Day Public Comment Period.

RESOLUTION NO. R20-80

**RESOLUTION OF INTENT BY THE CITY COUNCIL TO ADOPT THE 2020
CITY OF LAUREL GROWTH POLICY CREATING A THIRTY (30) DAY
PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD.**

WHEREAS, the City Council tasked the Planning Board with the preparation of an updated Growth Policy for City of Laurel; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Board approved an action plan incorporating public input and an approximate timeline for the adoption of an updated Growth Policy for City of Laurel; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Board conducted a series of public meetings, surveys and outreach to encourage public participation in the preparation of the updated Growth Policy; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Board considered several strategies and policies that could be adopted by the City Council to implement the updated Growth Policy; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Board encouraged both written and verbal testimony on issues and items of concern related to the future growth and development expected to occur during the life of the new Updated Growth Policy; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Growth Policy update addresses all the statutory components of a Growth Policy found in §76-1-601 MCA to the extent acceptable to the City Council; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Board conducted a public hearing on the Growth Policy update on October 21, 2020. Additionally, the Planning Board, by Resolution Number 20-01, currently recommends the adoption of the updated Growth Policy and Implementation Strategy by the City Council; and

WHEREAS, the City of Laurel continues to work cooperatively with Yellowstone County through their Planning Board on planning, subdivision, and land use related issues; and

WHEREAS, the City Council desires to establish and maintain up to date growth management regulations including but not limited to Zoning Regulations, Design and Development Standards, Subdivision, and Floodplain Regulations; and

WHEREAS, the City is statutorily required to examine and update the Growth Policy on a time frame not to exceed five (5) calendar years; and

WHEREAS, the City Council desires to provide persons who may be affected by the adoption of the Growth Policy update ample opportunity for involvement in the adoption process; and

WHEREAS, the City Council conducted a public hearing on November 24, 2020, regarding the Growth Policy update; and

WHEREAS, §76-1-604 of the Montana Code Annotated provides the process for the adoption, revision, or rejection of a growth policy by the City Council.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the City Council hereby adopts this Resolution of Intent and formally opens a public comment period for thirty (30) calendar days during which persons may comment upon the Growth Policy update. The comment period will expire upon December 24, 2020. Further, notice of the passage of this Resolution of Intent shall be published in a newspaper of record not less than twice during the comment period.

Persons who desire to comment on the Growth Policy update shall submit comments in written form to:

City of Laurel
GROWTH POLICY UPDATE COMMENTS
115 West 1st Street
P.O. Box 10
Laurel MT 59044

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that following the closure of the comment period the City Council will consider adopting with revisions, or rejecting the Updated Growth Policy prepared by the Planning Board at a subsequent council meeting.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the City Council on November 24, 2020, by Council Member _____.

PASSED and APPROVED by the City Council of the City of Laurel this 24th day of November 2020.

APPROVED by the Mayor this 24th day of November 2020.

CITY OF LAUREL

Thomas C. Nelson, Mayor

ATTEST:

Bethany Langve, Clerk-Treasurer

Approved as to form:

Sam S. Painter, Civil City Attorney

RESOLUTION NO. 20-01
LAUREL CITY-COUNTY PLANNING BOARD PLANNING BOARD

**A RESOLUTION OF THE LAUREL CITY-COUNTY PLANNING BOARD TO RECOMMEND THE
ADOPTION OF THE 2020 UPDATE TO THE 2014 LAUREL CITY-COUNTY GROWTH POLICY BY
THE LAUREL CITY COUNCIL**

WHEREAS, the Laurel City Council tasked the Planning Board with the preparation of updates to the 2014 Growth Policy for the City and the Planning Jurisdiction around the City of Laurel, AND;

WHEREAS, the Laurel City County Planning Board approved an action plan incorporating public input and an approximate timeline for the adoption of a new Growth Policy for the Laurel City County Planning Board, AND;

WHEREAS, the Laurel City County Planning Board created several sections in the work plan to encourage specific discussion on issues known to be controversial to aid in the research and support the findings and recommendations for the updates to the Growth Policy, AND;

WHEREAS, the Laurel City County Planning Board encouraged both written and verbal testimony on issues and items of concern related to the future growth and development expected to occur during the life of the Growth Policy. AND;

WHEREAS, the Laurel City County Planning Board conducted monthly work sessions on individual chapters of the draft Growth Policy starting in December 2019 and finishing in August 2020, AND;

WHEREAS, the proposed Growth Policy addresses all the statutory components of a Growth Policy to the extent acceptable to the Planning Board, AND;

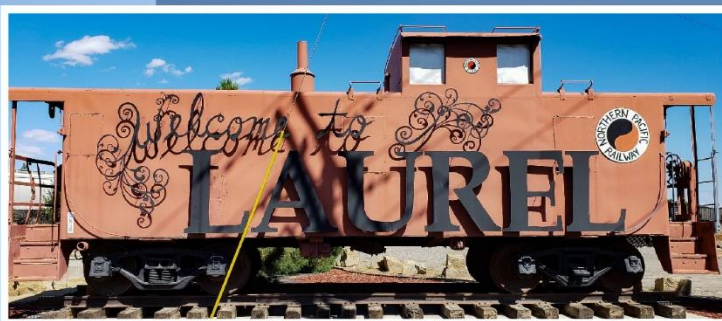
WHEREAS, the Laurel City County Planning Board did conduct a public hearing on the Growth Policy on October 21st, 2020.

NOW, THEREFOR,E BE IT RESOLVED by the Laurel City County Planning Board to recommend that the Laurel City Council Adopt the 2020 Laurel City County Growth Policy in accordance with the requirements of the Montana Code Annotated.

Dated this 4th day of Nov. 2020.



Laurel City-County Planning Board
Judy Goldsby, Chair



November 2020

GROWTH MANAGEMENT POLICY

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Introduction

The Growth Management Policy is a guide for the development of the City of Laurel over the next five years. The purpose of this plan is to provide general guidelines to develop and maintain Laurel as a safe, livable, and economically viable community that residents, institutions, and businesses are proud to call home. This document presents information about the City, its residents, and the goals and objectives the City will work towards in the long term.

This document is focused on the City of Laurel and its surrounding zoning and planning jurisdictions. Laurel is at a crossroads both in place and time. It is located at a vital junction for agriculture, transportation, and industry that helped develop the area over the past 130 years. The timing of this policy update is also essential given a growing population, changing demographics, a fast-growing municipality nearby (Billings), and the need for updated regulations and policies to face 21st century technological, economic, and land-use challenges.



Historical Context

The Crow was the principle Tribe in the Yellowstone Basin when European explorers first arrived. In July of 1806, Captain William Clark and his expedition floated down the Yellowstone River from current-day Livingston in crude canoes on their return journey. Clark and his expedition camped at the mouth of the Clark's Fork of the Yellowstone River near Laurel's present site and noted it as a possible location for a trading post. Chief Joseph later led the Nez Perce over the Yellowstone River near Laurel during their retreat to Canada in 1877. Colonel Sam Sturgis and his cavalry caught up and battled the Tribe at Canyon Creek approximately six miles north of present-day Laurel. The Nez Perce escaped the cavalry and continued their flight to Canada after the battle. Laurel is located on both the Lewis & Clark and Nez Perce National Historic Trails that commemorate these events.

European settlement of the area began in 1879. The railroad reached Billings by 1882 and reached current-day Laurel by that fall. The City of Laurel, initially called Carlton, was established in 1882 along the newly laid railroad tracks. The western legend of "Calamity Jane" Canary was associated with Laurel in its early years after she came to Laurel in 1882 and had her dugout near the Canyon Creek Battleground.

Laurel's population and its economy boomed during the early years. By 1920, the population had reached 2,338 residents. The rail yards were a permanent fixture of the local economy and became a dependable employer due to the consistent demand for agricultural products nationwide. The three major industries which have played a significant role in the growth of the City have been agriculture, the railroad, and oil. Local farms near current-day Laurel were settled before any official town being established. Popular crops for area farmers and ranchers included alfalfa, grains, and sugar beets.

This agricultural production was a significant draw for the region outside of the rail yard's ability to ship goods. These farms were an essential driver of the local economy despite the railyard's outsized role as a shipping center.

The Northern Pacific, Great Northern, and Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroads all made their junction in Laurel by 1906. The Northern Pacific was building terminal yards in 1907, which would eventually lead to Laurel being the largest terminal and classification station between St. Paul, Minnesota, Seattle, and Washington. The yards would eventually have a fifty-five-stall roundhouse, machine shop, ice-making plant, loading docks, water tank, and disinfecting plant. The yard is currently operated by Montana Rail Link, which is leased from the Burling Northern/Santa Fe Railroad. Laurel remains the largest rail yard between Minneapolis and Seattle.

The area was repeatedly drilled for oil exploration in the early 1920s. The Northwest Refining Company bought a site for a proposed 2,000-barrel refinery in 1922. In 1927, productive oil fields were discovered in the nearby Oregon Basin of Wyoming. The existing regional rail infrastructure made Laurel an ideal location for the refining and exporting of crude oil from Wyoming and other regions. The refinery in Laurel has been operated by many companies, including the Independent Refining Company, Farmers Union Central Exchange, and now CHS Inc.

Purpose

The Growth Management Policy is a statement of the community goals and objectives that will guide the City's development. The policy is a comprehensive document covering many different study areas, including demographics, land use, infrastructure, public services, transportation, and housing. The purpose of this Growth Management Policy is to:

- ❖ Establish Community Goals and Objectives
- ❖ Present an updated profile of the community
- ❖ Provide projections for housing, natural resources, population, land use, and other subjects
- ❖ Ensure an orderly set of policy priorities for the expansion of the City
- ❖ Put forward an implementation guide for the established Goals and Objectives
- ❖ Act as a guide and resource for city staff and other local stakeholders

Community Vision

The Growth Management Policy allows local stakeholders to create a future vision for the Laurel community. A well-thought-out vision is important because it informs the structure and form of the document and influences the City's work long after it is published. This vision can involve where the City wants to grow, what types of business residents would like to see, priorities for project funding, and the quality of life residents would like to have. The Growth Management Policy's goals, objectives, and recommendations for implementation are developed from this community vision. City staff worked with Planning Board members to develop a community vision for Laurel.



In the future, Laurel will have:

- ❖ A diverse array of residents, businesses, and institutions,
- ❖ Greater employment opportunities,
- ❖ Connected and accessible neighborhoods,
- ❖ A variety of housing options and levels of affordability,
- ❖ A thriving downtown and commercial district,
- ❖ Well-functioning public services and amenities,
- ❖ Clear and consistent regulations for development, and
- ❖ An engaged community.

Regulatory Requirements

The Growth Management Policy is a statutory necessity for local governments. Montana Code Annotated Title 76, Chapter 1, Part 6 provides the foundation for establishing a municipal growth policy. These statutes require certain general items to be included, but the direction, focus, and contents of the policy are the local governing body's responsibility. These statutes were established to enable local governments to proactively envision their future and implement change in a coordinated way.

CHAPTER 2: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Overview

The update process for the 2020 Growth Management Policy began in November 2019 and continued through October of 2020. Much of the plan was developed in the spring and early summer of 2020. The Planning Department convened multiple meetings of the Planning Board to discuss and review draft chapters and information and reached out to local, county, and state officials for input.

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent shelter-in-place directives disrupted the Laurel City-County Planning Board's in-person meetings. The Planning Department continued to draft sections of the plan, met with stakeholders virtually, and compiled chapters despite this disruption.

Prior Efforts

Before this update, the most recently approved Growth Management Policy was completed and approved by Laurel City Council in December of 2013. Before adopting the 2013 Growth Management Policy, The City of Laurel had prepared and adopted a Growth Management Policy in 2004.

Outreach

Outreach efforts were made during the late winter and early spring of 2020. The City reached out to many local, regional, and state groups. These groups and organizations were identified as essential stakeholders in the development of the plan. Many groups were unable to comment due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which caused significant scheduling and contact issues. The chart below shows the groups that the City met with and those contacted but who did not follow-up or could not provide direct information due to the pandemic.

Laurel Growth Management Policy Update Outreach	
Groups with which Meetings were held	Groups Contacted
Laurel Urban Renewal Agency	Laurel Chamber of Commerce
Laurel School District	Big Sky Economic Development Authority
City of Laurel Public Works	Montana Department of Commerce
City of Laurel Fire Department	Yellowstone County Disaster & Emergency Services
City of Laurel Police Department	Yellowstone County GIS
Laurel Rotary Club	Montana Department of Justice
Yellowstone County Board of County Commissioners	
Yellowstone County Sheriff's Department	
Department of Natural Resources and Conservation	
Montana Department of Transportation (Billings District)	
Beartooth Resource Conservation & Development	
Montana Department of Environmental Quality	

Timeline of Meetings for the Growth Management Policy Update

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic curtailed meetings of the Planning Board between March and June of 2020. Compiling the policy components and preparation of narrative portions continued during this time under the previously established schedule. The chart below shows the Planning Board and City Council meetings in which the Growth Management Policy Update was presented.

Laurel Growth Management Policy Update 2020 - Meeting Schedule			
Date	Purpose	Task	Outcome
December 11, 2019	Approve Schedule and Contacts	Initial Visioning Discussion	Invites to Agencies
January 8, 2020	Disc: Chapters 1&3	Introduction, Purpose and Common Goals	Work Session
February 12, 2020	Disc: Chapters 4&5	Community Profile, Employment Forecast	Work Session
February 26, 2020	Disc: Chapter 6	Land Use	Work Session
March 11, 2020	Disc: Chapter 7	Future Land use	Work Session
March 25, 2020	Disc: Chapter 8	Housing	Work Session
April 8, 2020	Disc: Chapter 9	Infrastructure	Work Session
April 22, 2020	Disc: Chapter 10	Transportation	Work Session
May 13, 2020	Disc: Chapter 11	Economic Development	Work Session
May 27, 2020	Disc: Chapters 12&13	Public Services, Facilities & Recreation Plan	Work Session
June 10, 2020	Disc: Chapters 3, 14, 15	Community Goals, Natl Resources & Implementation	Work Session
June 24, 2020	Review Document	Review Completed Chapters	Work Session
July 22, 2020	Planning Board Review	Chapters 3, 7, 7.5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13	Work Session
August 19, 2020	Planning Board Review	Review Draft Document	Schedule Public Hearing
October 21, 2020	Planning Board Public Hearing	Full Document Review and Approval	Resolution of Adoption
November 3, 2020	City Council Discussion Session	Full Document (PB Approved)	Preliminary Presentation
November 17, 2020	City Council Workshop	Full Document (PB Approved)	City Council Review and Comments
November 24, 2020	City Council Public Hearing	Receive Public Comment, Approve Resolution of Adoption	Resolution of Adoption
December 24, 2020	Final Adoption	30 Day Comment Period	Adoption of Growth Management Policy

CHAPTER 3: GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES

Overview

The community goals and objectives presented in this chapter were established to transform the community vision into a concrete reality. These goals, objectives, and strategies were developed through research, data collection, interviews, and public meetings that the City and the planning board conducted throughout the planning process.

These goals cover a wide range of topics, including Land Use, Transportation, Housing, Economic Development, Infrastructure, and more. This collection of community goals and objectives is meant to be exhaustive to provide the City, developers, residents, and business owners with comprehensive guidance to inform local efforts across different sectors, topics, and areas of influence.

Land Use Goals and Objectives

Land use policy is one of the most potent tools a city has. Zoning and subdivision codes influence growth patterns, infrastructure placement, road connectivity, and much more. The City of Laurel is focused on the effective use of land in and around the City. The City also plans to conserve open space and traditional land uses by focusing on smarter, denser development clustered along significant routes and commercial areas.

This plan's overall goals are to conserve open space while maximizing the areas currently in and directly adjacent to the City. Laurel's downtown and Southeast 4th Street rehabilitation are possible through a mix of infill development, mixed-use buildings, improved infrastructure, and updated façade and signage standards.

Goal 1: Conserve open space and traditional land uses

- ❖ Encourage cluster developments to incorporate open space into new developments
- ❖ Provide options for landowners for conserving portions of their land
- ❖ Study and Implement strategies to create an interconnected system of parks and greenways and open space that are accessible to area residents

Goal 2: Develop downtown Laurel into a vibrant place to live, work, and play

- ❖ Encourage mixed uses for living, working, and shopping local
- ❖ Identify priority parcels for infill development
- ❖ Implement Placemaking projects to create a more livable and enjoyable downtown
- ❖ Partner with local groups to support community businesses, events, and gatherings
- ❖ Connect with regional agencies to access project funding, receive technical support, and boost the visibility of Laurel development opportunities

Goal 3: Update Subdivision Code to meet the needs of Laurel and the surrounding area

- ❖ Provide clear and consistent standards
- ❖ Ensure the proper scale and scope of regulations
- ❖ Include trails, open space, and greenway considerations in parkland subdivision review
- ❖ Regularly review and update the Subdivision Code as needed to remain current

Goal 4: Update the Zoning Code to provide for greater flexibility of allowable uses, clearer requirements, and more efficient land use

- ❖ Study the inclusion of different types of housing within residential districts
- ❖ Update Overlay Districts, Parking Requirements, and the Sign Code to better fit the City's needs and character
- ❖ Allow mixed-use live/work opportunities in commercial areas
- ❖ Enable property owners to use their land more effectively and efficiently

Goal 5: Use long term planning documents to identify funding and address priority needs for infrastructure and development

- ❖ Establish an Annexation Plan to develop priority growth areas and strategies
- ❖ Develop a Capital Improvement Plan for vital infrastructure to support the City as it grows
- ❖ Prepare a Commercial and Industrial Development Study for land adjacent to major transportation routes in the Laurel area

Annexation Goals and Objectives

Municipalities need to seize growth opportunities. Having strategies to address challenges for developing a community and preparing priorities for expansion are vital activities. Two overarching goals have been designated to help the City of Laurel grow through annexation.

Goal 1: Adopt a long-range view for the growth of the City

- ❖ Establish a growth-conscious set of policies to expand the City and its services
- ❖ Create priority growth areas for extension of services
- ❖ Develop and approve an Annexation Plan for the Laurel Planning Jurisdiction
- ❖ Support the creation of a long-term Capital Improvement Plan for the extension of essential infrastructure

Goal 2: Manage fiscal responsibility with established and proposed annexation standards

- ❖ Ensure that the established standards are right and proper for the City of Laurel
- ❖ Ease the burden for developers to annex into the City while meeting established standards
- ❖ Allow greater flexibility in development patterns
- ❖ Determine the cost and benefits of annexation

Housing Goals and Objectives

Housing is a necessity in any community. The goals presented below are a means to ensure that people can find affordable, accessible, comfortable, and attractive housing in the community. To date, Laurel has not struggled with significant housing affordability issues. One housing trend that Laurel might consider is the growing demand for closer-knit, denser, and connected neighborhoods near commercial areas. Many younger Americans have abandoned the traditional single-family home for other housing, including rowhouses, tiny homes, condominiums, and apartments. Many older Americans are also focusing on downsizing to housing that is more accessible to local services, including restaurants, medical services, and grocery stores.

Housing is closely connected with transportation and economic development. Updating the zoning code to allow a more comprehensive array of housing options such as tiny homes, accessory dwelling units, and multi-family housing is an important goal. This update will ensure that currently developed parcels and vacant parcels within the City can be developed with more options for prospective buyers or renters. It is also crucial for Laurel to have standards and code that allow for the efficient use of space already within the City while enabling the effective use of land in the surrounding area.

Goal 1: Encourage a mixture of housing types to meet the demand of all market sectors

- ❖ Maintain a diverse array of housing and affordability levels
- ❖ Promote higher density housing types in the downtown area and adjacent to major transportation corridors
- ❖ Study mixed-use housing and other alternative housing types and styles
- ❖ Provide options for a full spectrum of housing from rentals to retirement housing

Goal 2: Provide information on housing-related grants, loans, and ownership programs

- ❖ Develop a list of resources for renters and homeowners
- ❖ Collect information on federal, state, local, and philanthropic rental and homeownership programs
- ❖ Advise Laurel area residents as to available support for housing, rent, and homeownership

Infrastructure Goals and Objectives

Infrastructure is the foundation of the community. It will be vital for the City to utilize long-range planning to establish infrastructure standards, map current infrastructure facilities, and identify infrastructure development costs for necessary and prospective projects.

The drafting of planning documents, including master plans and preliminary engineering reports (PERs) relating to the Laurel water system, wastewater system, and stormwater system, is critical to ensure orderly and effective growth of the City. A Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is another vital infrastructure planning document that should be completed. Plans and engineering reports should provide useable data, allow for inclusion in grant applications, and present direct insight into necessary current and future projects.

Goal 1: Maintain an Effective and Efficient Public Infrastructure System that Adequately Serves the Needs of the City

- ❖ Develop a data-driven infrastructure maintenance schedule
- ❖ Determine any existing gaps in services and other infrastructure deficiencies within the City
- ❖ Adopt up-to-date infrastructure standards that are appropriate for the needs of the City
- ❖ Study using public spaces within floodplains, watercourses, and wetlands to be used as passive recreation areas such as parks and greenways
- ❖ Study the feasibility of recycling programs and other means to reduce solid waste
- ❖ Incorporate stormwater system planning into roadway and other infrastructure planning processes

Goal 2: Establish the Long-Term Capital and Infrastructure Needs for the City

- ❖ Develop a Capital Improvement Plan for the improvement and expansion of infrastructure
- ❖ Prepare a Water System Master Plan
- ❖ Create a Wastewater System Master Plan
- ❖ Complete a Stormwater Management Plan
- ❖ Ensure infrastructure planning documents are routinely updated.
- ❖ Confirm that the established infrastructure priorities are adequate

Goal 3: Seek out Possible Funding Sources for the Expansion and Improvement of Infrastructure and Essential Community Services

- ❖ Study the physical and financial needs for the extension of infrastructure to priority growth areas.
- ❖ Collaborate with Montana agencies on major projects and studies
- ❖ Explore federal, state, and philanthropic infrastructure grant opportunities
- ❖ Determine positive impacts from the expansion and improvement of infrastructure
- ❖ Apply for funding opportunities that are appropriate for city priorities and projects and assist in keeping user fees reasonable

Transportation Goals and Objectives

The transportation network brings people together. This network is a patchwork of streets, roads, sidewalks, bike paths, trails, and rail. It is crucial to couple transportation development with land use. To this end, a goal is the development of a more multi-modal approach to streets and pathways.

Implementing bicycle and pedestrian improvements such as bike lanes, greenways, improved signage, and sidewalk improvements is critical. Furthermore, traffic and speed data should be studied on significant routes to determine street safety and determine possible resolutions to improve motorized and non-motorized traveler safety. Laurel seeks to make neighborhoods and commercial areas more accessible and connected by improving pedestrian facilities, including sidewalks, accessible curb cuts, signage, and road markings. Establishing a road network master plan is also vital to create a concrete plan for street expansion and continuity to support orderly and consistent growth patterns.

These transportation goals are a way to increase the quality of life, connect people to their community, increase safety, and plan for current trends and future growth. There are three overarching transportation goals, including objectives and strategies.

Goal 1: Preserve, Maintain, and Improve the Existing Transportation System

- ❖ Update the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)
- ❖ Establish a systematic approach for the maintenance and repair of the road network.
- ❖ Develop a Capital Improvement Plan to identify and prioritize significant transportation projects
- ❖ Establish a Road Network Master Plan to ensure street continuity, traffic flow, and neighborhood connectivity,
- ❖ Promote fiscal responsibility and high return on investment
- ❖ Coordinate roadway improvement projects to coincide with underground infrastructure improvements

Goal 2: Improve the Mobility, Safety, and Accessibility for all users and modes of travel

- ❖ Implement bicycle and pedestrian improvements and traffic calming measures to transform the downtown area into a pedestrian-friendly place
- ❖ Create a looping bicycle/pedestrian trail and street system that connects different areas of Laurel
- ❖ Adopt pedestrian and multi-modal friendly transportation standards and safety measures
- ❖ Explore options to improve and expand the Laurel Transit program and strategies to create other multi-modal transportation connections.
- ❖ Partner with local, regional, and statewide groups to further integrate Laurel into the more comprehensive passenger transportation network

Goal 3: Connect Transportation Decisions with Land-Use Decisions

- ❖ Integrate land-use planning and transportation planning to manage better and develop the transportation network.
- ❖ Utilize transportation projects to encourage intensive development patterns along significant routes and existing areas of the City.
- ❖ Adopt and implement consistent system policies and maintenance standards
- ❖ Ensure the development of a sustainable transportation system that minimizes environmental impacts

Economic Development Goals and Objectives

The Laurel economy has changed dramatically in the past few decades. The emergence of online retail has shifted the focus away from traditional brick and mortar downtowns businesses to easy to use and seemingly more convenient online or delivery options. Recently, small towns and cities across the country are finding that thoughtful economic development and land use planning can rehabilitate their downtowns and neighborhoods to reverse some of the losses related to the emergence of online retail.

The City has established focus areas for economic development. These areas include Laurel's traditional downtown core, the Southeast 4th St. Commercial district, the 1st Avenue Corridor, and Old Route 10 running west from the City. This chapter's primary focus is to establish a smarter, more sustainable development that adds character and connectivity to commercial areas. Commercial areas of Laurel should be attractive places to visit. Placemaking and beautification projects are useful to encourage residents and visitors to explore different areas of the City. Increasing walkability and mixed-use development can also create better housing and commercial opportunities.

The goals presented below are an effort to increase the attractiveness, usefulness, and quality of the community's commercial and economic sectors. The expansion brings new opportunities, and the area near the West Laurel Interchange has significant growth potential. This area could become a central area for the Laurel community's growth and development through the effective use of placemaking strategies, smart growth concepts, and cohesive zoning and development standards. Four main goals with related objectives have been established related to Economic Development as follows:

Goal 1: Develop downtown Laurel as a destination to live, work, and play

- ❖ Institute placemaking projects to further enhance district character
- ❖ Increase live-work opportunities for current and future residents and businesses
- ❖ Apply TIF funding to beautification, blight removal, and public improvement projects
- ❖ Identify and find solutions for unused or underused parcels as candidates for development

Goal 2: Create a resilient local economy

- ❖ Strengthen core businesses and industries through communication and connections with technical support
- ❖ Ensure that local economic activities are inclusive and accessible to all stakeholders
- ❖ Implement policies that create stable and sustainable economic growth
- ❖ Work to highlight the shared benefits of working together as a community with local businesses stakeholders, and developers
- ❖ Provide an economic ecosystem that allows for a wide array of businesses, industries, and developments to thrive
- ❖ Study and implement policies to enhance local business demand and alternative strategies for value creation for the community

Goal 3: Collaborate with area organizations to support economic growth and local employment and training opportunities

- ❖ Communicate with local groups to determine any needs and assistance
- ❖ Create partnerships with local and regional groups to fill local service gaps and create needed programming
- ❖ Take part in events and workshops to support local business initiatives and activities
- ❖ Establish common ground with local and regional groups to provide resources and assistance
- ❖ Connect residents and businesses with like-minded economic, financial, and entrepreneurship resources and opportunities

Goal 4: Study options for new commercial and industrial properties in anticipated high-growth areas

- ❖ Create a Corridor Master Plan for growth in and around the intersection with Old Route 10 and the West Laurel Interchange
- ❖ Study options and determine priorities for the possible establishment of Tax Increment Financing Districts (TIFs) and Targeted Economic Development Districts (TEDDs)
- ❖ Review and pursue opportunities for clustered commercial or industrial parks
- ❖ Develop funding strategies to provide services for priority growth areas.

Public Facilities and Services Objectives, Policies and Strategies

Effective and efficient public services are a significant draw for prospective residents, developers, and businesses. Above all, public facilities and services must be accessible, useful, and dependable for everyone residing, working, and visiting the City. Laurel should identify current gaps and determine the projected needs of public facilities as the City grows. It is crucial to work with public stakeholders and departments to include the whole population. Providing consistent and stable service delivery is essential.

Goal 1: Provide consistent and high-quality public services to the community

- ❖ Develop standard operating procedures to ensure consistency for city departments
- ❖ Develop maintenance procedures for parks, facilities, and public areas.
- ❖ Study current facilities and services to identify gaps and determine projected needs in services

Goal 2: Respond to the changing nature of the community

- ❖ Plan for the expansion of public facilities in priority growth areas
- ❖ Invest in public facilities that are accessible to everyone in the community
- ❖ Study how to improve city services to boost the quality of life for residents, businesses, and institutions

Goal 3: Work with city departments and local stakeholders to determine the priority expansion of public facilities and services

- ❖ Open lines of communication between city departments and local stakeholders to gather input on major projects
- ❖ Consider the public service requirements of large-scale projects before their approval and implementation
- ❖ Develop plans for the expansion of Fire, Police, and EMS facilities

Recreation Goals and Objectives

The wide array of Laurel city parks is a great asset to residents. It is the goal to ensure that current and future city parkland is an essential amenity. Parks should be developed and improved to act as neighborhood focal points. Many of Laurel's parks are very small, with some located in less than optimal locations. It is a goal to ensure that parkland is a useable and enjoyable amenity for residents. The City should study underutilized or burdensome parkland parcels and consider re-use scenarios.

Historical Riverside Park has been a staple of the community for almost one hundred years. The Riverside Park Master Plan was developed in 2018 to provide a blueprint for improvements and the park's use. It will be essential to continue the ongoing improvement efforts and develop policies to attract visitors. Riverside Park should be maintained as a historical, recreational, and economic asset in the future.

Goal 1: Develop parkland as an essential and enjoyable amenity for residents

- ❖ Ensure new developments have appropriate park space for recreation and general use
- ❖ Study how existing parks can be improved through new facilities, changed layouts, or additions
- ❖ Review current park infrastructure and determine if improvements are necessary to serve the needs of the surrounding area better

Goal 2: Promote Riverside Park as a vital historic, civic, and recreation resource for residents and visitors

- ❖ Adhere to the projects and strategies presented in the 2018 Riverside Park Master Plan
- ❖ Seek grant funding for structural and site improvements
- ❖ Develop historic markers for Riverside Park and its historic structures
- ❖ Study options for connecting Riverside Park to the city proper through infrastructure improvements, civic engagement, or other means
- ❖ Establish signage and marketing for the assets and resources of Riverside Park to area residents and visitors

Goal 3: Create an interconnected system of parks, greenspace, and trails that are accessible to all

- ❖ Create a city-wide Park System Master Plan to develop project priorities
- ❖ Consider the creation of a City Parks Department to oversee park operations and maintenance
- ❖ Identify unused land that can be transformed into green space or trails for use by the public
- ❖ Update the zoning and development codes to encourage the creation of bicycle and pedestrian trail corridors

Natural Resource Goals and Objectives

The Laurel planning jurisdiction contains a variety of terrain types and environments. The natural environment should be preserved and enhanced to balance environmental sustainability with economic growth, recreational opportunities, and development. Natural resources and the natural environment can be managed with growth activities to provide social, economic, and community benefits to people over time while continuing their natural functions. The natural resource goals and objectives have been developed with this balance of activities in mind.

Goal 1: Protect Laurel's natural resources and traditional environment

- ❖ Provide options for landowners for conserving portions of their land while developing others
- ❖ Achieve a balanced pattern of growth to ensure environmental concerns are considered during the development
- ❖ Manage the local water resources as a healthy, integrated system that provides long-term benefits from enhanced environmental quality

Goal 2: Incorporate sustainable development patterns in the Laurel subdivision and land use codes

- ❖ Review and update existing zoning and subdivision regulations to ensure environmental preservation and conservation are addressed
- ❖ Review and update landscaping ordinances as needed to best suit Laurel's natural environment
- ❖ Manage rivers, floodplains, wetlands, and other water resources for multiple uses, including flood and erosion protection, wildlife habitat, recreational use, open space, and water supply

Goal 3: Connect with local, regional, and state agencies and stakeholders to improve the natural environment in and around Laurel

- ❖ Sponsor environmental cleanup and rehabilitation programs that include the City, school district, community organizations, and residents
- ❖ Participate in regional watershed studies to achieve adequate long-term flood protection
- ❖ Explore the possibility of creating a conservation corridor along the Yellowstone River

Intergovernmental Coordination Goals and Objectives

Intergovernmental coordination and collaboration are essential to ensure that the City of Laurel can sustainably develop, seize growth opportunities, and improve residents, visitors, and businesses' quality of life. Consistent intergovernmental coordination will allow Laurel to be a partner and participant rather than a bystander in regional growth.

It will be necessary for the City to regularly communicate with local, county, and state partners to seize grant and development opportunities, provide the Laurel perspective, and connect local groups to those in the broader region. It is envisioned that the City will help direct residents, businesses, developers, and groups to helpful county, state, federal and institutional resources and supports.

Goal 1: Establish lines of communication with local, county, and state partners

- ❖ Create an accurate directory of government representatives and staff
- ❖ Update governmental stakeholders regarding ongoing projects and work in the Laurel area
- ❖ Develop working relationships with legislators, staff, and stakeholders at different levels of government

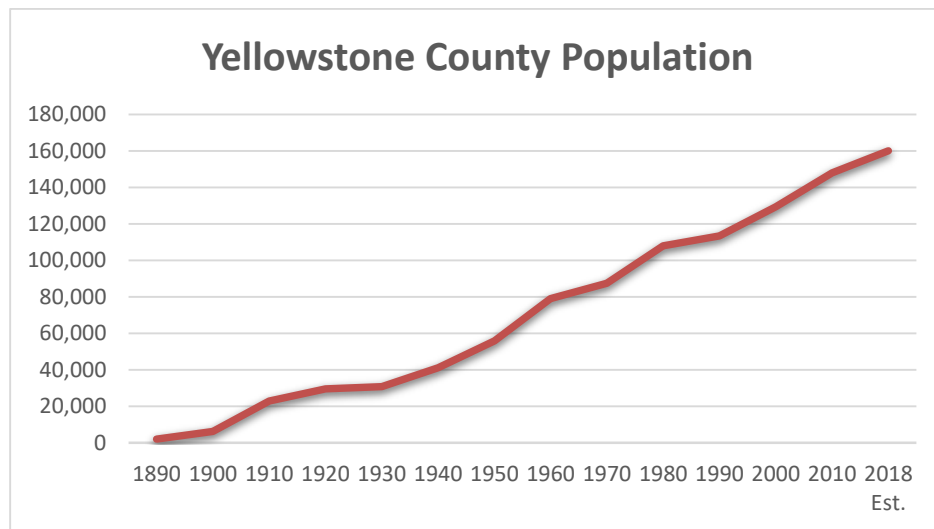
Goal 2: Coordinate with local and regional institutions to support and grow the Laurel community

- ❖ Work with economic development groups to seize opportunities for business growth
- ❖ Connect area businesses with institutions and governmental groups that can support their mission
- ❖ Communicate with area legislators to provide information on growth patterns and development in the Laurel area.
- ❖ Maintain open communications with state agencies and the Board of County Commissioners to confirm compliance with statewide codes and operational needs.

CHAPTER 4: COMMUNITY PROFILE

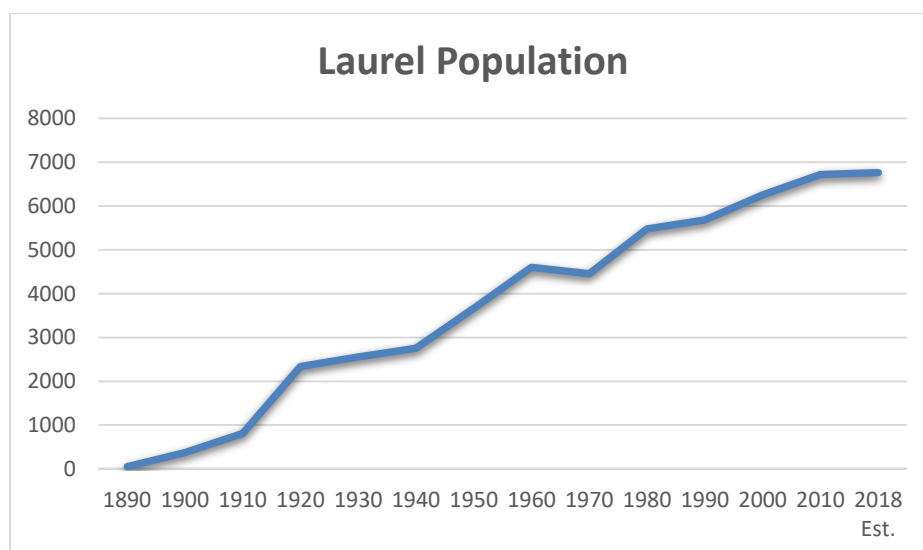
Population Trends

The City of Laurel was incorporated in 1908. The population of Laurel grew steadily after the early boom years of railroad and oil development. The nearby City of Billings has also contributed to the overall growth and development in Yellowstone County in the past few decades, with Laurel playing a somewhat lesser role. City staff anticipates a continuation of steady growth despite certain developments that may impact this, such as establishing the West Laurel Interchange for interstate I-90.



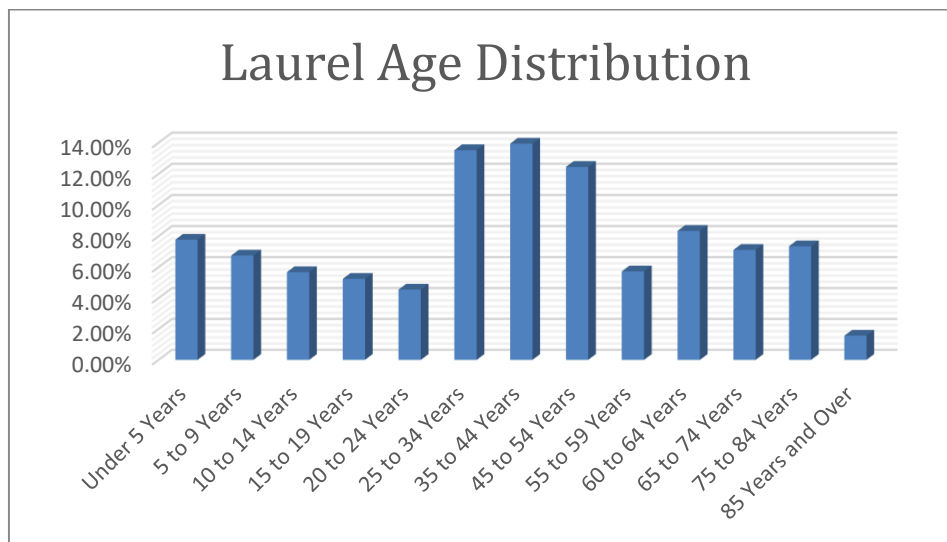
U.S. Decennial Census, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Laurel has grown slowly over the past forty years. It is anticipated that Laurel will reach a population of 7,000 after the 2020 U.S. Census is completed.



U.S. Decennial Census, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Residents of Laurel tend to be older. The chart below shows that most residents are above 25, with almost 40 percent of the population between the ages of twenty-five and fifty-nine.



2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Ethnic Characteristics

The charts below provide a summary of the ethnic makeup of the City of Laurel. The current Census estimates indicate that Laurel is not a very diverse community. The lowest estimate for white/Caucasian residents is 95.11 percent, which is displayed in the “Hispanic or Latino and Race” Chart below.

Race	Estimate	Percent
Total Population	6,885	100.00%
White	6,775	98.40%
Black or African American	11	0.16%
American Indian and Alaska Naïve	192	2.79%
Asian	0	0.00%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0	0.00%
Some Other Race	16	0.23%
2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates		

Hispanic or Latino and Race	Estimate	Percent
Total Population	6,885	100.00%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	178	2.59%
Mexican	101	1.47%
Other Hispanic or Latino	77	1.12%
Not Hispanic or Latino	6,707	97.41%
2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates		

Households and Families

There are an estimated 2,882 households and 1,907 families in the City of Laurel. Households in Laurel have a median household income of \$50,778, while Laurel families have an estimated median income of \$68,575. An estimated 9 percent of Laurel residents are below the poverty level compared with 5.5 percent of families. It is forecasted that Laurel's overall population will increase by 1.3 percent between 2019 and 2024, with an increase in total households of 1.1 percent and families of 8.6 percent.

Education

Laurel is a well-educated community. 94.07 percent of the population over the age of 25 has attained a high school diploma, with 51.21 percent having at least completed some college or an associate degree program. Laurel spends less per student than the United States average but maintains a more positive student per librarian and student per counselor ratio.

Education	Laurel, MT	United States
Expenditures Per Student	8,629.00	12,383.00
Educational Expenditures Per Student	7,897.00	10,574.00
Instructional Expenditures per Student	5,080.00	6,428.00
Pupil/Student Ratio	15.87*	16.80
Students per Librarian	464.70	538.10
Students per Counselor	348.50	403.20

Education in Laurel, Montana. Bestplaces.net. Accessed 2/3/2020.

*Figure 25: Student to Teacher Ratios (2013), Towncharts.com

Work Commute

Seventy-nine percent of Laurel residents commute to work alone in a car, truck, or van. This percentage is slightly higher than the national average of 76.4 percent. Laurel does have a higher than average carpool rate, with 13.66 percent versus the national average of 9.2 percent, according to the American Community Survey. Laurel residents travel an average of 21.5 minutes to work, which can be partially attributed to the fact that several Laurel residents travel to the nearby city of Billings for employment purposes. (Billings is approximately 17 miles away).

Commuting to Work	Estimate	Percent
Workers 16 Years and Over	3,528	100.00%
Car, Truck, or Van - Drove Alone	2,787	79.00%
Car, Truck, or Van - Carpooled	482	13.66%
Public Transportation (excluding Taxicab)	22	0.62%
Walked	82	2.32%
Other Means	15	0.43%
Worked at home	140	3.97%
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	21.50	
2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates		

CHAPTER 5: EMPLOYMENT AND POPULATION FORECASTS

A diverse mix of businesses helps a city thrive and allows residents to live, work, and play in their communities. A diverse array of businesses also keeps a community more resilient in the case of economic downturns. Laurel has been blessed with two long-term stable employers; the Montana Rail Link railyard and the CHS Refinery. These two institutions are well established and are not anticipated to disappear. The City of Laurel hopes to diversify the local economy further and attract various businesses and related employment. The growth policy focuses on revitalizing Laurel's downtown businesses, assessing how zoning can be updated to meet the needs of businesses and employees better, and connecting Laurel neighborhoods with the existing business communities to help increase traffic to existing establishments.

Employment Forecasts

66.92 percent of the estimated 5,362 residents of Laurel aged 16 years and over are in the labor force. Only 2.69 percent are unemployed, and 30.40 percent are not in the labor force, according to the 2017 U.S. Census estimates. The unemployment rate has remained steady, with the current rate at approximately 2.5 percent. Laurel also has a balanced split of occupations, with no general sector having more than 16 percent of the total labor pool. This type of mix of industries and employment is suitable for a community as it helps to insulate it from major economic shifts.

Industry	Estimate	Percent
Total Civilian Employed Population 16 years and over	3,588	100.00%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, and Mining	153	4.26%
Construction	262	7.30%
Manufacturing	315	8.78%
Wholesale Trade	157	4.38%
Retail Trade	603	16.81%
Transportation and Warehousing, and Utilities	206	5.74%
Information	66	1.84%
Finance and Insurance, and Real estate and rental and leasing	208	5.80%
Professional, Scientific, and Management, and Administrative and waste management services	299	8.33%
Education Services, and Healthcare and Social Assistance	533	14.86%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation, and Accommodation and Food Services	493	13.74%
Other Services, except public administration	233	6.49%
Public Administration	60	1.67%
2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates		

Housing

Housing is a critical asset to a community. Maintaining a mix of affordable housing is essential to attracting a diverse array of people to the community. Housing provides shelter and provides character to a community by way of how it is designed, situated, and utilized. The charts below provide an overview of housing in Laurel. Laurel has a low housing vacancy rate and many owner-occupied units.

Housing Occupancy	Estimate	Percent
Total housing units	2,992	100%
Occupied housing units	2,882	96.30%
Vacant housing units	110	3.70%
2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates		

Sixty-seven percent of all houses in Laurel are owner-occupied. This information means that people have invested their time, money, and effort into the Laurel community because they live here full-time.

Housing Tenure	Estimate	Percent
Occupied Housing Units	2,882	100.00%
Owner-Occupied	1,931	67.00%
Renter-Occupied	951	33.00%
2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates		

Affordable rents enable a wide array of people to live in the community. Seventy percent of renters in Laurel pay 35 percent or less of their income toward their monthly rent. This percentage is positive because it allows more money to be utilized for other consumer purposes, such as restaurants, shopping, and other services.

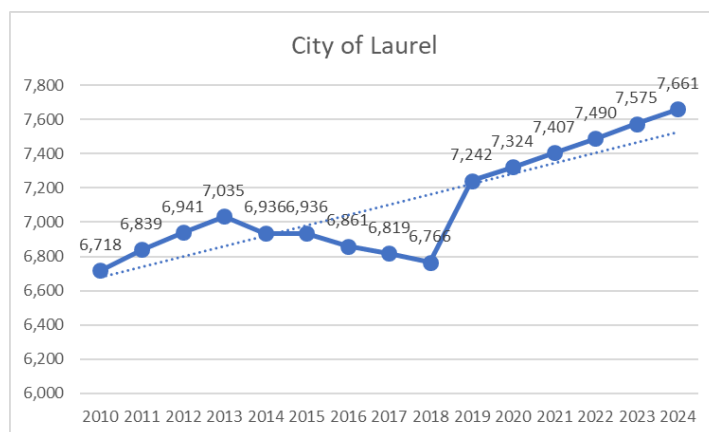
Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income	Estimate	Percent
Occupied units paying rent	898	100.00%
Less than 15.0 percent	115	12.81%
15.0 to 19.9 percent	183	20.38%
20.0 to 24.9 percent	52	5.79%
25.0 to 29.9 percent	161	17.93%
30.0 to 34.9 percent	121	13.47%
35.0 percent or more	266	29.62%
2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates		

Seventy-eight percent of houses in Laurel are worth between \$100,000 and \$300,000. The median household value is \$169,900. This data is very positive as affordable houses and rents allow a more diverse array of people to become homeowners and put long-term roots into the community.

Housing Value	Estimate	Percent
Owner-Occupied Units	1,931	100.00%
Less than \$50,000	203	10.51%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	155	8.03%
\$100,000 to 149,999	377	19.52%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	592	30.66%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	554	28.69%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	50	2.59%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	0	0.00%
\$1,000,000 or More	0	0.00%
Median (In Dollars)	\$ 165,900	
2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates		

Population Forecasts

Laurel saw a dip in population between 2013 and 2018 (from 7,035 to 6,766). This trend was reversed in 2019, with an increase in population to 7,242 residents. It is anticipated that Laurel will grow at a steady rate over at least the next five years. This assumption considers the community's proximity to the City of Billings and the ability to attract businesses, residents, and commuters that support the Billings and Yellowstone County economy.



Growth Rate	2010-2019	2019-2024
Population	0.880%	1.30%
Households	0.840%	1.10%
Families	0.580%	8.60%
Median Household Income	X	1.68%
Per Capita Income	X	2.44%

CHAPTER 6: Land Use

Overview

Laurel is in South Central Montana, 16 miles west of Billings, the largest City in Montana. Laurel is located along major transportation routes, including Interstate I-90, Route 212, and Old Route 10. Laurel is located 223 miles east of Helena, the state capital, seventy miles from the northeast entrance of Yellowstone National Park, 80 miles from the Little Big Horn Battlefield National Monument, and 137 miles from Bozeman.

Laurel is located on the western boundary of Yellowstone County. This area has seen significant development with the City of Billings' continued growth, but the surrounding region remains sparsely populated and remains mostly prairie, rangeland, and farmland.

Trends

The City of Laurel has developed slowly in the past few decades. The development has focused itself north and west of the City. There are also many vacant and underused parcels within the City itself. The area adjacent to Interstate I-90 is mostly commercial and industrial. This similar land use is seen along Old Route 10 to the west of the City.

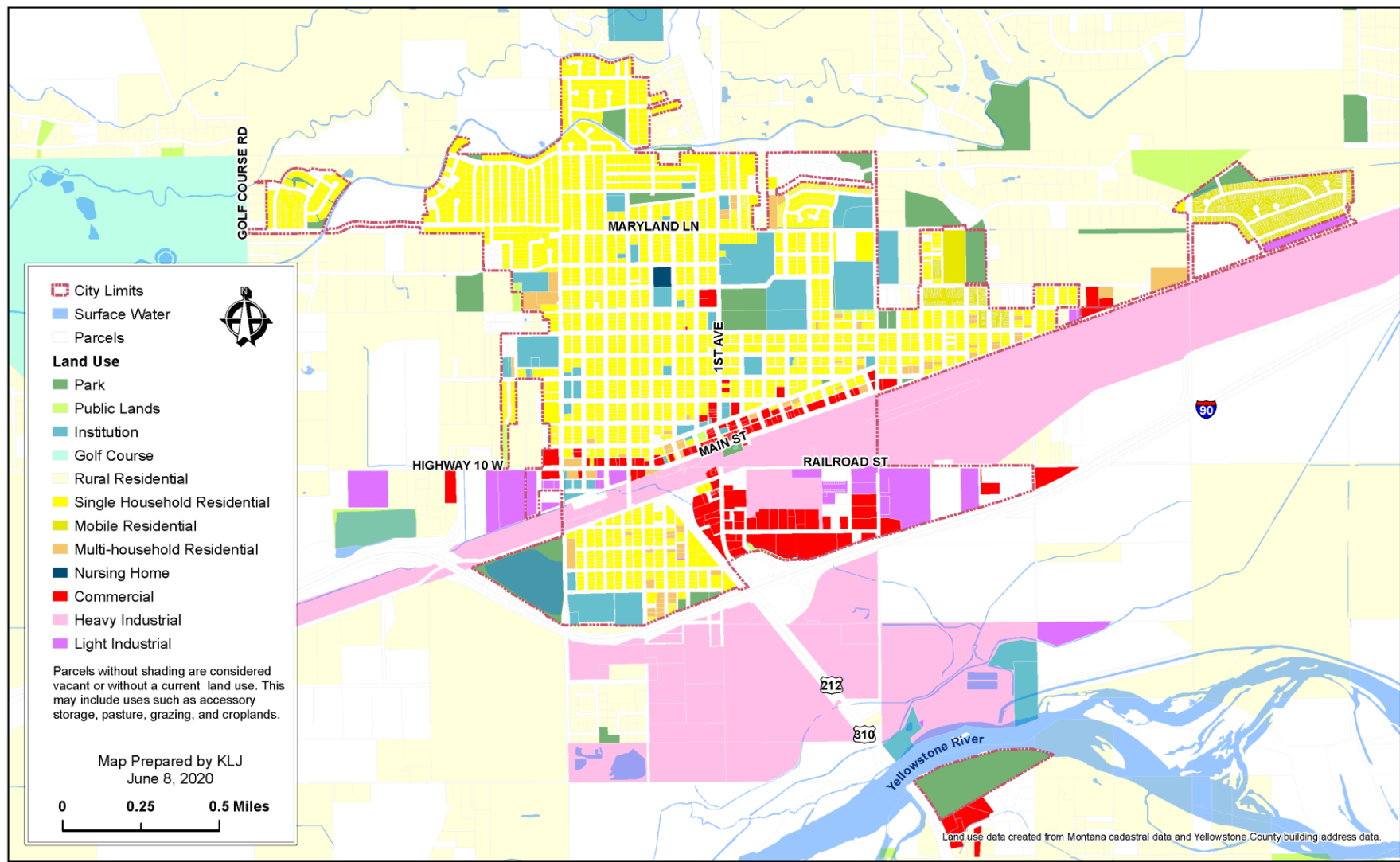
Existing Land Uses

The City of Laurel has a variety of established zoning districts. These districts cover a wide range of uses and purposes. The districts and their official definitions can be found below.

- ❖ Agricultural-open space (AO) zone - The agricultural-open space zone is intended to preserve land for agricultural and related use. Land within this zone is usually un-subdivided and contains a minimum of roads, streets, and other utilities. It may be cultivated acreage or land less suitable for cultivation, yet suitable for various agricultural enterprises using the broadest scope of the agricultural definition. Land within this zone may be located adjacent to highways and arterial streets. The AO zone is further intended to discourage the scattered intrusion of uses not compatible with an agricultural rural environment.
- ❖ Suburban residential (SR) zone - This zone is limited to single-family residential tracts on a minimum of five acres of land and on which agricultural uses may be conducted with the exception that animal units shall not exceed ten per five acres.
- ❖ Residential tracts (RT) zone - This zone is designed for single-family residential homes on a minimum of one acre of land. Livestock is limited to two livestock units per acre with additional units allowed per additional half-acre increments in conformance with Section 17.08.651 of this code. No livestock is allowed in the city limits, and all livestock must be removed if/when annexation occurs.
- ❖ Residential estates-22,000 (RE-22,000) zone - This zone is intended to provide of low-density, single-family, residential development in areas near or adjacent to the City that are served by either central water or sewer systems.

- ❖ Residential-7500 (R-7500) zone – This zone is intended to provide an area for medium, urban-density, single-family, residential environment on lots that are served by a public sewer and sewer system.
- ❖ Residential-6000 (R-6000) zone – This zone is intended to promote an area for a high, urban-density, duplex residential environment on lots that are usually served by a public water and sewer system.
- ❖ Residential light multifamily (RLMF) zone – This zone is intended to provide a suitable residential environment for medium density (up to a fourplex) residential dwellings. The area is usually served by a public water and sewer system.
- ❖ Residential multifamily (RMF) zone - The RMF zone is intended to provide a suitable residential environment for medium to high density residential dwellings; and to establish, where possible, a buffer between residential and commercial zones.
- ❖ Residential manufactured home (RMH) zone - The RMH zone is intended to provide a suitable residential environment for individual manufactured homes, manufactured home parks, and competitive accessory uses.
- ❖ Planned unit development (PUD) zone – This zone is intended to provide a district in which the use of the land is for the development of residential and commercial purposes, as an integrated unit.
- ❖ Residential professional (RP) zone - This zone is intended to permit professional and semiprofessional uses compatible with surrounding residential development.
- ❖ Neighborhood commercial (NC) zone - The NC zone is intended to accommodate shopping facilities consisting of convenience retail and personal service establishments which secure their principal trade by supplying the daily needs of the population residing within a one-half mile radius of such neighborhood facilities. The location and quantity of land within the NC zone should be a business island not more than four acres in size and that no business frontage should extend more than six hundred feet along any street.
- ❖ Central business district (CBD) classification - The CBD classification is intended to primarily accommodate stores, hotels, governmental and cultural centers and service establishments at the central focal point of the City's transportation system.
- ❖ Community commercial (CC) classification - The CC classification is primarily to accommodate community retail, service and office facilities offering a greater variety than would normally be found in a neighborhood or convenience retail development. Facilities within the classification will generally serve an area within a one and one-half mile radius and is commensurate with the purchasing power and needs of the present and potential population within the trade area. It is intended that these business facilities be provided in business corridors or islands rather than a strip development along arterials.

- ❖ Highway commercial (HC) district - The purpose of this district is to provide areas for commercial and service enterprises which are intended primarily to serve the needs of the tourist, traveler, recreationist, or the general traveling public. Areas designated as highway commercial should be located in the vicinity of, and accessible from freeway interchanges, intersections in limited access highways, or adjacent to primary or secondary highways. The manner in which the services and commercial activities are offered should be carefully planned in order to minimize the hazard to the safety of the surrounding community and those who use such services; and to prevent long strips of commercially zoned property.
- ❖ Light industrial (LI) classification - A LI classification is intended to accommodate a variety of business warehouse and light industrial uses related to wholesale plus other business and light industries not compatible with other commercial zones, but which need not be restricted in industrial or general commercial zones, and to provide locations directly accessible to arterial and other transportation systems where they can conveniently serve the business and industrial center of the City and surrounding area.
- ❖ Heavy industrial (HI) district – This district accommodates manufacturing, processing, fabrication, and assembly of materials and products. Areas designated as heavy industry should have access to two or more major transportation routes, and such sites should have adjacent space for parking and loading facilities.
- ❖ Airport (AP) zone - The AP zone is designated to preserve existing and establish new compatible land uses around the Laurel airport.
- ❖ Floodplain (FP) zone - This zone is designed to restrict the types of uses allowed within the areas designated as the floodplain and floodways as officially adopted by the Montana Board of Natural Resources and Conservation, Helena, Montana.
- ❖ Public (P) zone – This zone is intended to reserve land exclusively for public and semipublic uses in order to preserve and provide adequate land for a variety of community facilities which serve the public health, safety and general welfare.



EXISTING LAND USE

Laurel Area Existing Land Use Zoning, 2020

Residential and Rural Residential

Laurel's many residential districts provide a variety of housing densities, volumes, and types. Laurel has a joint city-county planning board and has regulations that accommodate these two different modes of living. The older areas of the City, such as the south side and neighborhoods adjacent to downtown, have higher density zoning as is appropriate for those originally platted parcels and smaller-scale residential buildings. Newer developments and additions to the City generally have lower density zoning than the original Laurel townsite and are more suburban. It is important to provide a mix of residential styles and types to provide residents and prospective residents a housing choice.

Commercial

Laurel is a full-service community with supermarkets, gas stations, bars, and restaurants accessible to the public. There are a variety of different commercial areas as well. The traditional central business district remains heavily commercial, with some buildings containing apartments on the upper floors. The area adjacent to I-90 accessible from 1st Avenue S. by E. Railroad St. and SE 4th St. contains commercial and industrial properties that serve residents and highway travelers. The parcels along Old Rt. 10 contain a mix of zoning, including highway-focused commercial properties. Many properties located along E. Main Street are zoned Community Commercial and contain a variety of establishments.

Public

The City of Laurel maintains a full array of public facilities to serve the residents, businesses, and institutions within the city limits. The City maintains a fully staffed city hall, public library, public works shops, a water treatment plant, and a sewer treatment plant. The Laurel School District maintains the Laurel High School and Middle School along with Graff Elementary School, South Elementary School, and West Elementary School.

Parks

Laurel is home to many parks of all shapes and sizes. The most important of these parks are Thompson Park and Riverside Park. Thompson Park is in the City center and has many athletic fields, a public pool, and public facilities. Riverside Park is a historic park that has been used by residents and travelers to the area since before the City of Laurel officially existed. Throughout Laurel's history, this park has been used by private, civic, and government groups. Many other smaller parks are established as land has been annexed into the City and further developed.

Industrial

There is a large amount of industrial property in and around the City of Laurel. The City of Laurel was initially built around the commercial rail yard currently operated by Montana Rail Link, the most massive switching yard between Minneapolis and Seattle. The second major industrial property is the large refinery complex owned and operated by CHS Inc. The other crucial industrial property in and around the City is the Fox Lumber operation, located along East Railroad Street.

Urban Renewal

The City of Laurel established a Tax Increment Finance District (TIF) in 2007 that encompasses the traditional downtown area and the SE 4th Street commercial area. This District has provided financing for infrastructure projects and grant funding to local property owners and residents for façade, structural, signage improvements, and technical assistance within the district. The grant program is managed by the volunteer board that makes up the laurel Urban Renewal Agency.

CHAPTER 7: FUTURE LAND USE

Overview

Laurel has struggled to grow over the past two decades due to a lack of long-term planning capacity, lack of funding, and a lack of focus on larger goals. Laurel's somewhat stagnant growth happened during a time of consistent growth for the neighboring City of Billings and other areas throughout Yellowstone County. Laurel must be forward-thinking if it wants to thrive as a separate entity outside of Billings. This change of thinking involves planning for commercial and industrial expansion, seizing growth opportunities, and adopting zoning and development standards that meet the city needs and attract developers and new residents.

Residents of Laurel pride themselves on the small-town character of the community. The City needs to properly plan for growth and have the appropriate regulations to grow and maintain the classic community character that residents enjoy. This balance includes establishing appropriate building design standards, zoning requirements, and signage standards to maintain community character.

Residential Districts

Residential areas within Laurel come in many shapes and sizes. Some are more densely built and more urban looking, while others are the traditional, modern American suburb with single-family homes. Many American cities continue to maintain a more restrictive style code that limits specific residential uses, types, and sizes while others have begun moving toward a more inclusive model of allowing different styles, sizes, and housing types in residential areas.

Some different housing types compared to the traditional single-family home include accessory dwelling units (ADU's), townhomes, and rowhouses. Expanding housing options can be as simple as adjusting the number of allowable units and setbacks for lots. Development in residential neighborhoods can be increased through small changes. Studying the existing districts and updating setbacks and other restrictions can significantly impact helping our neighborhoods evolve and grow over time.

Vacant Land

The City currently has numerous unused or vacant parcels that could be brought into productive use. Adaptive reuse of vacant structures is a strategy many cities use to revitalize downtowns. Prioritizing infill development for the downtown area and the SE 4th Street District can help bring new businesses, jobs, and residents. The City can also utilize Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) funding to support vacant properties' acquisition and rehabilitation within the downtown and SE 4th Street commercial areas. Partnering with local institutions and organizations to better utilize unused land as gathering spaces or as a home for community projects and other efforts can help people see new land uses that may have been unused/vacant for many years.

Development Standards

The City of Laurel currently has multiple development standards that include the Public Works Standards, rules governing utilities, and subdivision development requirements. Adopting a consistent and understandable set of development standards for areas within the City and its zoning jurisdiction will ease the development process for residents, landowners, and developers.

Extraterritorial Zoning

The extraterritorial zoning of Laurel extends approximately one mile outside the municipal city limits. This current zoning district is classified as "Residential Tracts" and is focused on low-density residential. The City needs to ensure that this zoning designation and its requirements still adequately cover county residents' needs within the zoning jurisdiction. It is recommended that City staff ensure this extraterritorial zoning can easily allow county residents to join the City if they so choose.

Infrastructure Extension

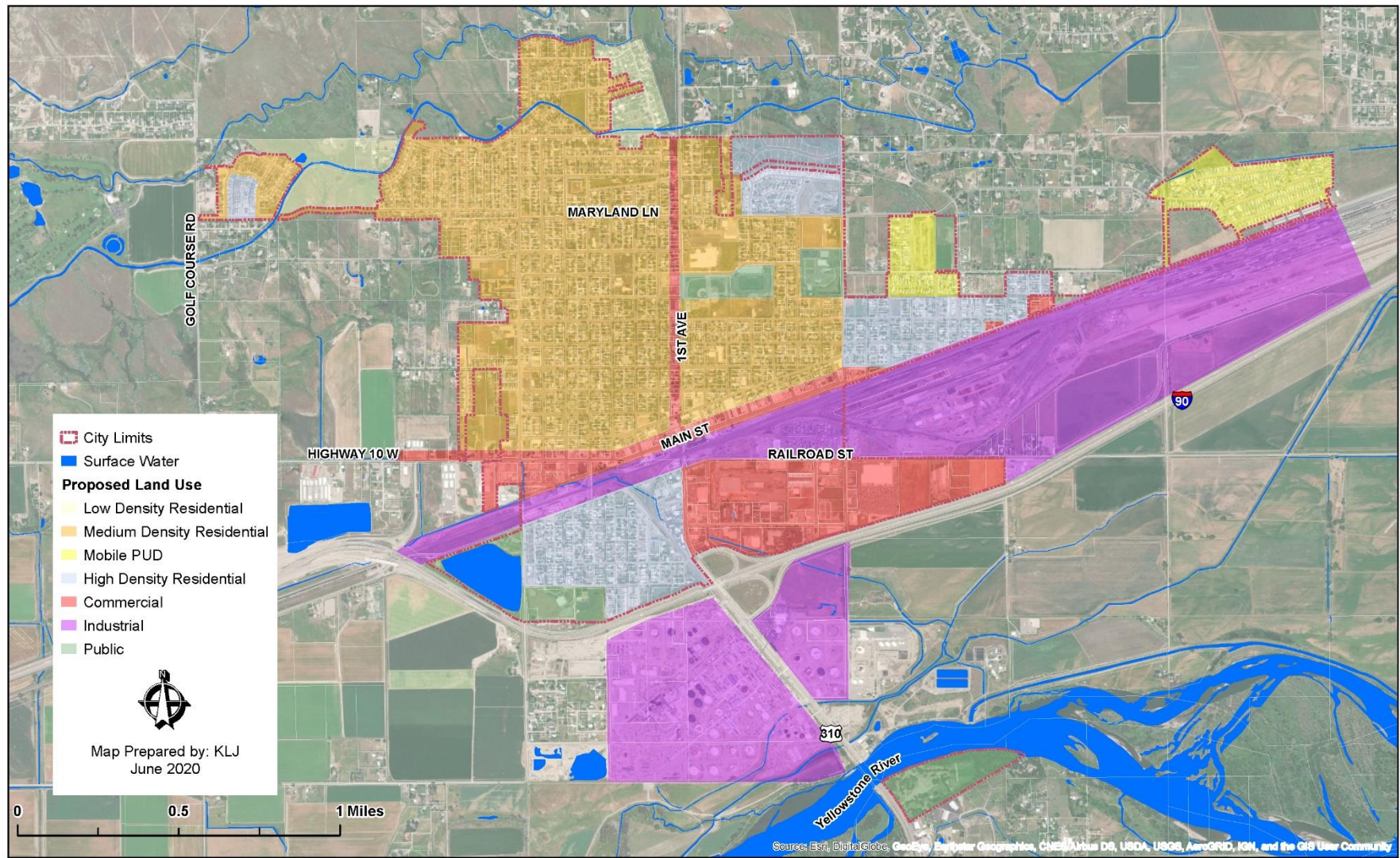
Planning for the expansion of city services and infrastructure is vital in bringing new growth to a community. The City did not address long-term infrastructure and growth for many years. Installing new infrastructure is expensive, but it is more costly to lose development opportunities that allow the community to grow and develop.



Identifying and installing critical infrastructure along major routes needs to be a priority for city staff. There are many opportunities to support these infrastructure efforts through public and private grants and loan programs. Many grant programs exist to extend infrastructure to support job creation and economic growth. Grants such as these can be used to expand infrastructure to the recently completed West Laurel Interchange.

New development and growth require adequate infrastructure to support it. Development of an Annexation Plan and a Capital Improvement Plan can

establish the priority areas for growth and establish project costs for identified infrastructure needs. Laurel has not previously prepared either of these types of plans. It would be wise for city staff, partners, and stakeholders to study the possibilities for significant commercial and industrial development in the area and plan infrastructure to accommodate these new land uses.



PROPOSED LAND USE MAP

Laurel Future Land Use, 2020

Future Land Use Goals and Objectives

This plan's overall goal is to conserve open space while maximizing areas currently in and directly adjacent to the City. Parks and greenways will be essential amenities for residential developments and commercial corridors and should be considered in initial planning rather than as an afterthought. Zoning will be updated to provide a more diverse array of housing types and density. Priority areas and parcels for annexation and development will be determined, and infrastructure extension costs will be discussed. Codes will be updated to maintain community character while simultaneously enabling the development of new neighborhoods. Work in the central business district will focus on infill and mixed-use development to create the most effective use of Laurel's traditional downtown.

Goal 1: Conserve open space and traditional land uses

- ❖ Encourage cluster developments to incorporate open space into new developments
- ❖ Provide options for landowners for conserving portions of their land
- ❖ Study and Implement strategies to create an interconnected system of parks and greenways and open space that are accessible to area residents

Goal 2: Develop downtown Laurel into a vibrant place to live, work, and play

- ❖ Encourage mixed uses for living, working, and shopping local
- ❖ Identify priority parcels for infill development
- ❖ Implement Placemaking projects to create a more livable and enjoyable downtown
- ❖ Partner with local groups to support community businesses, events, and gatherings
- ❖ Connect with regional agencies to access project funding, receive technical support, and boost the visibility of Laurel development opportunities

Goal 3: Update Subdivision Code to meet the needs of Laurel and the surrounding area

- ❖ Provide clear and consistent standards
- ❖ Ensure the proper scale and scope of regulations
- ❖ Include trails, open space, and greenway considerations in parkland subdivision review
- ❖ Regularly review and update the Subdivision Code as needed to remain current

Goal 4: Update the Zoning Code to provide for greater flexibility of allowable uses, clearer requirements, and more efficient land use

- ❖ Study the inclusion of different types of housing within residential districts
- ❖ Update Overlay Districts, Parking Requirements, and the Sign Code to better fit the City's needs and character
- ❖ Allow mixed-use live/work opportunities in commercial areas
- ❖ Enable property owners to use their land more effectively and efficiently

Goal 5: Use long term planning documents to identify funding and address priority needs for infrastructure and development

- ❖ Establish an Annexation Plan to develop priority growth areas and strategies
- ❖ Develop a Capital Improvement Plan for vital infrastructure to support the City as it grows
- ❖ Prepare a Commercial and Industrial Development Study for land adjacent to major transportation routes in the Laurel area

CHAPTER 7.5: ANNEXATION

Overview

The annexation of properties outside the current city limits must have Laurel remain a viable, independent community. Annexing territory into a municipality helps a city grow geographically, economically, and socially. Laurel's actual City has grown slowly over the past few decades, with very few new subdivisions and parcels annexing into the City despite many developments in the surrounding area. The City of Laurel and its residents seek to maintain their longstanding identity and character while supporting steady growth. Due to the City's proximity to the fast-growing City of Billings, annexation is now necessary to ensure Laurel's long-term viability, character, and independence.

Annexation planning is a long-term process in both scope and scale. Targets and goals are usually set for a timeline of five and ten years, with performance measures in place to track progress. Implementing successful annexation and growth activities involves thoughtful updates to local development and annexation codes, addressing infrastructure gaps, and outreach to nearby county property owners and developers to showcase the City's benefits.

Purpose

Annexation is presented in Title 7, Chapter 2. in the Montana Code Annotated that establishes the Creation, Alteration, and Abandonment of Local Governments. Parts of this chapter sets the conditions and rules for annexation and addition of territory into a municipality, establishes the ways areas can be annexed and provides specific limitations to these processes for both municipalities and property owners.

Annexation is a process that brings new territory into a municipality and extends public services to that territory. Annexation is a necessary process to continue the growth and development of communities in Montana. Adding new territory to a community adds new business opportunities, industry, recreation, and residential developments. Annexation also provides an opportunity for new resources and amenities to be added.

Importance

Laurel is currently at a crossroads in development. The City has not grown or expanded significantly in the past few decades, while the nearby city of Billings has been steadily expanding westward toward Laurel. Billings has established and implemented a long-term annexation and expansion plan while Laurel has had piecemeal annexations and additions to the City. Laurel could find itself hobbled financially if it does not address annexing new territory that can create growth opportunities as Billings steadily expands into western Yellowstone County.

Proper annexation planning and implementation can lead to increased economic activity, new residential development, and increased revenues for the local government to provide services. Growth and expansion need to be an official part of Laurel's conversation to remain a viable, livable, and autonomous community in the future. It will be necessary to update the current annexation policy to ensure it provides reasonable restrictions, clear guidelines, and options and incentives to developers and property owners who want to annex the City.

Priority Areas

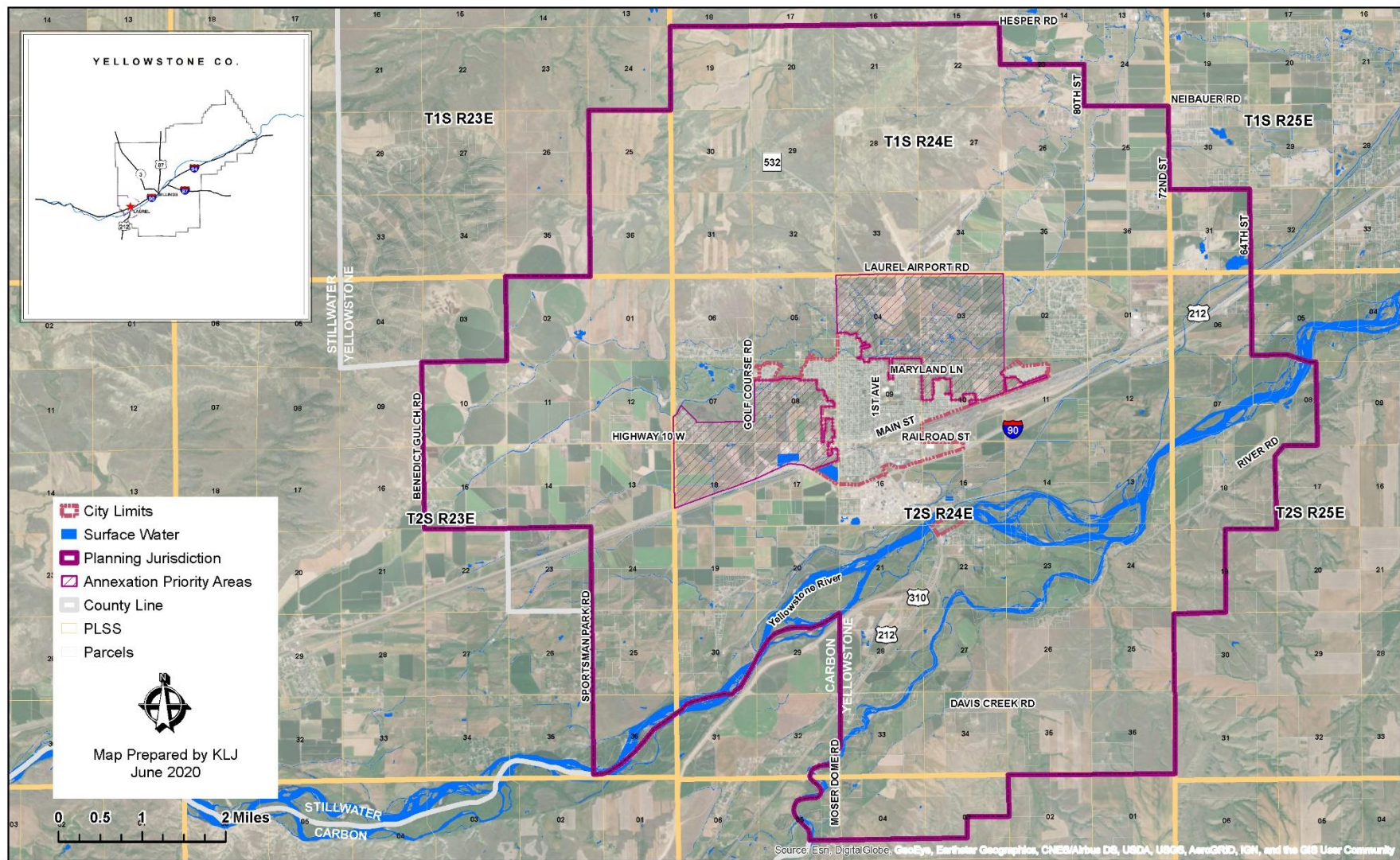
Establishing priority areas is essential for setting a plan for growth, starting discussions with property owners and developers, and preparing projects. A map of the Laurel Planning Jurisdiction and priority growth areas are presented on the next page.

Areas to the west of Laurel are a high priority for development due to their proximity to the City and established transportation corridors. The annexation of territory to the west presents the most viable options for growth. Roadways already serve this area, and there are adjacent services nearby. A high priority should be placed on parcels between 8th Avenue and Golf Course Road, parcels neighboring the intersection of Old Rt. 10, and the West Laurel Interchange.

There are many areas directly adjacent to the east of the City that would be prime candidates for annexation in addition to the previously mentioned westward expansion. The parcels between Alder Avenue and Yard Office Road, especially those along East 8th Street, should be considered and the lands adjacent to the Village Subdivision. These areas are already closely linked to the City with roads and services, and their inclusion would fill gaps in the Laurel City Map.

A few specific areas should be looked at for annexation north of the City as well. These include lands off West 12th Street that straddle the big ditch, areas between Montana Avenue and Great Northern Road, and the land neighboring 1st Ave North to Lois Place.

Growing the City of Laurel to the south is not a viable option because the CHS refinery makes up the bulk of the land between Interstate-90 and the Yellowstone River. The costs associated with the extension and construction of city services to those parcels adjacent to and south of the Yellowstone River would be prohibitive due to the distances needed to extend infrastructure and the fact that floodplain makes up much of the land adjacent to the Yellowstone River.



PLANNING JURISDICTION

Laurel Planning Jurisdiction and Priority Growth Areas, 2020

Annexation Policies

Laurel has not annexed many territories in recent years. This lack of annexation can be attributed to the 2008 annexation policy, which many prospective developers consider draconian. Many property owners and developers have remarked that the policy's strict requirements and its lack of alternatives and options for infrastructure financing and build-out place too high a price on annexation to make it feasible. Discussions should take place as to if this approved policy still serves the City's needs and what policies and requirements would enable growth activities and annexation more fully. A future annexation policy should also establish priority areas and specific goals over the next five to ten years.

Infrastructure Extension

Connection to improved utilities and services is the main driver behind annexing into a municipality. Laurel has not developed a long-term plan around extending services that can enable property owners to annex into the City more quickly. Developing a CIP will help Laurel prioritize growth areas and build out public services to position Laurel for growth and attract new properties and development to the City.

Annexation Goals

The following two goals were prepared to help the City of Laurel grow through annexation.

Goal 1: Adopt a long-range view for the growth of the City

- ❖ Establish a growth-conscious set of policies to expand the City and its services
- ❖ Create priority growth areas for extension of services
- ❖ Develop and approve an Annexation Plan for the Laurel Planning Jurisdiction
- ❖ Support the creation of a long-term Capital Improvement Plan for the extension of essential infrastructure

Goal 2: Manage fiscal responsibility with established and proposed annexation standards

- ❖ Ensure that the established standards are right and proper for the City of Laurel
- ❖ Ease the burden for developers to annex into the City while meeting established standards
- ❖ Allow greater flexibility in development patterns

Determine the cost and benefits of annexation

CHAPTER 8: HOUSING

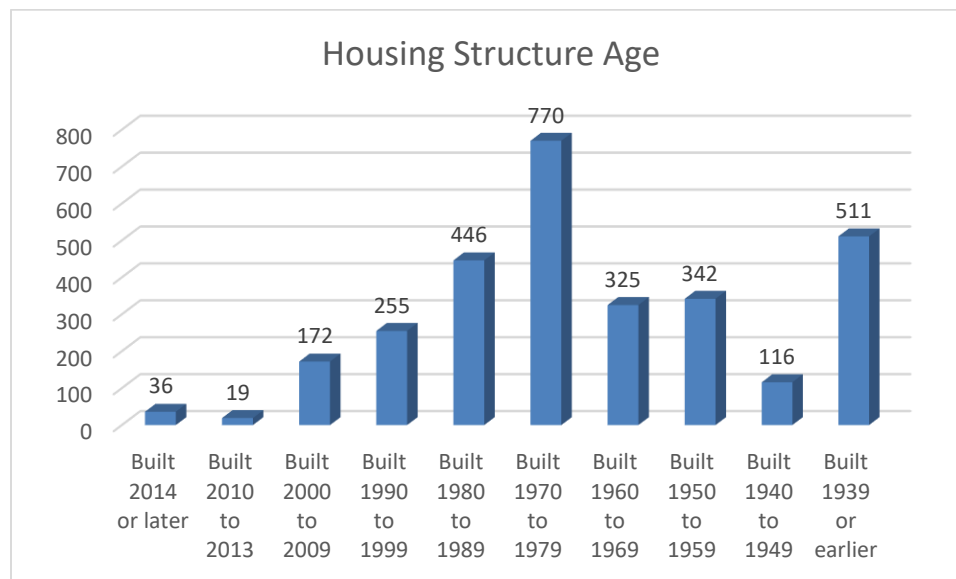
Overview

Housing is an essential element of any community. This chapter summarizes housing in Laurel and discusses some housing support programs to help renters and current and prospective homeowners. Having adequate, accessible, and affordable housing is an essential piece of what attracts people to a community. The City of Laurel has a variety of housing options and housing types that provide options for residents. It is crucial to maintain a wide array of housing that meets the market's different demands, including rental properties, multifamily units, single-family homes, and retirement homes.

Laurel's location has made it an attractive bedroom community to Billings. This strategic location opens opportunities for traditional neighborhood residential housing and embraces the growing trends of building closer-knit, dense, connected neighborhoods for more urban and in-town development. It will be necessary for the city to think about housing and real estate trends as it grows. This will ensure that the current population's housing needs are met while creating housing that will interest prospective residents and homeowners.

Households and Housing Units

Approximately 68 percent of Laurel's housing stock dates to before 1979. Aging housing stock can pose issues for maintenance, safety, and accessibility. These issues can lead to the need for code enforcement to step in to ensure the local ordinances are followed and that the situation has not become hazardous or dangerous. Ensuring that new housing is built will provide new homeownership opportunities and help raise the standard of housing available for residents.



2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Sixty-five percent of Laurel's housing stock is made up of detached single-family homes. Mobile homes make up the next most significant share of housing at 15 percent of units. This proportion of detached

single-family homes has been the norm for Laurel and many other cities and towns throughout the United States.

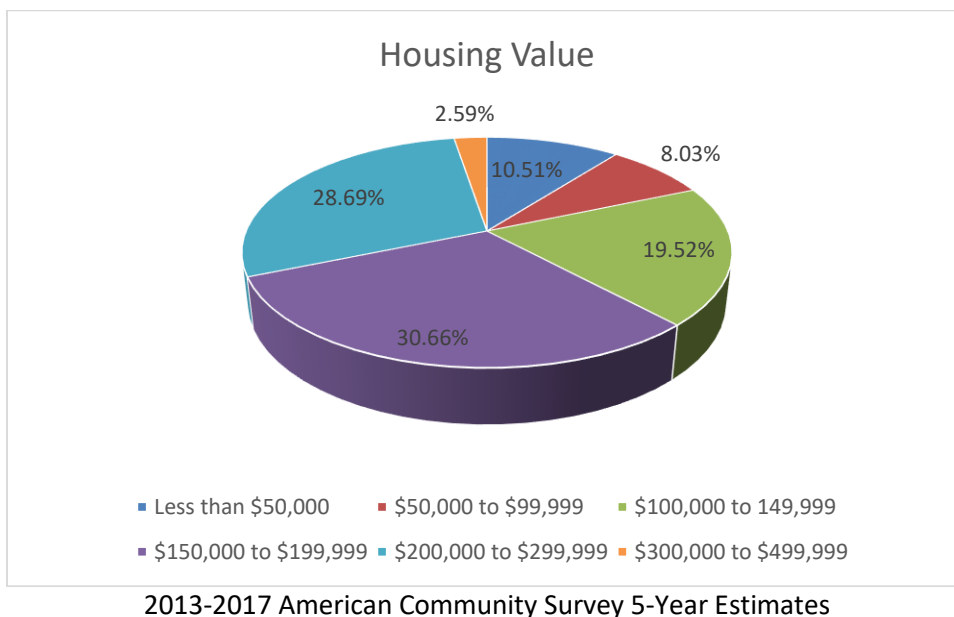
It is important to think about current and emerging housing trends to embrace growth opportunities, whether in a traditional residential neighborhood or more urban or downtown environments.

Units in Structure	Estimate	Percent
Total housing units	2,992	2,992
1-unit, detached	1,952	65.20%
1-unit, attached	87	2.90%
2 units	92	3.10%
3 or 4 units	103	3.40%
5 to 9 units	119	4.00%
10 to 19 units	48	1.60%
20 or more units	130	4.30%
Mobile home	461	15.40%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0	0.00%
2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates		

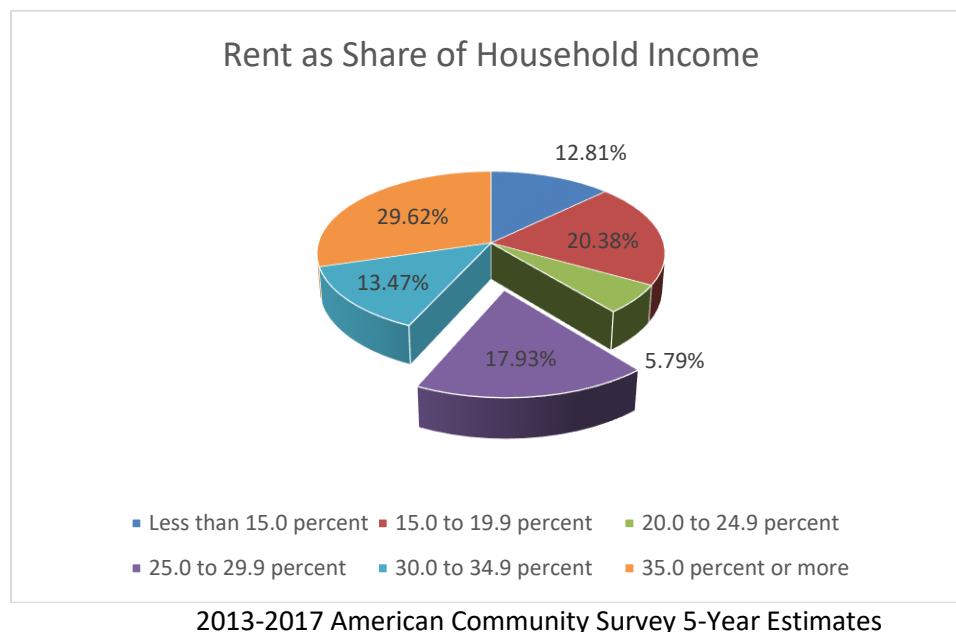
A move back towards traditional downtowns has also been seen across the United States. This trend presents various opportunities for diversifying the type and size of housing options to include rowhouses, townhomes, live-work (mixed-use) buildings, and more.

Housing Affordability

Many parts of the United States are facing issues with housing affordability. This affordability issue has included some communities in Montana, such as Bozeman and Whitefish. Housing in Laurel has generally remained affordable despite being located within twenty miles of the state's largest city. The charts below provide an overview of both current housing value and rental expenditures.



Rental affordability is an essential factor in retaining residents, especially those who may work in the service and retail industries. Overall, 57 percent of Laurel residents spend less than 30 percent of their income on rent. These statistics is a positive figure that allows a diverse array of residents to afford to live in Laurel.



Housing Programs and Incentives

Many housing support and incentive programs exist that are sponsored by non-profits, institutions, and state and federal agencies, including the following:

Montana Housing Support Programs

- ❖ Bond Advantage Down Payment Assistance program
- ❖ MBOH Plus 0% Deferred Down Payment Assistance Program
- ❖ Multi-Family Coal Trust Homes Program
- ❖ Housing Choice Voucher Program
- ❖ Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH)
- ❖ Project-Based Section 8
- ❖ Section 811 Supporting Housing for Persons with Disabilities

The Federal Government also has several First Time Homebuyer Loans and Programs, including the following:

- ❖ FHA Loan Program
- ❖ HUD - Good Neighbor Next Door Buyer Aid Program
- ❖ Homepath ReadyBuyer Program
- ❖ Energy Efficient Mortgage Program
- ❖ HOME Investment Partnerships Program

Community Land Trust

Community Land Trusts (CLTs) are non-profits that hold land permanently in trust for communities to make it available for housing, farming, ranching, commercial space, historic preservation, or open space. These organizations separate the land price from the improvements made to it, investing subsidy, and enforcing resale restrictions on properties to ensure permanent affordability. Trust Montana is a statewide organization that assists rural cities and towns with managing community land trusts to ensure they can maintain affordable and traditional land uses. CLTs serve an essential role in setting aside land as a community asset for generations to use and enjoy.

Inclusionary Zoning

Inclusionary zoning is a land-use policy that incentivizes dense housing development through tax relief, abatements, and bonuses. These zoning policies enable developers to maintain regular profits while capturing a share of excess profits for public benefit. Inclusionary zoning utilizes feasibility studies to analyze the impact of density and infill development on specific areas. Communities must carefully weigh each incentive's costs and benefits and evaluate them relative to the affordable housing requirements or goals. Incentives include:

- ❖ Density Bonuses
- ❖ Expedited Processing
- ❖ Fee waivers
- ❖ Parking reductions
- ❖ Tax abatements

Housing Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Encourage a mixture of housing types to meet the demand of all market sectors

- ❖ Maintain a diverse array of housing and affordability levels
- ❖ Promote higher density housing types in the downtown area and adjacent to major transportation corridors
- ❖ Study mixed-use housing and other alternative housing types and styles
- ❖ Provide options for a full spectrum of housing from rentals to retirement housing

Goal 2: Provide information on housing-related grants, loans, and ownership programs

- ❖ Develop a list of resources for renters and homeowners
- ❖ Collect information on federal, state, local, and philanthropic rental and homeownership programs
- ❖ Advise Laurel area residents as to available support for housing, rent, and homeownership

CHAPTER 9: INFRASTRUCTURE

Overview

The City of Laurel Department of Public Works operates the municipal water treatment and distribution system, the wastewater collection and treatment system. It conducts maintenance and improvement work on roads, streets, sidewalks, and parks. The City of Laurel has recently completed several major infrastructure upgrades. These include an upgrade to the Wastewater Treatment Plant, an overhaul of the Water Treatment Plant, installation of a new water Intake, and improvement of the sedimentation basins at the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

There are still primary infrastructure needs that need to be addressed. The City's water and sewer lines are aging, and in many places are still the original lines installed around the time of incorporation. A major priority is to study how to provide services to the West Laurel Interchange area, which has significant growth potential.

Opportunities also include expanding services to nearby county residents to the north, west, and east of the current city limits. There is a total of 2,858 water connections in the city system. Exploring funding for the extension and improvement of water and wastewater services to enable more annexation and development is worthwhile. Additionally, funding the expansion of the capacity of the City to handle stormwater runoff is of vital importance in increasing the longevity of streets, roads, and pedestrian areas.

The goals and objectives presented in this chapter are focused on just a few critical areas. It is hoped that the City can maintain an efficient and effective system of infrastructure and services that meets the City's needs while establishing long-term capital infrastructure goals to expand and improve services. The City should seek federal, state, and philanthropic grant and loan programs to support these goals and priorities.

Wastewater System

The City of Laurel's Wastewater Treatment Plant is located at 5310 Sewer Plant Road. It is staffed with three operators and one relief. The facility was first constructed in 1908 and underwent substantial upgrades in the 1930s and 1986. The Plant most recently underwent a significant upgrade that was completed in 2016. The reclamation system is a Biological Nutrient Removal system (BNR). The facility now conducts sludge dewatering as well. The new system has reduced nitrogen levels and phosphorus being discharged into the Yellowstone River. Improvement of the Sedimentation Basins was completed in 2019. The wastewater system has a capacity of 1,120,000 gallons per day. City staff should monitor the current wastewater and sewer system to ensure that it can meet the growing demands of the City.



Water System

The Laurel Water Treatment Plant is located at 802 Highway 212 South. An upgrade of the Water Treatment Plant was completed in 2019. The Plant operates 24 hours per day and is staffed with six employees plus management. The Water Treatment Plant has a treatment capacity of 5,000,000 gallons per day. The Plant provides water service to more than 6,700 people and has a total of 2,858 metered connections.

The Yellowstone River is the raw water source for the City of Laurel. A water right was filed in 1908, giving the City access to 12,600,000 gallons per day. A water reserve was granted in 1978 that allowed for the anticipation of future growth and added 6,380,000 gallons per day.

The original water distribution system was installed in 1908. There is currently one ground storage tank built in 1967 with a capacity of 4,000,000 gallons, with 2,000,000 of them being usable and the other 2,000,000 creating pressure for distribution. Additionally, the City has two booster pump stations. Pipe sizes in the system range from 2 to 18 inches in diameter. The 301 fire hydrants scattered throughout the system are tested routinely to ensure they are working correctly.

The City provides water to all areas within the City Limits; however, 82 residential connections and one industrial connection are outside the City boundary. Property owners in the county who are interested in connecting to the City system must make all the necessary excavations and pay for all materials necessary for connections. The current standards and regulations for public works and utilities require developers to extend to utilities.



The Yellowstone River has provided adequate water for the City, but in recent years concerns have been raised regarding enough flow due to erosion from flooding and droughts. The City has taken steps to counteract these concerns through significant upgrades to the Water Treatment System. Upgrades and improvements were completed on the sedimentation basins and the Water Treatment Plant in 2019.

Additionally, a new water intake in the Yellowstone River was completed in 2017 to ensure a stable water supply despite the changing nature of the river's course and level. One additional project that has been identified is the need for a second water reservoir to create extra storage capacity as the City grows. The City should include this in any future public works planning documents.

Stormwater System

Stormwater is collected and managed to prevent flooding, erosion, and contamination of water sources. Water can carry pollutants such as oil, fertilizer, pesticides, soils, and trash as it runs off rooftops, paved streets, highways, and parking lots after a rain event or during snowmelt. Stormwater can flow directly into the Yellowstone River from a property or into a storm drain and through the city infrastructure until it is released into the Yellowstone River. The three significant concerns of stormwater management are the volume of runoff water, the timing of runoff water, and the potential contaminants the water is carrying.

The City of Laurel has historically experienced problems with flooding in the downtown area. Flooding activities are generally from heavy rain runoff and not directly due to the nearby Yellowstone River. The City of Laurel has a limited stormwater infrastructure to handle stormwater runoff. The majority of stormwater infrastructure is in the central business district and the South East 4th Street area. Stormwater management has also been established for the Elena, Iron Horse, and Foundation Subdivisions.

The City needs to address stormwater infrastructure within its current limits and as it expands. Creating an adequate stormwater management system helps keep roadways in good condition and lessens drivers' hazards in inclement weather. Stormwater system extensions should be considered during any roadway planning procedure to ensure roadway improvements do not have to be recreated.

Solid Waste Services

The City of Laurel Public Works Department provides exclusive solid waste collection services within the city limits. The City does not provide any solid waste collection services outside of the city limits. Garbage services are not exclusive to parcels that choose to annex into the City as per Montana state regulations. The City of Laurel operates the City's transfer station, which is located at 175 Buffalo Trail Road. The transfer station provides added services such as taking in large or bulky items, tree branches, and other unusual materials and pieces. Laurel utilizes the Billings Regional Landfill located nearby.

Infrastructure Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Maintain an Effective and Efficient Public Infrastructure System that Adequately Serves the Needs of the City

- ❖ Develop a data-driven infrastructure maintenance schedule
- ❖ Determine any existing gaps in services and other infrastructure deficiencies within the City
- ❖ Adopt up-to-date infrastructure standards that are appropriate for the needs of the City
- ❖ Study using public spaces within floodplains, watercourses, and wetlands to be used as passive recreation areas such as parks and greenways
- ❖ Study the feasibility of recycling programs and other means to reduce solid waste
- ❖ Incorporate stormwater system planning into roadway and other infrastructure planning processes

Goal 2: Establish the Long-Term Capital and Infrastructure Needs for the City

- ❖ Develop a Capital Improvement Plan for the improvement and expansion of infrastructure
- ❖ Prepare a Water System Master Plan
- ❖ Create a Wastewater System Master Plan
- ❖ Complete a Stormwater Management Plan
- ❖ Ensure infrastructure planning documents are routinely updated.
- ❖ Confirm that the established infrastructure priorities are adequate

Goal 3: Seek out Possible Funding Sources for the Expansion and Improvement of Infrastructure and Essential Community Services

- ❖ Study the physical and financial needs for the extension of infrastructure to priority growth areas.
- ❖ Collaborate with Montana agencies on major projects and studies
- ❖ Explore federal, state, and philanthropic infrastructure grant opportunities
- ❖ Determine positive impacts from the expansion and improvement of infrastructure
- ❖ Apply for funding opportunities that are appropriate for city priorities and projects and assist in keeping user fees reasonable

CHAPTER 10: TRANSPORTATION

Overview

Laurel is at the center of a major transportation network that includes local streets and sidewalks, state arterials, railroad lines, and an interstate highway. The city itself was surveyed and built on a gridded road network that provided orderly development for residential and commercial properties close to the railroad, Old Route 10, and 1st Avenue, which run through Laurel's downtown. The establishment of Interstate-90 near Laurel led to commercial development on the south side of the city. Subsequent developments of residential subdivisions and commercial areas have not continued the original ordered network, causing problems for road continuity, provision of services, and orderly and consistent city growth at its boundaries. The railyard and numerous railroad lines bisect the city, separating neighborhoods from each other and creating only two north-south access points, the 1st Avenue underpass, and the 5th Avenue railroad crossing.

Connecting transportation decisions with land use policy is a crucial city goal. A priority for the city is to develop a multi-modal approach to streets and pathways. The City will encourage intensive land use within and adjacent to the city and along major transportation routes while ensuring residential developments provide adequate and accessible pedestrian improvements to allow everyone to access their community. Establishing a consistent maintenance plan to preserve, improve, and expand the transportation network will provide current and future residents with an easy and effective way to move around the city regardless of travel mode. The orderly growth of the transportation network will also be essential to ensure neighborhoods and commercial areas are easily accessible to all. These transportation goals help increase quality of life, connect people to their community, increase safety, and plan for current trends and future growth.

Local Routes & Maintenance

Laurel's downtown core and original neighborhoods were developed on a gridded network of streets and alleyways. Subsequent developments have strayed from this system and have not followed any set guidelines for road connections or continuity. This lack of orderly roads and pedestrian systems outside Laurel's traditional core has created future growth issues.



Very few existing streets allow for unbroken travel from the east to the west side of Laurel. New development has taken place without considering roadway connections and traffic planning.

Subsequent subdivisions and construction have not provided easements or right of way to continue city thoroughfares, and structures were constructed within the path of right of ways. This lack of forethought is especially apparent west of 8th Avenue, which has many roads that seemingly go nowhere. It will be necessary for Laurel to establish specific guidelines to ensure adequate road connectivity for traffic flow, safety, wayfinding, and the extension of future services.

Laurel has only two north-south road connections between its northern and southern neighborhoods. The two connections are the 1st Avenue underpass and 5th Avenue railroad crossing. The nearest other connections are Exit 437 for East Laurel and Exit 426 to Park City. Investigating other means of north-south access and finding other connection points will improve emergency service response, ease traffic along major routes, and improve accessibility to and from different city areas.

Many of Laurel's roads are also in dire need of repair. Many of the city's older local roads were built with deficiencies and antiquated design methods, which now compound annual maintenance problems. The city recently completed a study of its municipal road network that included an inventory and provide solutions to the system's infrastructure deficits. Utilizing this study and updated development and service standards will lead to improved road conditions and connectivity for Laurel residents, businesses, and visitors.

State Highways

Two major state routes pass through Laurel. These are 1st Avenue, which forms the major north-south route, and Old Route 10, which runs east-west and acts as Laurel's Main Street. These routes support significant commercial and industrial traffic, resulting in congestion during peak hours at intersections.

Seeking mobility and safety improvements along these two routes is encouraged to create more livable, accessible, and safer streets as the city updates its zoning code, subdivision code, and roadway standards. A map of road classifications has also been provided to show further details of the Laurel road network and other major streets and roadways in the city.

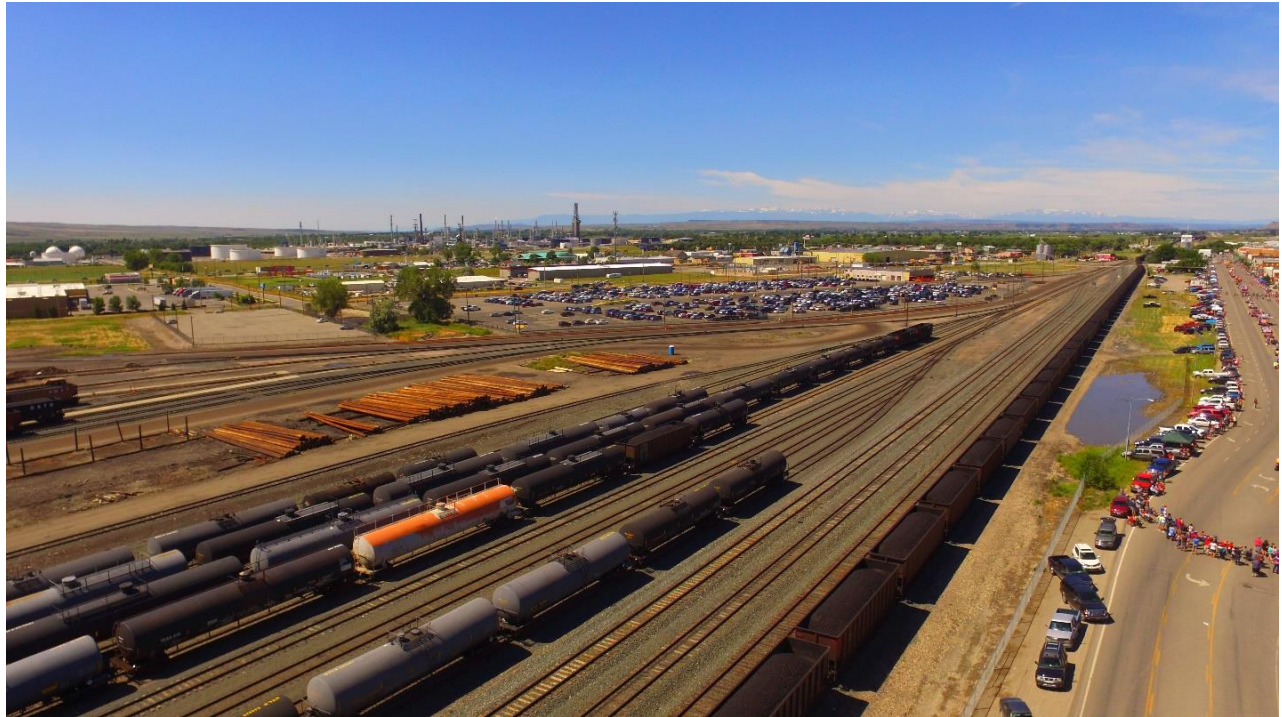
Federal Highways

Interstate-90 passes directly through Laurel. There are currently three off-ramps to access the highway, the most recent of these just completed in 2020 on the city's west end. The interstate has been a source of growth for the city, with many businesses locating in the SE 4th Street District adjacent to the highway.

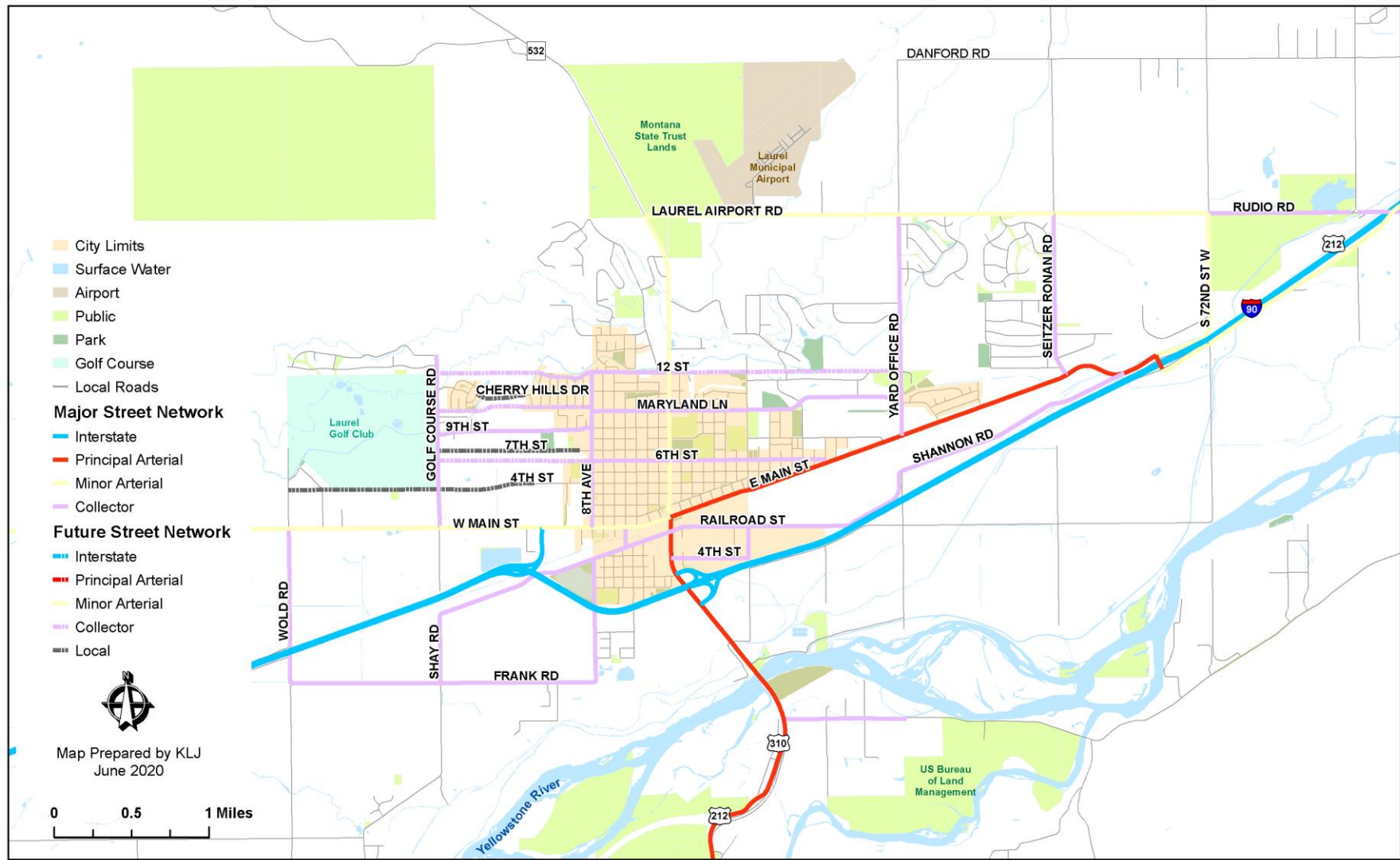
The Montana Department of Transportation recently completed a north-facing on/off-ramp west of Laurel to connect to 19th Avenue West. This additional on/off-ramp is expected to alleviate some access issues and provide new development opportunities. This additional access point is also anticipated to bring new growth opportunities for the area. Planning for this growth and seeking out possible funding sources to extend city services to this area is vital

Railroad

Montana Rail Link operates the rail yard in Laurel. This yard has been active since the late 1800s and is a historic asset to the transportation and economic sectors. The rail yard is a hub for freight and raw materials heading through the area. Despite not being within the city limits, the railroad, CHS refinery, and other industrial properties provide many benefits to the area by providing a healthy job base, revenue to the school district, and lower tax rates for residential and commercial properties.



The railroad is a major asset to the area and hinders transportation in and around the Laurel area. The railroad is not within the Laurel city limits, and as such, the city has little oversight of the activities taking place. The rail yard and its lines split the city into a north and south side with only two north-south connections, the 1st Avenue underpass, and the 5th Avenue crossing. The only other north-south connections are the East Laurel Exit and West Laurel Exit on Interstate-90.



MAJOR STREET NETWORK

Laurel Road Classifications, 2020

Roadway Classifications

- ❖ Interstate Highway (Principal Arterial)
 - Primary through travel route
 - Longest trip length
 - Highest trip speed
- ❖ Principal Arterial
 - Serves major activity centers and includes corridors with the highest traffic volumes and the city's longest trip length.
 - Provides the highest level of mobility, at the highest speed, for long uninterrupted travel.
- ❖ Minor Arterial
 - Interconnects principal urban arterials
 - Provides continuity for rural arterials that intercept urban boundaries
- ❖ Collector
 - Designed for travel at lower speeds and shorter distances.
 - Collectors are typically two-lane roads that collect and distribute traffic from the arterial system.
 - Collector roads penetrate residential communities, distributing traffic from the arterials
 - Urban collectors also channel traffic from local roads onto the arterial system.
 - Serves both land access and traffic circulation in higher density residential and commercial/industrial areas
- ❖ Local
 - Largest element in the American public road network in terms of mileage.
 - Local roads provide basic access between residential and commercial properties, connecting with higher-order roadways.
 - Provides access to adjacent land
 - Short distance trips

Public Transportation

Laurel Transit was established in 2010 through grant funding from the State of Montana to provide transportation services to the elderly and disabled population in the Laurel area. Laurel Transit currently provides on-demand transportation services within Laurel, its surrounding area, and scheduled service to Billings. Laurel Transit operates Monday-Friday, 10:00 am – 4:00 pm. The Billings scheduled service route begins at 7:30 am. Laurel Transit has connected with local and regional agencies whenever possible to expand its services.



Discussions have previously taken place around the viability of a fixed route system for the city of Laurel. These services are currently not feasible but future growth and development in Laurel could also necessitate better in-town transit connections or a commuter route to Billings.

Funding Sources

Many state and federal funding sources exist for transportation projects that impact:

- ❖ Road Safety
- ❖ Alternative Transportation
- ❖ Improved Mobility
- ❖ Economic Development
- ❖ Job Creation and Retention

Federal Agencies with available grants include:

- ❖ Federal Highways Administration
- ❖ U.S. Department of Transportation
- ❖ Federal Transit Administration
- ❖ U.S. Department of Agriculture
- ❖ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Transportation Goals and Objectives

The three overarching transportation goals with objectives and strategies are as follows:

Goal 1: Preserve, Maintain, and Improve the Existing Transportation System

- ❖ Update the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)
- ❖ Establish a systematic approach for the maintenance and repair of the road network.
- ❖ Develop a Capital Improvement Plan to identify and prioritize significant transportation projects
- ❖ Establish a Road Network Master Plan to ensure street continuity, traffic flow, and neighborhood connectivity,
- ❖ Promote fiscal responsibility and high return on investment
- ❖ Coordinate roadway improvement projects to coincide with underground infrastructure improvements

Goal 2: Improve the Mobility, Safety, and Accessibility for all users and modes of travel

- ❖ Implement bicycle and pedestrian improvements and traffic calming measures to transform the downtown area into a pedestrian-friendly place
- ❖ Create a looping bicycle/pedestrian trail and street system that connects different areas of Laurel
- ❖ Adopt pedestrian and multi-modal friendly transportation standards and safety measures
- ❖ Explore options to improve and expand the Laurel Transit program and strategies to create other multi-modal transportation connections.
- ❖ Partner with local, regional, and statewide groups to further integrate Laurel into the more comprehensive passenger transportation network

Goal 3: Connect Transportation Decisions with Land-Use Decisions

- ❖ Integrate land-use planning and transportation planning to manage better and develop the transportation network.
- ❖ Utilize transportation projects to encourage intensive development patterns along significant routes and existing areas of the City.
- ❖ Adopt and implement consistent system policies and maintenance standards
- ❖ Ensure the development of a sustainable transportation system that minimizes environmental impacts

CHAPTER 11: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Overview

Laurel has two traditional industries that have been the community economic pillars; the railroad and oil refining. These two economic sectors play a significant role in the economy. Still, they have been joined by many other services and businesses that diversify economic opportunity to include retail, education, healthcare, and finance. Laurel has seen a decline in downtown and local businesses as Billings has become more accessible, and online shopping and delivery become more readily used. Large and small communities have been forced to compete more and more for businesses, workers, and growth opportunities in an increasingly connected global economy. It will take significant effort to develop Laurel as a community with a self-contained business ecosystem where local businesses and entrepreneurs and larger statewide and national establishments can thrive.

Laurel's proximity to Billings is a smaller scale example of how different factors impact the local community economy. Laurel has been considered a bedroom community to Billings due to its proximity and number of Laurel residents who commute into Billings. It has also become easier for Laurel residents to travel to Billings for food, shopping, and other services. If it were in any other county in Montana, Laurel would be the center of economic development and business activities.

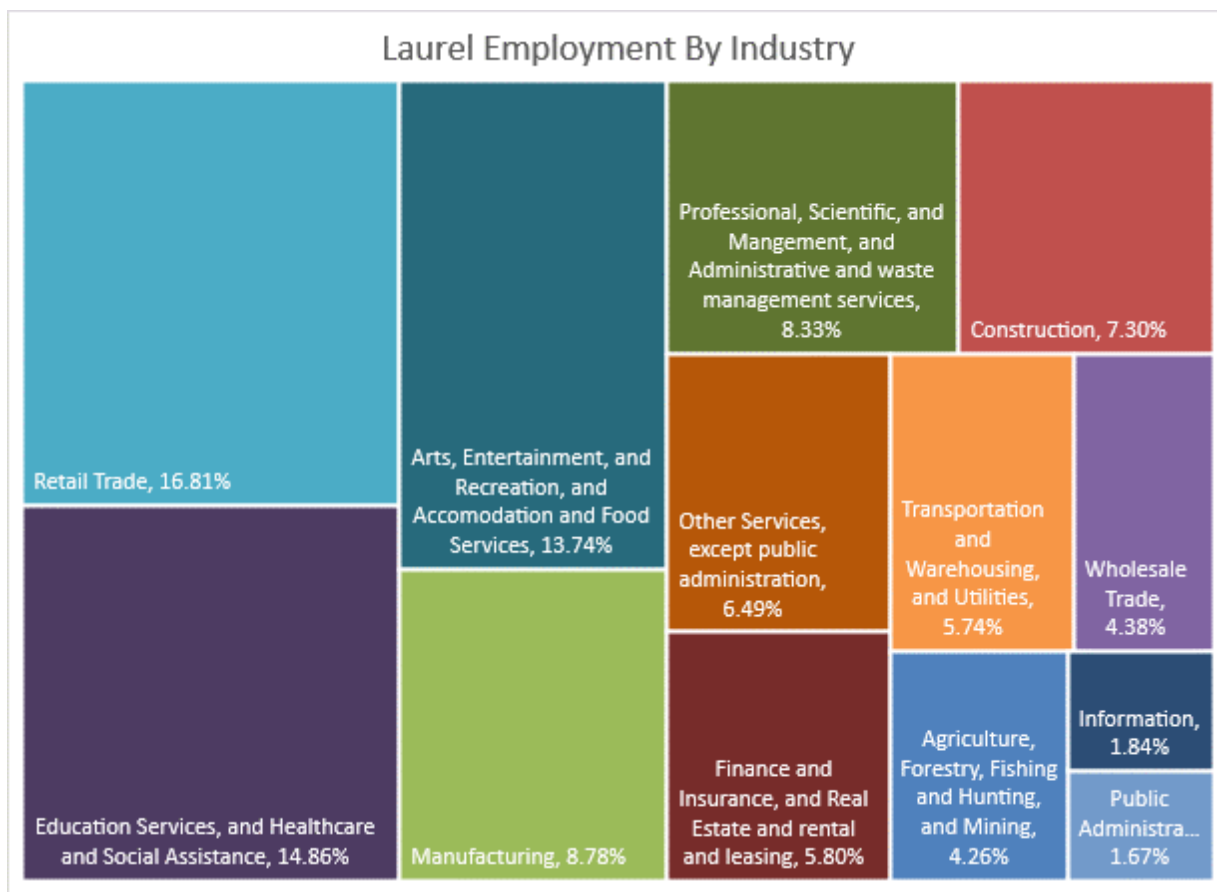
Laurel can still become a community where small businesses thrive, the downtown is healthy, and entrepreneurs take the risk to open a business even with its proximity to Billings. Creating a more attractive and active business community is not an impossible task. Goals have been established to help develop Laurel independently while keeping it connected with Yellowstone County and the Billings area.

Studying and adopting policies to develop downtown Laurel into a destination to live, work, and play can help breathe new life into the community. Focusing on resilient economic growth activities will create both new activity and sustainable, long term economic stability. Increasing Laurel's collaboration and communication with area groups can help connect stakeholders to business funding supports, employment, and training opportunities that would otherwise not be available. Growth is anticipated on the west side of Laurel. It is essential to plan for this growth by studying options for new commercial and industrial properties in priority areas.

The Local Economy

Workers in Laurel are employed in a wide array of industries. The following chart presents a visual representation of the different industries and their percentage in those workforces. A diverse employment base helps to ensure a stable and resilient economy. Improving the City's core sectors while opening up new growth opportunities is an important objective to help keep the local economy healthy.

Several major industries are located directly outside the city limits that have a large impact on the community. These include the MRL railyard and the CHS refinery. These two industries provide many jobs to Laurel residents and those residing within the Laurel planning jurisdiction. These anchor industries provide livelihoods to many Laurel area residents and support other industries and businesses in the Laurel planning area. It will be essential to maintain good relationships with MRL and CHS to coordinate growth efforts and adequately develop the Laurel area.



(2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)

Economic Development Organizations

Various groups are active in the economic development field in the Laurel and Yellowstone County area. Big Sky Economic Development and Beartooth Resource Conservation & Development serve the Laurel community and have services available for businesses and residents. These agencies can help leverage

funding and access to different state and federal programs to support local economic development efforts.

Laurel Chamber of Commerce

The Laurel Chamber of Commerce provides services to foster a healthy business climate in the Laurel area for business owners, employees, and customers. The Chamber supports and hosts many community events, including farmer's markets, the July 4th Celebration, and the Christmas Stroll. The Chamber has also developed relationships with local organizations and businesses to create a better business climate, a thriving downtown, and improve the community.



Big Sky Economic Development Agency

The official mission statement of Big Sky Economic Development is "... to sustain and grow our region's vibrant economy and outstanding quality of life, by providing leadership and resources for business creation, expansion, retention, new business recruitment, and community development."

Big Sky Economic Development Agency (BSEDA) is the South-Central Montana region's certified economic development authority. BSEDA directly serves a nine-county region, including Petroleum, Wheatland, Golden Valley, Musselshell, Sweetgrass, Stillwater, Yellowstone, Carbon, and Big Horn counties. BSEDA provides services and support for small business development, community development initiatives, federal procurement assistance, tax increment financing assistance, workforce development, veterans business assistance, and business financing.

The City of Laurel Planning Director is currently the Ex-Officio representative for the City of Laurel on BSEDA's Board of directors. The Ex-Officio member represents the interests of the City on the Board and communicates the position of the City to BSEDA's staff and partners.

Beartooth Resource Conservation & Development

Beartooth Resource Conservation & Development, or Beartooth RC&D, began in 1969 as a partnership between the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service and Carbon and Stillwater Counties to serve that area. Beartooth is now an officially designated Economic Development District and has expanded its support to Sweet Grass, Yellowstone, and Big Horn Counties. Beartooth RC&D provides technical assistance and community development services to groups in the South-Central Montana region.

The overall mission of Beartooth RC&D is to improve local economic and social conditions by focusing on the conservation, utilization, and development of the natural and human resources of the region. The City has begun regular conversations with Beartooth RC&D to coordinate local economic development efforts and be notified of ongoing work in the region. Keeping communication channels open and collaborating on projects will help support Laurel's economic development and the surrounding area.

Economic Development Objectives and Policies and Strategies

Four main goals and related objectives have been established that focus on Economic Development and are as follows:

Goal 1: Develop downtown Laurel as a destination to live, work, and play

- ❖ Institute placemaking projects to further enhance district character
- ❖ Increase live-work opportunities for current and future residents and businesses
- ❖ Apply TIF funding to beautification, blight removal, and public improvement projects
- ❖ Identify and find solutions for unused or underused parcels as candidates for development

Goal 2: Create a resilient local economy

- ❖ Strengthen core businesses and industries through communication and connections with technical support
- ❖ Ensure that local economic activities are inclusive and accessible to all stakeholders
- ❖ Implement policies that create stable and sustainable economic growth
- ❖ Work to highlight the shared benefits of working together as a community with local businesses stakeholders, and developers
- ❖ Provide an economic ecosystem that allows for a wide array of businesses, industries, and developments to thrive
- ❖ Study and implement policies to enhance local business demand and alternative strategies for value creation for the community

Goal 3: Collaborate with area organizations to support economic growth and local employment and training opportunities

- ❖ Communicate with local groups to determine any needs and assistance
- ❖ Create partnerships with local and regional groups to fill local service gaps and create needed programming
- ❖ Take part in events and workshops to support local business initiatives and activities
- ❖ Establish common ground with local and regional groups to provide resources and assistance
- ❖ Connect residents and businesses with like-minded economic, financial, and entrepreneurship resources and opportunities

Goal 4: Study options for new commercial and industrial properties in anticipated high-growth areas

- ❖ Create a Corridor Master Plan for growth in and around the intersection with Old Route 10 and the West Laurel Interchange
- ❖ Study options and determine priorities for the possible establishment of Tax Increment Financing Districts (TIFs) and Targeted Economic Development Districts (TEDDs)
- ❖ Review and pursue opportunities for clustered commercial or industrial parks
- ❖ Develop funding strategies to provide services for priority growth areas.

CHAPTER 12: PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Overview

Municipalities provide numerous public services to their residents, businesses, and institutions. Effective public services are vital for a community to thrive. Public services include fire departments, police departments, parks and recreation programs, libraries, emergency medical services, and water and sewer utility systems. Public officials need to take a lead role by planning and implementing expansions and improvements of public services that maintain and improve their community's quality of life.

This chapter presents the array of public services operated by the City of Laurel and provides goals and objectives to improve and expand those services to help the community better. A proactive approach to public services can also lead to many benefits as newly established or upgraded services can incentivize new development and growth. Effective public services show prospective residents, business owners, and developers that the municipality is working to provide stable services while addressing future service needs.



City Administration

Laurel City Hall is located at 110 West 1st Street. The City Hall contains offices for the City Clerk-Treasurer, Water Department, Planning Department, and the Public Works Department. The City Hall also contains the City Council Chambers, the Office of the Mayor, City Court, and related administrative archives.

Laurel Police Department

The Laurel Police Department is a full-service department serving the community twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. The City of Laurel currently has 14 sworn officers employed by the City. Services include patrolling for criminal activities and traffic violations, accident investigation, and misdemeanor and felony crime investigation. The Department's service area is within Laurel's municipal boundaries unless responding as backup to another law enforcement agency in the surrounding area. The Laurel

Police Department works with the Eastern Montana Drug Task Force, (EMDTF) assists the Yellowstone County Sherriff on calls near Laurel, and works closely with the Montana Highway Patrol.

The City of Laurel ensures that its officers are appropriately certified and trained above and beyond the state requirements. Officers must pass a twelve-week introductory police officer course at the Montana Law Enforcement Academy in the state capital of Helena. Furthermore, communication officers must also attend and pass a one-week course for their additional responsibilities. The Laurel Police Department also hosts its introductory reserve course annually for reserve officers.

The Laurel Police Department is currently located in the Fire-Ambulance-Police Building (FAP building). The facility is shared with the Fire Department and Ambulance service. The facility was built in 1976 and has seen several additions and renovations over time. The FAP Building is aging and lacks many facilities that the departments require. The Police Station lacks sufficient office space for its officers, a breakroom, separate locker room facilities for male and female officers, and the radio room lacks adequate fire control due to the space required for department servers. This space also lacks secure vehicle and equipment storage areas. It is essential that the city seek out funding options to improve, expand, and construct new facilities for the Police Department.



The Department is in need of a new facility. Planning should focus on construction of a new Police Station to the West of the City to follow anticipated growth trends. This location is also a security requirement for the Department. A westward location would be upwind from the Railroad lines and Refinery complex which would be secure in the face of any major ecological, chemical, or radiological crisis that might originate at these industrial and shipment points. Major elements for a future Police Station include:

- ❖ DUI Processing Rooms (secure with camera system)
- ❖ Video Security system (specifically for animal storage, inventory, and evidence)
- ❖ Separate Locker Rooms with bathing facilities and adequate locker space
- ❖ Full kitchen/breakroom area
- ❖ Secure and reinforced lobby area and front desk with audio system
- ❖ Evidence storage rooms with processing rooms and secure lockers
- ❖ Storage bays for larger amounts of evidence and vehicles
- ❖ Secure weapons room for ammunition, weaponry, and cleaning supplies
- ❖ Vehicle Storage area for Police vehicles and equipment under cover and secured.
- ❖ Conference room for meetings, presentations, press conferences, and trainings

Department leadership has identified certain staffing needs for the department as Laurel grows. The department needs a second Lieutenant position and a possible Captain position. These command positions would provide more effective leadership for the patrol officers. The Department also plans to add a Parking & Animal Control position in the near future. The department also needs additional civilian positions filled including an additional dispatcher, and an evidence technician and executive assistant to help with day to day duties.

The current policies and procedures for the Department date to 2014 and have not been updated due to a lack of manpower and lack of time. Department leadership has identified the program Lexipol as a vital

digital resource that will help to keep the department's policies and procedures up to date. The Department plans to contract with Lexipol to assist with updating policies, training, and overall helping to keep law enforcement agencies current.

Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services

Laurel Volunteer Fire Department

The Laurel Volunteer Fire Department (LVFD) has served the City of Laurel and the surrounding area since its inception in 1909. The Mission statement of the Laurel Volunteer Fire Department is:

"Laurel Fire Department is committed to serving the City of Laurel, its residents, the surrounding fire districts, and the visitors to our City for any of their emergency fire rescue needs. We will do this through strong dedication and commitment to our community with a long tradition guiding us to what is important."



The LVFD provides full-service fire response service to the City of Laurel, Laurel Airport Authority, Yellowstone Treatment Center, Laurel Urban Fire Service Area, and Fire Districts 5, 7, and 8. These services include structure fires, wildland fires, vehicle fires, industrial hazards, water, ice rescue, vehicle extractions, Hazmat situations, rope rescue, and public service calls.

It has been recognized that the LVFD needs to adapt to the changing nature of fire services. It will be essential to improve the delivery of high-quality services to the community by planning and implementing new policies. The LVFD has begun the development of a "Fire Services Business and Work Plan" that presents information about the Department as well as goals and objectives to improve and expand fire services. Goals presented in the Draft Work Plan include:

- ❖ Finance – Develop avenues of revenue to offset costs for manpower, operations, and equipment replacement
- ❖ Equipment replacement – Develop a schedule for equipment replacement
- ❖ Education – Communicate with city officials on the beneficial aspects of the current LVFD structure
- ❖ Training – Continue and expand training to evolve with ever-changing fire services
- ❖ Communications – Develop communication lines between various groups at Department, local, county, and state levels.
- ❖ Performance Management – Evaluate Department on skills and abilities for career advancement and adjustments to training needs
- ❖ Construction of a New Fire Station – A new station will be necessary to meet a growing community's needs.

Firefighters in Montana are required to complete a minimum of thirty training hours per year. Many of the members of the LVFD regularly complete over 100 hours of training hours per year. Members of the LVFD are allowed to travel to specialized schools and training sessions to learn new information and share it with their fellow firefighters in the Department.

The LVFD is actively involved in the community through events and has held annual events such as Fire Prevention Weeks and Safety Days. The LVFD also manages the fireworks display for the 4th of July

celebration. The Laurel 4th of July celebration is well-known throughout the state and brings awareness of the work of the LVFD.

The LVFD is currently set at 45 members to meet current community needs. The Department undertook a reorganization in 2010 to better coordinate efforts. This reorganization allowed the Department to meet any partially paid staff requirements for a department if the City of Laurel met the requirements for a Second-Class city of 7,500 residents or more. The Laurel Volunteer Fire Department has a mutual aid agreement with Yellowstone County Fire Services.

As previously noted, the Department is in the Fire-Ambulance-Police Building (FAP building). This facility has three full bays and an extra half bay for equipment. The LVFD also has access to equipment bays at the Laurel City shops as necessary. It is anticipated that an expansion of the FAP building or the construction of a new facility will be necessary to cover the Laurel community's fire service needs long-term adequately.

Ambulance Service

The primary mission of the City of Laurel Ambulance Service (LAS) is to provide quality pre-hospital emergency medical services and transportation to medical facilities promptly and safely to those residing, visiting, or traveling through the Laurel service area. The Department is a hybrid model, with certain full-time positions and additional volunteers. The Department has a full-time director and five full-time Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs). LAS staff are trained to provide at least a minimum of Basic Life Support (BLS) assistance. They also have the necessary endorsements from the state to provide other advanced services.

As previously noted, the LAS is located at the Fire-Ambulance-Police building. The FAP building has space for three ambulances, restrooms, a crew lounge, offices, a small kitchen, and storage rooms. The building also has a community meeting room attached. The City needs to consider options for upgrades, expansions, or new facility locations to improve emergency services.

School District

The Laurel School District serves the City of Laurel and the surrounding area. The District instructs 2,100 students in total. The District maintains instructional levels from Kindergarten through twelfth grade (K-12). The grades are grouped as follows:

- ❖ Kindergarten through 4th grade – Elementary School
- ❖ Grades 5 through 8 – Middle School
- ❖ Grades 9 through 12 – High School

The Laurel School District currently operates five school buildings that include:

- ❖ Laurel High School
- ❖ Laurel Middle School
- ❖ Fred W. Graff Elementary
- ❖ South Elementary
- ❖ West Elementary

The Laurel School District's Mission is: "Dedicated to the individual development of each student, every day, without exception." Students are assigned to a classroom or group depending on what will best serve that student. Considerations are made for class size, peer relations, student/teacher relations, and

teaching instructional style. The School District also has administrative offices located at the old Laurel Middle School at 410 Colorado Avenue.

The Goals of the Laurel School District are:

- ❖ To deliver a quality educational program that promotes both academic success and the overall development of every student.
- ❖ To meet the needs and skill level of each student.
- ❖ To promote high student expectations, the importance of lifelong learning and creative/critical thinking.
- ❖ To provide the students with a strong desire to learn.
- ❖ To foster self-discovery, self-awareness, and self-discipline.
- ❖ To develop an awareness of and appreciation for cultural diversity.
- ❖ To stimulate intellectual curiosity and growth.
- ❖ To provide fundamental career concepts and skills.
- ❖ To help the student develop sensitivity to others' needs and values and respect for individual and group differences.
- ❖ To be free of any sexual, cultural, ethnic, or religious bias.

The District previously established goals for District growth in a 10-15 Year Master Facility Plan. This plan included developing a new facility for grades 3 through 5 and a transportation facility, the remodeling of existing schools, relocating administrative offices, selling aging district-owned structures, and addressing inadequate learning environments in certain facilities. The District developed these goals to grow with the community and adapt when necessary and will be updating their Master Facility Plan in 2021.

Public Library

The Laurel Public Library was created in 1916 via ordinance and opened to the public on July 18, 1918. The Library was first established at 115 West 1st Street, the site of the current City Hall. The Library relocated to its current facility at 720 West 3rd Street in 1989 after fundraising by volunteers, and the Library Board allowed for the move. The Laurel Public Library serves the citizens that reside within the city limits. Yellowstone County residents are served without cost. Stillwater and Carbon County residents can also apply for and receive a library card. The Library's mission is to provide a "place where community members can grow, teach, and interact in mutual benefit with others."

The current library facility is approximately 6,000 square feet and contains four wings. The Library's clients' general needs are met by the current building, but improvements have been discussed. The Library could be improved by expanding the building to include a storage room, meeting rooms, and small study rooms. The needs of library clients have been growing, and the Library will need to grow with them.

The Library does not have any specific sharing agreements with the Parmly Library in Billings or other regional libraries. The Library is currently part of the Montana Shared Library Catalog Consortia by agreeing with the Montana State Library. This consortium comprises more than 140 libraries across the state consisting of public, academic, and particular library types.

Public Services and Facilities Goals and Objectives

Effective and efficient public services are a necessity for existing and prospective residents, developers, and businesses. Above all, public facilities and services must be accessible, helpful, and dependable for everyone residing, working, and visiting the City. City staff should identify the current gaps and projected needs of public facilities as the City grows. It is vital to work with public stakeholders and departments to ensure input and projects positively impact the whole population. Providing consistent and stable service delivery is paramount.

Goal 1: Provide consistent and high-quality public services to the community

- ❖ Develop standard operating procedures to ensure consistency for city departments
- ❖ Develop maintenance procedures for parks, facilities, and public areas.
- ❖ Study current facilities and services to identify gaps and determine projected needs in services

Goal 2: Respond to the changing nature of the community

- ❖ Plan for the expansion of public facilities in priority growth areas
- ❖ Invest in public facilities that are accessible to everyone in the community
- ❖ Study how to improve city services to boost the quality of life for residents, businesses, and institutions

Goal 3: Work with city departments and local stakeholders to determine the priority expansion of public facilities and services

- ❖ Open lines of communication between city departments and local stakeholders to gather input on major projects
- ❖ Consider the public service requirements of large-scale projects before their approval and implementation
- ❖ Develop plans for the expansion of Fire, Police, and EMS facilities

CHAPTER 13: RECREATION PLAN

Overview

Access to recreational opportunities and parkland is a critical component of quality of life for communities, especially Montana communities. The parks and public areas owned and maintained by the City of Laurel are assets to local and area residents. Access to walking, biking, hiking, and other local amenities help boost residents' and visitors' quality of life. Many cities and towns have begun establishing greenways and trails to connect parks and open spaces with local neighborhoods. Incorporating these into Laurel planning and development strategies can help enhance livability and help residents be healthier and more active.

The City should consider developing a vision for the Laurel parks system that would establish priorities for park funding and placement of parks that would be most useful for residents. Creating a connected park and trail system would enable residents to enjoy more parts of Laurel and the surrounding area.



Many of Laurel's parks are very small, with some located at less than ideal or fully accessible locations. Parkland must be a fully useable amenity for residents. Parks should be developed and improved to act as neighborhood focal points. The City should also study underutilized or burdensome parkland parcels and consider reuse scenarios.

Repurposing vacant or underused land as parks and trails can create many added benefits for a community. Downtown Laurel currently has large areas of vacant land owned by the BNSF Railroad and leased by MRL. Studying options for low impact reuse of this land as parkland or greenways could enliven downtown by activating the south side of Main Street, creating more opportunities for residents to spend time downtown, and creating more public space for events or gatherings.

Riverside Park has been a staple of the community for almost one hundred years. The Riverside Park Master Plan was developed in 2018 to provide a blueprint for improvements and the park's use. It will be essential to continue the ongoing improvement efforts detailed in that plan and develop policies to attract Yellowstone County and beyond. Riverside Park should be maintained as a historical, recreational, and economic asset in the future.

City Parks

There are many public parks throughout the City of Laurel. Some of the larger, more established parks are listed below. There are also many smaller unnamed parks throughout the city.

- ❖ Thomson Park
- ❖ Russell Park
- ❖ Nutting Park
- ❖ Kiwanis Park
- ❖ Murray Park
- ❖ South Pond
- ❖ Riverside Park
- ❖ Lions Park
- ❖ MT State Firefighters Memorial Park

Parks Funding, Governance, and Operations

The Public Works Department is responsible for maintaining and improving park facilities. Public Works provides staff time and funding toward the upkeep of park facilities. The City of Laurel Park Board comprises volunteers who provide oversight and input on park operations, maintenance, and activities.

Riverside Park is an essential historic asset for the city, the region, and Montana. Many private and public groups are active in this park's historic preservation, including the Yellowstone Historic Preservation Board that helps to support preservation and improvement efforts in Riverside Park.

Community Sponsored Events

Community sponsored events are an effective way to get residents outside, engaged with nature, and connected to their community. Laurel has a history of hosting popular events that get people outside and active. City staff and local stakeholders should continue to work together to promote outdoor events to encourage people to be more active in the community.

Laurel hosts several events throughout the year. The July 4th festivities include the Chief Joseph Run, pancake breakfast, parade, and fireworks celebration. Laurel also hosts an annual Christmas tree lighting event downtown, farmer's markets, and other seasonal events throughout the year.

The city's parks are a focal point for residents and visitors. They represent an important asset that makes Laurel a better place to live. City staff should partner with local groups to support community events and create more opportunities for recreational activities and outdoor enjoyment in the city's neighborhood parks.

Recreation Objectives and Policies and Strategies

Goal 1: Develop parkland as an essential and enjoyable amenity for residents

- ❖ Ensure new developments have appropriate park space for recreation and general use
- ❖ Study how existing parks can be improved through new facilities, changed layouts, or additions
- ❖ Review current park infrastructure and determine if improvements are necessary to serve the needs of the surrounding area better

Goal 2: Promote Riverside Park as a vital historic, civic, and recreation resource for residents and visitors

- ❖ Adhere to the projects and strategies presented in the 2018 Riverside Park Master Plan
- ❖ Seek grant funding for structural and site improvements
- ❖ Develop historic markers for Riverside Park and its historic structures
- ❖ Study options for connecting Riverside Park to the city proper through infrastructure improvements, civic engagement, or other means
- ❖ Establish signage and marketing for the assets and resources of Riverside Park to area residents and visitors

Goal 3: Create an interconnected system of parks, greenspace, and trails that are accessible to all

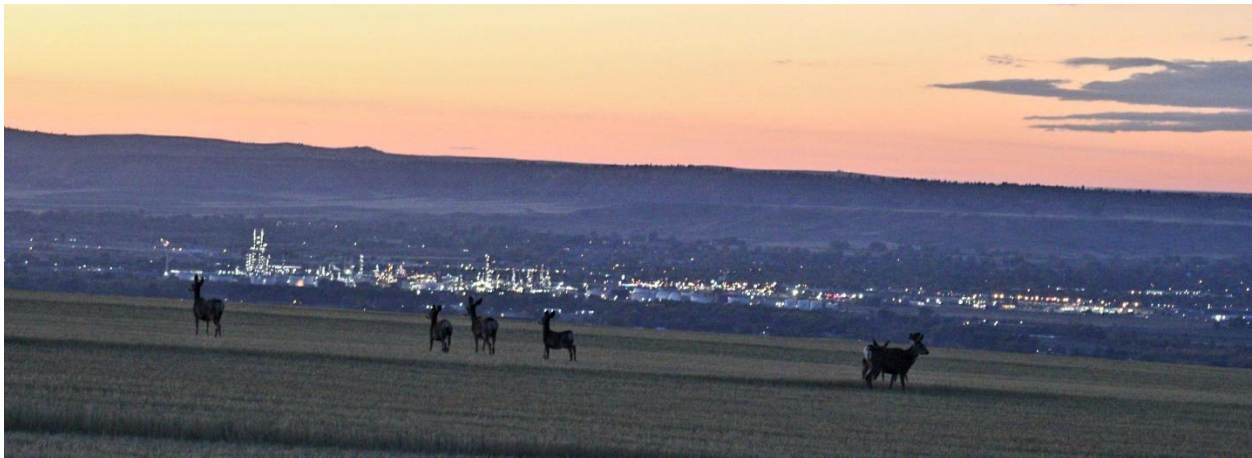
- ❖ Create a city-wide Park System Master Plan to develop project priorities
- ❖ Consider the creation of a City Parks Department to oversee park operations and maintenance
- ❖ Identify unused land that can be transformed into green space or trails for use by the public
- ❖ Update the zoning and development codes to encourage the creation of bicycle and pedestrian trail corridors

CHAPTER 14: NATURAL RESOURCES

Overview

The Laurel planning jurisdiction contains a variety of terrains and environments. The city itself is urbanized and is surrounded by several residential subdivisions. A variety of farmland, grazing land, riverine areas, and wetlands surround the city and make up much of the planning area. Laurel's natural features pose unique opportunities and challenges that should be considered when planning for growth.

The natural environment should be preserved and enhanced to balance environmental sustainability with economic growth, recreational opportunities, and development. Natural resources and the natural environment can be balanced with growth activities to provide social, economic, and community benefits to people over time while continuing their natural functions. The proximity to natural areas such as parks, trails, and other open spaces is an essential variable for many people as they choose where to live and work.



The Laurel area is an interconnected network of land and water resources that contribute to the community's health, economic well-being, and quality of life. This network of natural resources requires investment and maintenance, just like roads and utility systems. Creating a balance of conservation, management, and growth can reward a community with excellent benefits, including increased quality of life, longer-lasting infrastructure, and improved property values.

Groundwater Resources

Groundwater quality and quantity will become a growing concern as Laurel and the surrounding area develops. Traditional modes of living will shift because of groundwater issues. The direct impact of development in the area will be a reduction of groundwater recharge capacity. Groundwater recharge has averaged 8.2 inches per year but depends on the specific land use and soil type. The planning area contains relatively thin alluvial gravel deposits of groundwater. The average saturated thickness of local aquifers is fifteen feet, with the thinnest saturated zones occurring along cliffs and bluffs and the Yellowstone River's channel.

Wildlife Habitat

Rivers, Streams, and Lakes

It is important to recognize the Yellowstone River as a critical asset to Laurel. The Yellowstone River provides a stable water source for the city and recreational opportunities and riverine wildlife habitat. Maintaining the Yellowstone River as a resource is a complex job that includes managing the river ecosystem, monitoring historic water rights, and considering the local community's needs for economic and residential uses.

There are also many year-round and seasonal drainage and irrigation ditches that carry water through the city. These ditches include the Nutting Drain Ditch, Big Ditch, High Ditch, and Cove Ditch. Flooding is known to occur intermittently near the ditches. High water levels on properties near the ditches are a concern for property owners seeking to develop their property.



Floodplains

A floodplain is an area of land adjacent to a stream, river, or other water sources that stretches from the banks or boundaries of its channel to the base of higher elevation terrain that experiences flooding during high discharge rainfall periods. Floodplains are natural drainage basins for the discharge of heavy precipitation. The Yellowstone River exhibits vast floodplains and variations in flow due to terrain. Flow rates are dependent upon the season and the amount of rain and snowmelt. Flows are usually at their highest during the spring months and into early summer.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) utilizes the 100-year floodplain boundaries as the standard measurement for floodplain regulation. The 100-year floodplain is the area that has a one percent chance of flooding each year from a specific water source. The federal government expects municipalities and counties to take a proactive approach to flood damage prevention. Laurel has had an established Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) since 1982. This map was most recently updated in November of 2013.

Most of the Laurel planning area is outside the 100-year floodplain. The areas within the 100-year floodplain include many properties directly abutting the Yellowstone River and its tributaries, some irrigation and stormwater ditches running through the city, and portions of downtown Laurel along Main Street as well as directly adjacent side streets. Laurel's Riverside Park is also within the floodplain.

Wetlands

Wetlands are ecosystems that are flooded by water permanently or seasonally. Wetlands have unique vegetation, wildlife, and hydric soils. Wetlands near Laurel include riparian areas along the Yellowstone

and Clark's Fork Rivers, marshes, spring seeps, and prairie potholes. Wetlands have historically been obstacles and have been removed whenever possible. Much of Laurel and the surrounding area suffers from high groundwater. Close attention must be paid to high groundwater and its impacts on public utilities such as water lines, sewer lines, and stormwater drainage systems. It is vital to understand wetlands and their traditional role in the environment to better plan for growth and development.

Agricultural Land

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) defines prime farmland as land with the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops. These crops also have the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce economically sustained high crop yields when managed appropriately.



Laurel and Yellowstone County have been home to agricultural farms and ranches since the beginning of European settlement in the area. There a vast amount of agricultural farmland within the Laurel planning jurisdiction itself. The map below presents the varieties of crops in the Laurel planning area.

Laurel - Crop Data

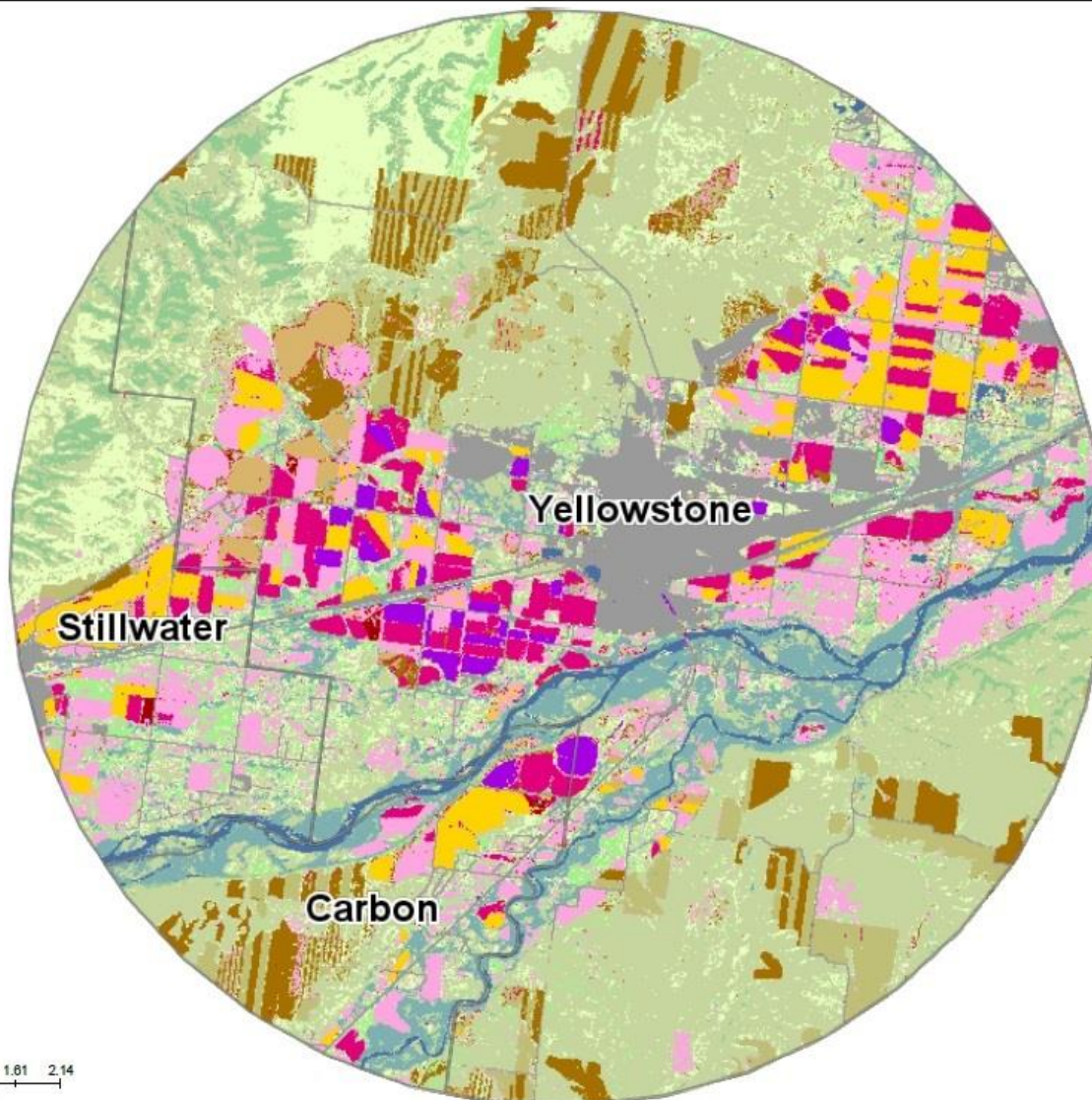
Land Cover Categories
(by decreasing acreage)

AGRICULTURE*

- Grass/Pasture
- Alfalfa
- Fallow/Idle Cropland
- Other Hay/Non Alfalfa
- Winter Wheat
- Barley
- Corn
- Spring Wheat
- Sugarbeets
- Dry Beans
- Triticale
- Peas
- Safflower
- Oats
- Flaxseed
- Canola

NON-AGRICULTURE**

- Shrubland
- Woody Wetlands
- Evergreen Forest
- Developed/Low Intensity
- Developed/Open Space
- Herbaceous Wetlands

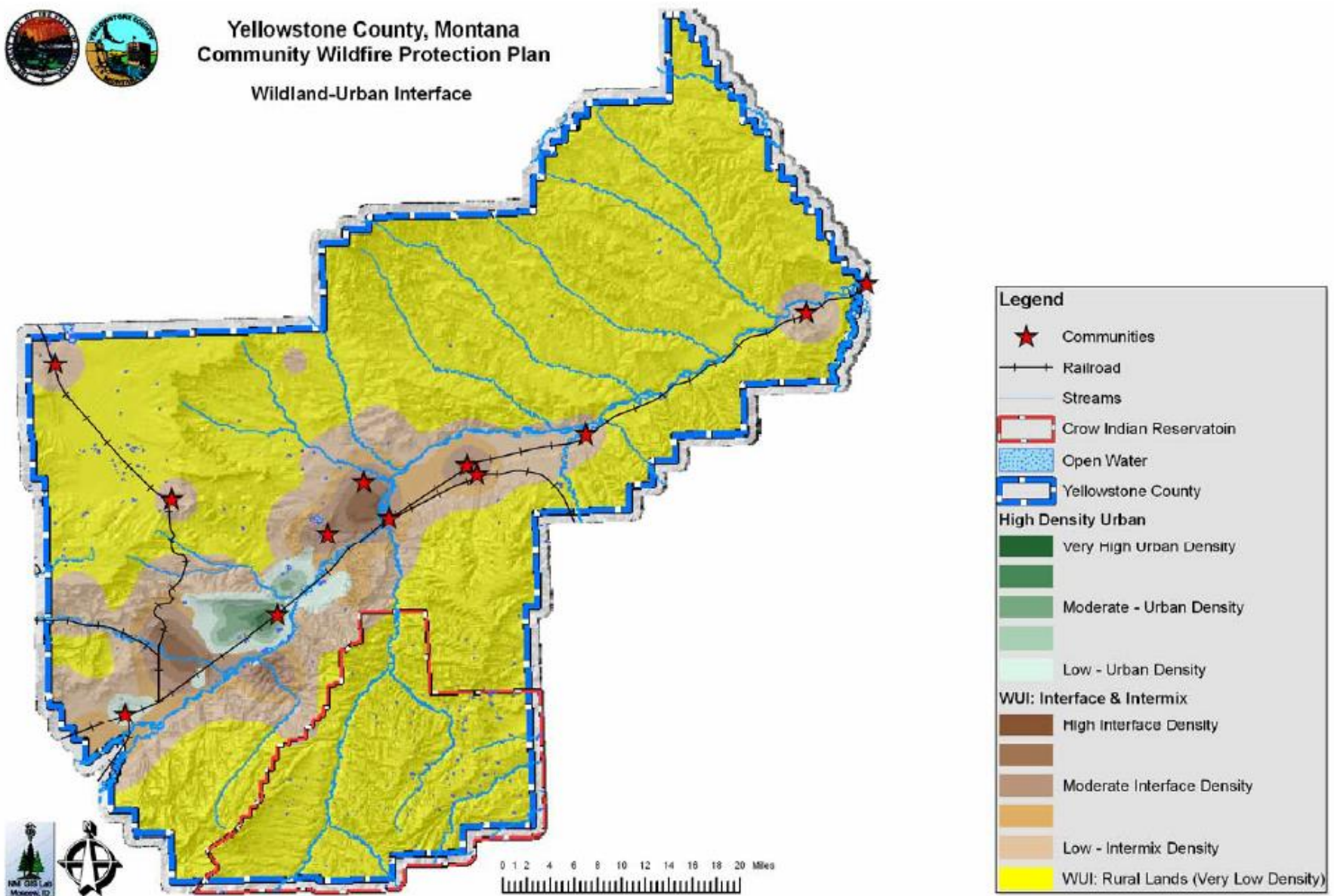


Wildland-Urban Interface and Significant Infrastructure



Yellowstone County, Montana Community Wildfire Protection Plan

Wildland-Urban Interface



Wildland-Urban Interface

Laurel was part of the planning process for the Community Wildfire Protection Plan in 2006. A Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) map was prepared as a part of this process. The planning process's goal was to improve fire prevention, reduce hazardous fuels, restore, fire-adapted ecosystems, and promote community assistance.

Yellowstone County has a diverse ecosystem with an array of vegetation that has developed with, and adapted to, fire as a natural disturbance. Decades of wildland fire suppression and long-standing land-use practices have altered the plant community. They have resulted in dramatic shifts in the types of fires and local species composition. Rangelands and farmland in Yellowstone County have become more susceptible to large-scale, high-intensity fires that threaten life, property, and natural resources because of these long-term practices.

Natural Resource Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Protect Laurel's natural resources and traditional environment

- ❖ Provide options for landowners for conserving portions of their land while developing others
- ❖ Achieve a balanced pattern of growth to ensure environmental concerns are considered during the development
- ❖ Manage the local water resources as a healthy, integrated system that provides long-term benefits from enhanced environmental quality

Goal 2: Incorporate sustainable development patterns in the Laurel subdivision and land use codes

- ❖ Review and update existing zoning and subdivision regulations to ensure environmental preservation and conservation are addressed
- ❖ Review and update landscaping ordinances as needed to best suit Laurel's natural environment
- ❖ Manage rivers, floodplains, wetlands, and other water resources for multiple uses, including flood and erosion protection, wildlife habitat, recreational use, open space, and water supply

Goal 3: Connect with local, regional, and state agencies and stakeholders to improve the natural environment in and around Laurel

- ❖ Sponsor environmental cleanup and rehabilitation programs that include the City, school district, community organizations, and residents
- ❖ Participate in regional watershed studies to achieve adequate long-term flood protection
- ❖ Explore the possibility of creating a conservation corridor along the Yellowstone River

CHAPTER 15: GROWTH POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Overview

The 2020 Laurel Growth Policy is a significant upgrade of the existing Growth Management Plan. The previous Growth Management Plan provided very useful information regarding existing community characteristics as well as trends that had future implications for the community, but it did not provide specific recommendations regarding how the community might best address existing and emerging issues.

The content of this chapter is critical to compliance with state law and provides necessary details for the Laurel community to be eligible for various funding programs and resources. The chapter is organized into two primary sections as follows:

1. Section 1: Identification of tools available to Montana cities to help implement the growth policy; and
2. Section 2: Fulfills a specific requirement in Montana State Law requiring growth policies to evaluate jurisdictional subdivision regulations in the following three ways:
 - a. Identification of how local government defines various impact assessments as specified in the law
 - b. Addressing how public hearings for proposed subdivisions will be conducted, and
 - c. Addressing how the local government will make decisions with respect to various impact assessments

In addition, the second section identifies specific objectives, policies, and strategies for six planning topic areas which are also outlined throughout the Growth Policy text:

- ❖ Land Use
- ❖ Housing
- ❖ Infrastructure
- ❖ Economic Development
- ❖ Public Facilities and Services
- ❖ Intergovernmental Coordination

In some cases, the topic areas identify specific resources and programs that are available to help implement strategies identified for each topic area. Objectives are also listed, and for each identified objective, there are recommended implementation measures. The implementation measures are either recommended policies or strategies. Recommended policies reflect the intent of how a governing body might address a planning topic or issue through policy. Strategies reflect a specific course of action that a governing body might utilize to address a specific planning topic or issue.

Implementation Tools

This section identifies several types of Growth Policy implementation tools. Generally, there are five types of tools at a local government's disposal to help implement a growth policy. They include:

- ❖ **Regulations:** Regulations are generally outlined and authorized by Montana Code Annotated (MCA) and adopted into law by local government.

- ❖ **Policies:** The Growth Policy and other adopted plans contain policies that express the community's interest in pursuing a course of action on topics and issues. Unlike regulations, local government has discretion in the implementation of policies.
- ❖ **Government Finance:** Government finance tools represent the community's financial commitment to fund the implementation of policies and strategies outlined in the Growth Policy.
- ❖ **Education:** Educational tools, such as the growth policy itself, include several activities that inform the public, appointed officials and elected officials that facilitate effective decision making.
- ❖ **Coordination:** Coordination tools are voluntary measures in the local government or between a local government and other local, state and federal government or agency that result in more efficient and effective delivery of services or a shared response to a common concern.

A discussion of each of the types of growth policy implementation tools is provided below. The tools described are not all inclusive but rather are intended to provide examples of tools that are commonly used by communities in Montana. Several of the tools are already being utilized by the City of Laurel. The tools not in use may be considered as additional means to advance the implementation of the Growth Policy.

Regulatory Tools

Subdivision Regulations

MCA requires counties to adopt subdivision regulations that comply with the Montana Subdivision and Platting Act. Subdivision regulations control the creation or modification of the division of land into new parcels or tracts. They also control the design of subdivisions and provide standards for adequate provision of infrastructure without adversely impacting public services and natural resources.

The City of Laurel has adopted subdivision regulations that are enforced in the City or on lands proposed for annexation into the City. Subdivision regulations will need to be updated to be consistent with this Growth Policy and must include any amendments made during the 2020 Montana Legislative session.

Zoning Regulations

Zoning regulations are a common regulatory tool to control land use. One of the primary purposes of zoning regulations is to minimize land use incompatibility. Zoning regulations also establish standards that limit the density or intensity of development as well as other characteristics of development such as off-street parking, signs, lighting, site layout, etc. Zoning regulations are supplements to a zoning map that establishes zoning districts in the jurisdiction. The zoning map provides the means to separate incompatible land uses and zoning regulations mitigate potential land use incompatibilities at the boundaries separating different zoning districts.

The City of Laurel adopted zoning regulations in 2001. Over the years, several amendments have been made. The city is in the process of reviewing a comprehensive update to the zoning regulations as prepared by their planning consultant. Pursuant to MCA, the City of Laurel can establish extraterritorial zoning jurisdiction up to one mile beyond the city limits if Yellowstone County and the city create the extraterritorial area and provide for joint administration.

Design Standards

Design standards are most often contained within zoning regulations but can also be established in subdivision regulations. The purpose of design standards is to enhance the appearance and functionality of a development. Overly restrictive design standards can impede development. If properly crafted, design standards can significantly enhance the built environment without placing undue burdens on a developer.

Floodplain Regulations

Floodplain regulations are intended to regulate the use of land located within an officially designated 100-year floodplain in order to protect buildings and occupants from the risks associated with flooding. Floodplain provisions are contained in the subdivision regulations. Some communities choose to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating System (CRS). CRS is a voluntary incentive program that recognizes and encourages community floodplain management activities that exceed the minimum NFIP requirements. Any community in compliance with the minimum requirements of NFIP may participate. Participation in the CRS results in discounted premiums for flood insurance policy holders; between 5 to 45 percent depending on the rating of proposed floodplain management activities, reducing the likelihood or magnitude of damage resulting from a flood.

Zoning Compliance Permits

Zoning compliance permits ensure that development activities comply with zoning regulations. The City of Laurel requires the issuance of zoning compliance permits for most types of improvements to private property.

Building Permits

Building permits are utilized to ensure that construction of buildings follows the State of Montana Building Code. Building permits are required for all buildings over two hundred (200) square feet. Most residential building permits are issued by the City Building Inspector but permits for commercial or residential buildings with five or more dwelling units are issued by the State.

Policy Tools

Neighborhood or Area Plans

The Growth Policy can be further implemented by more detailed neighborhood or area plans. With the adoption of the Growth Policy, plans may be prepared that provide a greater level of detail for specific areas or issues as the City finds need.

Annexation Policy

A city expands its boundaries and its jurisdictional authority through the process of annexation. There are six different methods for annexation authorized by state statute (Parts 42 through 46 of Title 7, Chapter 2, MCA). Part 46 authorizes an annexation resulting from a petition from private property owners.

Cities use two tools to facilitate and guide future annexations. The first is a “Limits of Annexation” map that delineates the areas surrounding the city that can be reasonably supported by urban services and infrastructure. The map is prepared in coordination with the preparation of a capital improvements plan. The second is the use of annexation agreements. Entering into an annexation agreement with a property

owner prior to the submission of development plans gives a local jurisdiction the opportunity to assign infrastructure and other costs associated with development of the annexed property.

Urban Planning Area

Urban planning areas are different than Extra Territorial/City-County Planning areas. An Urban Planning Area focuses on extension of infrastructure over a portion of the City-County Planning Jurisdiction and typically for a shorter time horizon than the jurisdictional area associated with the City-County Planning Jurisdiction.

Designation of an urban planning area is utilized for the extension of urban services as a jurisdiction grows. It delineates the geographic extent of how far outside the city limits the jurisdiction is prepared to extend urban services within a 10-year planning horizon. This is often accomplished by establishing an urban service area boundary beyond the city limits. The urban service area boundary is established in coordination with planned growth areas identified in the Growth Policy as well as the city's capital improvement plan. This tool helps a city plan for future growth outside the city limits and puts property owners outside the city limits on notice of what areas will and will not be supported by the extension of urban services.

Urban Renewal Districts

The establishment of urban renewal districts facilitates redevelopment of specifically selected areas in the city. Title 7, Chapter 15, Part 42 of the MCA gives municipalities authority to establish urban renewal districts in areas that meet the statutory definition of "blighted" areas and authorizes the municipality to expend funds in the area to stimulate private investment.

Tax increment finance (TIF) districts are often used to recapture the city's expenditure of funds for public improvements in the redevelopment area. TIF districts use the incremental increase in tax collections as blighted areas are redeveloped or other improvements are made to properties within the district. It is this increment that is used to retire debt to install the additional or new capital infrastructure. Municipalities are required to prepare and adopt an urban renewal plan prior to establishing an urban renewal district. For more information see the TIF Section under Government Finance Tools.

Government Finance Tools

Capital Improvement Programs

City and county governments often program capital improvements on an annual basis. This is a reasonable practice for communities experiencing minimal or no growth activity. However, the use of a multi-year capital improvement program is an important tool to plan for public expenditures when communities are experiencing or anticipating high levels of growth. In such cases, a local government may establish a five-year capital improvement program. As noted above, a multi-year capital improvement program can support the establishment of urban service areas and facilitate negotiation of an annexation agreement.

Fee Incentives

The reduction or full waiver of municipal fees can be utilized to support implementation of specific growth policy goals and objectives. Often the financial incentive is used to support affordable housing or redevelopment projects. The tool can also be used to support specific economic development policy.

Impact Fees

An impact fee is a charge on development assessed at the building permit or zoning compliance permit stage of a project to assist the funding of new or expanded facilities that are needed to accommodate the development. Impact fees are used by communities anticipating or experiencing high levels of growth and are intended to maintain existing or minimum levels of service with minimal costs to existing property owners.

Impact fees can be assessed for a wide range of community services including but not limited to public safety (EMS, police and fire), public works (sewer, water, transportation and drainage facilities), recreation, libraries, etc. Citizens who are assessed impact fees need to receive benefit from impact fee expenditures within a reasonable period, which most often is five years.

Local Government Owned Land

Land that is owned by local government, including school districts, is a valuable resource that can be used to implement growth policy goals and objectives. Undeveloped public land may be used to financially leverage private development that meets a community's high demand need. By reducing or eliminating land acquisition costs the jurisdiction provides a significant financial incentive to facilitate development that supports the implementation of land use, housing or economic development policy. When this implementation tool is used the local government should consider entering into a development agreement to ensure the developer provides the desired outcome.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) was first authorized by the Montana legislature in 1974. It is a locally-driven funding mechanism that allows cities and counties to direct property tax dollars that accrue from new development, within a specifically designed district, to community and economic development activities within that district. It is intended as a tool that can encourage and support investment in areas where growth has been hindered by a lack of infrastructure and/or the presence of blight.

TIF does not increase property taxes for individuals and businesses located within a designated district. It only affects the way that taxes are distributed after they have been collected. A base taxable value is determined upon the establishment of a TIF district, and any additional tax revenue that accrues due to new development over a specified time frame is used to finance a variety of district improvements.

Eligible improvement activities include:

- ❖ Land acquisition
- ❖ Rehabilitation and renovation
- ❖ Demolition and removal of structures
- ❖ Planning, marketing, and analysis
- ❖ General redevelopment activities
- ❖ Constructing, improving, and connecting to infrastructure

Education Tools

Planning Studies and Data Collection

The Growth Policy provides significant information and data on the community's various characteristics. It also provides an extensive list of policies and strategies to implement growth policy objectives. In most cases the information and data contained in the growth policy will be enough to justify and implement the policies and strategies. However, there may be cases where the community will need to conduct

more detailed follow-up planning studies and collect additional information to support an implementation activity. Establishing impact fees or urban renewal districts are examples of implementation measures requiring additional study. As discussed below, ongoing collection of data will support Growth Policy monitoring.

Growth Policy Monitoring

The recommended policies and strategies contained in the Growth Policy are based on an assessment of current information and data. Policies and strategies remain relevant so long as conditions in the community are aligned with current trends. However, unanticipated circumstances or opportunities are likely to arise that will warrant a re-evaluation of policies or strategies whether they have been implemented or not. To support a re-evaluation of policies or strategies, data that is applicable to planning topics should be collected and reported on an annual basis. This data will, in effect, provide community indicator information allowing the community to identify the emergence of new trends.

It is recommended that the City consider preparation of an annual community indicator report that can be used to support an evaluation of the level of success in achieving community goals and objectives, and an assessment of the need to implement or revise selected policies and strategies contained in the Growth Policy. Annual community Indicator reports also provide valuation information that can be used in the next update of the Growth Policy. The reports can also be used to justify need when requests for outside funding are made.

Community indicator reports should provide information that can be compared to information contained in the Growth Policy, so change can be measured. Annual community indicator reports should include, but are not limited to an assessment and review of the following information:

- ❖ Building permits for new housing
- ❖ Volume of sales of residential property (Laurel Real Estate MLS Service)
- ❖ Crime statistics (Laurel Police Department)
- ❖ Client caseloads for senior citizen programs (Yellowstone County Council on Aging)
- ❖ Number and type of new or expanded businesses
- ❖ Number and type of new jobs created (Montana Department of Labor and Industry)
- ❖ Tax revenue
- ❖ School enrollment
- ❖ Levels of participation in recreational programs
- ❖ Remaining capacity of sewer treatment facilities
- ❖ Remaining capacity of the landfill
- ❖ Updated population projections prepared by the Montana Department of Commerce
- ❖ Annual departmental budget reports/requests
- ❖ Medical Facility programming/services

Coordination Tools

Intra-Governmental Coordination

The functions of local government are logically divided into departments. The departmentalization of local government services tends to discourage the sharing of information and coordination between departments. Too often synthesizing information from the various departments to get a holistic view of the community is solely the responsibility of the elected officials and most often occurs during preparation of annual budgets. It is recommended that Laurel consider the timely sharing of department reports with staff members responsible for overseeing implementation of the Growth Policy.

In addition, the City might consider assigning individual departments the task of implementing or evaluating the need to implement recommended policies and strategies that most clearly impact those individual departments. This is an excellent way to spread ownership of the Growth Policy. Annual department reports can provide information on the status of recommended implementation activities. The City might consider including a Growth Policy Implementation section into each department budget, to institutionalize the community's commitment to Growth Policy implementation.

Intra-governmental coordination is also an effective tool to more efficiently deliver services. When leaders of each department meet periodically to share information and service delivery challenges, there is more opportunity to enhance coordination between departments and identify ways that staff, equipment and other departmental resources might be shared to mitigate service delivery challenges.

Inter-Governmental Coordination

The same principles discussed in the previous section apply to coordination between local governments and between local governments and regional, tribal, state and federal agencies. Inter-governmental coordination provides an opportunity to regularly share information about plans and programs and enhance working relationships.

The City might consider establishing a semi-annual meeting schedule with regional, state and federal agencies and a quarterly meeting schedule for local governments within the county. Individual County Commissioners and City Council members can be designated as the liaison for each agency and/or local government. The intangible benefits of this coordination are often the maintaining of open lines of communication and a greater mutual understanding of the perspectives and needs of the larger region and state.

Evaluation of Yellowstone County/Laurel Subdivision Regulations

An evaluation of the administration and standards contained in the Laurel Subdivision Regulations is required as part of the Growth Policy. There are three items that need to be evaluated per Title 76, Chapter 1, Part 6, 76-1-601(3)(h), MCA. 1).

1. How local government defines the various impacts assessments as specified in 76-3-608(3)(a),
2. How local government makes decisions with respect to the impact assessments as made, and
3. How public hearings for proposed subdivisions are conducted.

Impact Assessments: Definitions and Evaluation Factors

Local government subdivision regulations are required to review proposed subdivisions in accordance with the following criteria provided in 76-3-608(3)(a):

- ❖ The effect on agriculture
- ❖ The effect on agricultural water user's facilities
- ❖ The effect on local services
- ❖ The effect on the natural environment
- ❖ The effect on wildlife and wildlife habitat
- ❖ The effect on public health and safety

For each of the above criteria, applicable definitions and evaluative provisions contained in the subdivision regulations must be identified.

Effect on Agriculture

Agriculture is defined as all aspects of farming or ranching including the cultivation or tilling of soil; dairying; the production, cultivation, growing, harvesting of agricultural or horticultural commodities; raising of livestock, bees, fur-bearing animals or poultry; and any practices including forestry or lumbering operations, including preparation for market or delivery to storage, to market, or to carriers for transportation to market. The effect on agriculture is evaluated utilizing the following provisions:

1. Is the proposed subdivision or associated improvements located on or near prime farmland or farmland of statewide importance as defined by the Natural Resource Conservation Service? If so, identify each area on a copy of the preliminary plat.
2. Is the proposed subdivision going to result in removal of any agricultural or timber land from production? If so, describe.
3. Are there any possible conflicts with nearby agricultural operations (e.g., residential development creating problems for moving livestock, operating farm machinery, maintaining water supplies, controlling weeds or applying pesticides; agricultural operations suffering from vandalism, uncontrolled pets or damaged fences)? If so, describe.
4. Are there any possible nuisance problems which may arise from locating a subdivision near agricultural or timber lands? If so, describe.
5. What effects would the subdivision have on the value of nearby agricultural lands?

Effect on Agricultural Water User Facilities

Agricultural water user facilities are defined as those facilities which provide water for irrigation or stock watering to agricultural lands to produce agricultural products. These facilities include, but are not limited to, ditches, head gates, pipes and other water conveying facilities. The effect on agricultural water user facilities is evaluated by the following provisions:

1. Are there any conflicts the subdivision would create with agricultural water user facilities (e.g. residential development creating problems for operating and maintaining irrigation systems) or would agricultural water user facilities be more subject to vandalism or damage because of the subdivision? Describe.
2. Are there any possible nuisance problems which the subdivision would generate regarding agricultural water user facilities (e.g. safety hazards to residents or water problems from irrigation ditches, head gates, siphons, sprinkler systems or other agricultural water user facilities)? Describe.

Effect on Local Services

Local services are defined as any and all services that local governments, public or private utilities are authorized to provide for the benefit of their citizens. The effect on local services is evaluated by the following provisions:

1. Are there any additional or expanded public services and facilities that would be demanded of local government or special districts to serve the subdivision? Describe.
2. Are there any additional costs which would result for services such as roads, bridges, law enforcement, parks and recreation, fire protection, water, sewer and solid waste systems,

ambulance service, schools or busing, (including additional personnel, construction and maintenance costs)? Describe.

3. Who would bear these costs (e.g. all taxpayers within the jurisdiction, people within special taxing districts, or users of a service)?
4. Can service providers meet the additional costs given legal or other constraints (e.g. statutory ceilings on mill levies or bonded indebtedness)?
5. Are there off-site costs or costs to other jurisdictions that may be incurred (e.g. development of water sources or construction of a sewage treatment plant; costs borne by a nearby municipality)? Describe.
6. How does the subdivision allow existing services, through expanded use, to operate more efficiently, or makes the installation or improvement of services feasible (e.g. allow installation of a central water system or upgrading a country road)?
7. What are the present tax revenues received from the un-subdivided land?
 - a. By the County \$ _____
 - b. By the municipality, if applicable, \$ _____
 - c. By the school(s) \$ _____
8. What are the approximate revenues received by each above taxing authority if the lots are reclassified, and when the lots are all improved and built upon? Describe any other taxes that would be paid by the subdivision and into what funds (e.g. personal property taxes on mobile/manufactured homes are paid into the County general fund).
9. Would new taxes generated from the subdivision cover additional public costs?
10. How many special improvement districts would be created which would obligate local government fiscally or administratively? Are any bonding plans proposed which would affect the local government's bonded indebtedness?

Effect on Natural Environment

Natural environment is defined as the physical conditions which exist within a given area, including land, air, water, mineral, flora, fauna, sound, light and objects of historic and aesthetic significance. The effect on the natural environment is evaluated by the following provisions:

1. What are the known or possible historic, paleontological, archaeological or cultural sites, structures or objects which may be affected by the proposed subdivision? Describe and locate on a plat overlay or sketch map.
2. How would the subdivision affect surface and groundwater, soils, slopes, vegetation, historical or archaeological features within the subdivision or on adjacent land? Describe plans to protect these sites.
3. Would any stream banks or lake shorelines be altered, streams re-channeled or any surface water contaminated from sewage treatment systems, run-off carrying sedimentation, or concentration of pesticides or fertilizers?
4. Would groundwater supply likely be contaminated or depleted as a result of the subdivision?
5. Would construction of roads or building sites require cuts and fills on steep slopes or cause erosion on unstable, erodible soils? Would soils be contaminated by sewage treatment systems? Explain
6. What are the impacts that removal of vegetation would have on soil erosion, bank or shoreline instability?
7. Would the value of significant historical, visual or open space features be reduced or eliminated?

8. Are there any natural hazards the subdivision could be subject to (such as flooding, rock, snow or landslides, high winds, severe wildfires, or difficulties such as shallow bedrock, high water table, unstable or expansive soils, or excessive slopes?
9. How would the subdivision affect visual features within the subdivision or on adjacent land? Describe efforts to visually blend the proposed development with the existing environment (e.g. use of appropriate building materials, colors, road design, underground utilities and re-vegetation of earthworks).

Effect on Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat

Wildlife is defined as those animals that are not domesticated or tamed, or as may be defined in a Growth Policy. Wildlife habitat is defined as the place or area where wildlife naturally lives or travels through. The effect on wildlife and wildlife habitat are evaluated by the following provisions:

1. What impacts would the subdivision or associated improvements have on wildlife areas such as big game wintering range, migration routes, nesting areas, wetlands or important habitat for rare or endangered species?
2. What effect would pet, or human activity have on wildlife?

Effect on Public Health and Safety

Public health and safety are defined as the prevailing healthful, sanitary condition of wellbeing for the community at large. Conditions relating to public health and safety include but are not limited to: disease control and prevention; emergency services; environmental health; flooding, fire or wildfire hazards, rock falls or landslides, unstable soils, steep slopes and other natural hazards; high voltage lines or high pressure gas lines; and air or vehicular traffic safety hazards. The effect on public health and safety is evaluated by the following provisions:

1. Are there any health or safety hazards on or near the subdivision, such as: natural hazards, lack of water, drainage problems, heavy traffic, dilapidated structures, high pressure gas lines, high voltage power lines or irrigation ditches? These conditions, proposed or existing, should be accurately described with their origin and location identified on a copy of the preliminary plat.
2. Would the subdivision be subject to hazardous conditions due to high voltage lines, airports, highways, railroads, dilapidated structures, high pressure gas lines, irrigation ditches and adjacent industrial or mining uses?
3. How will the subdivision affect the adjacent land use? Identify existing uses such as feed lots, processing plants, airports or industrial firms which could be subject to lawsuits or complaints from residents of the subdivision.
4. What public health or safety hazards, such as dangerous traffic, fire conditions or contamination of water supplies would be created by the subdivision?

In addition to the above factors, the subdivision regulations also require preparation of a community impact report on the following public services and facilities.

1. Education and busing
2. Roads and maintenance
3. Water, sewage, and solid waste facilities
4. Fire and police protection
5. Payment for extension of capital facilities

Public Hearing Requirements and Procedures

The subdivision regulations contain several sections that specify the procedural requirements for the following types of subdivision applications.

1. Divisions of land exempt from subdivision review
2. Review and approval procedures for minor subdivisions
3. Review and approval procedures for major subdivisions, including review and approval of preliminary and final plats
4. Expedited review of a first minor subdivision

The subdivision regulations apply to all jurisdictions within the county. The County is in the process of updating the subdivision regulations for consistency with all applicable enacted amendments to the MCA during the last three Montana legislative sessions. All procedural provisions, including those applicable to public hearings, are consistent with the current statutory provisions contained in the MCA.

Objectives, Policies and Strategies

A growth policy is a foundational document. It is intended to provide an overview of the community in terms of guidance for future planning. As a guiding document, the growth policy should encourage as many “finer point” studies and documents as possible to encourage refining of larger scope ideas.

Items outlined in the following tables are only options, and do not in any way obligate the governing body to pursue, fund or prioritize any given option or opportunity. Instead, the following are the recommended objectives and policies and strategies for each topic of the Growth Policy. For each policy and strategy, the entity responsible for implementation is identified and a recommended time frame for implementation is provided. The entity listed first for each policy and strategy (in italicized type) is assigned the primary responsibility to initiate and follow-through with implementation measures. In a few cases, multiple entities are assigned the primary responsibility for implementation. Other listed entities for recommended policies and strategies are responsible for supporting the implementation measures. Four implementation time frames are provided:

1. Immediate (defined as within a year after adoption of the Growth Policy)
2. Short-term (defined as not later than two years after adoption of the Growth Policy)
3. Mid-term (defined as between two and four years after adoption of the Growth Policy)
4. Long-term (defined as prior to the future update of the Growth Policy in 5 years (2025))

Land Use Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Conserve Open Space and Traditional Land Uses		
OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	TIME FRAME
Encourage cluster developments to incorporate open space into new developments	Planning Dept City Council	Mid-term
Provide options for landowners for conserving portions of their land	Planning Dept City Council	Immediate
Study and Implement strategies to create an interconnected system of parks and greenways and open space that are accessible	Public Works Planning City Council	Mid-term Long-term

Goal 2: Develop downtown Laurel into a vibrant place to live, work, and play		
OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	TIME FRAME
Encourage mixed uses for living, working, and shopping local	Planning Board County Commission	Short-term
Identify priority parcels for infill development	Planning Board LURA	Mid-term
Implement Placemaking projects to create a more livable and enjoyable downtown	Planning Dept Chamber of Commerce LURA Public Works	Short-term Mid-term
Partner with local groups to support community businesses, events, and gatherings	City Council Planning Chamber of Commerce	Immediate
Connect with regional agencies to access project funding, receive technical support, and boost the visibility of Laurel development opportunities	City Council County Commission Planning Dept BSEDA	Long-term

Goal 3: Update Subdivision Code to meet the needs of Laurel and the surrounding area		
OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	TIME FRAME
Provide clear and consistent standards	Planning Dept Zoning Commission Public Works Dept	Short-term
Ensure the proper scale and scope of regulations	Planning Dept Planning Board Zoning Commission	Mid-term
Include trails, open space, and greenway considerations in parkland subdivision review	Planning Dept Planning Board	Mid-term Long-term
Regularly review and update the Subdivision Code as needed to remain current	Planning Board City Council	Long -term

Goal 4: Update Zoning Code to provide for greater flexibility of allowable uses, clearer requirements, and more efficient land use		
OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	TIME FRAME
Study the inclusion of different types of housing within residential districts	Planning Dept Planning Board	Mid-term
Update Overlay Districts, Parking Requirements, and the Sign Code to better fit the City's needs and character	Planning Dept Planning Board Public Works LURA	Short-term Mid-term
Allow mixed-use live/work opportunities in commercial areas	Planning Dept Planning Board	Short-term
Enable property owners to use their land more effectively and efficiently	Planning Board Planning Dept	Mid-term

Goal 5: Use long term planning documents to identify funding and address priority needs for infrastructure and development		
OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	TIME FRAME
Establish an Annexation Plan to develop priority growth areas and strategies	City Council Planning Dept Public Works	Mid-term
Develop a Capital Improvement Plan for vital infrastructure to support the City as it grows	Public Works Planning Dept	Short-term
Prepare a Commercial and Industrial Development Study for land adjacent to major transportation routes in the Laurel area	Planning Dept City Council	Mid-term

Annexation Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Adopt a long-range view for the growth of the City		
OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	TIME FRAME
Establish a growth-conscious set of policies to expand the City and its services	Planning Board City Council	Mid-term Long-term
Create priority growth areas for extension of services	Planning B City Council	Immediate
Develop and approve an Annexation Plan for the Laurel Planning Jurisdiction	Planning Dept City Council BSEDA Beartooth RC&D	Short-term Mid-term

Goal 2: Manage fiscal responsibility with established and proposed annexation standards		
OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	TIME FRAME
Ensure that the established standards are right and proper for the City of Laurel	Planning Board County Commission	Short-term
Ease the burden for developers to annex into the City while meeting established standards	Planning Board City Council	Mid-term
Allow greater flexibility in development patterns	Planning Board Planning Dept	Short-term Mid-term
Determine the cost and benefits of annexation	Clerk-Treasurer City Council Planning Dept Public Works	Mid-term

Housing Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Encourage a mixture of housing types to meet the demand of all market sectors		
OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	TIME FRAME
Maintain a diverse array of housing and affordability levels	Planning Dept	Immediate
Promote higher density housing types in the downtown area and adjacent to major transportation corridors	Planning Dept	Mid-term
Study mixed-use housing and other alternative housing types and styles	Planning Dept	Mid-term Long-term
Provide options for a full spectrum of housing from rentals to retirement housing	Planning Dept	Long-term

Goal 2: Provide information on housing-related grants, loans, and ownership programs		
OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	TIME FRAME
Develop a list of resources for renters and homeowners	Planning Dept Montana Housing	Short-term
Collect information on federal, state, local, and philanthropic rental and homeownership programs	Planning Dept Montana Housing HUD	Short-term Mid-term
Advise Laurel area residents as to available support for housing, rent, and homeownership	Planning Dept	Immediate

Infrastructure Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Maintain an effective and efficient public infrastructure system that adequately serves the needs of the City		
OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	TIME FRAME
Develop a data-driven infrastructure maintenance schedule	Public Works	Short-term
Determine any existing gaps in services and other infrastructure deficiencies within the City	Public Works Planning	Short-term Mid-term
Adopt up-to-date infrastructure standards that are appropriate for the needs of the City	Public Works	Short-term
Study using public spaces within floodplains, watercourses, and wetlands to be used as passive recreation areas such as parks and	Planning Dept Planning Board	Mid-term Long-term
Study the feasibility of recycling programs and other means to reduce solid waste	Public Works Planning Dept	Mid-term
Incorporate stormwater system planning into roadway and other infrastructure planning processes	Planning Dept Public Works City Council	Mid-term Long-term

Goal 2: Establish the long-term capital and infrastructure needs for the City		
OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	TIME FRAME
Develop a Capital Improvement Plan for the improvement and expansion of infrastructure	Public Works City Council	Mid-term
Prepare a Water System Master Plan	Public Works Planning Dept	Mid-term Long-term
Create a Wastewater System Master Plan	Public Works Planning Dept	Mid-term Long-term
Complete a Stormwater Management Plan	Public Works Planning Dept	Mid-term Long-term
Ensure infrastructure planning documents are routinely updated.	Public Works	Long-term
Confirm that the established infrastructure priorities are adequate	Public Works Planning City Council	Mid-term

Goal 3: Seek out possible funding sources for the expansion and improvement of infrastructure and essential community services		
OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	TIME FRAME
Study the physical and financial needs for the extension of infrastructure to priority growth areas	Planning Dept Public Works	Mid-term
Collaborate with Montana agencies on major projects and studies	City Council	Immediate
Explore federal, state, and philanthropic infrastructure grant opportunities	Public Works Planning Dept	Short-term
Determine positive impacts from the expansion and improvement of infrastructure	Public Works Planning Dept	Mid-term
Apply for funding opportunities that are appropriate for city priorities and projects and assist in keeping user fees reasonable	Public Works Planning Dept Clerk-Treasurer	Mid-term Long-term

Infrastructure Funding Opportunities:

Montana Department of Environmental Quality, Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Loan Program

The Montana Legislature established the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) Loan Program for Drinking Water projects. The program provides at or below market interest rate loans to eligible Montana entities. The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is the administering agency and assures the technical, financial and programmatic requirements of the program are met.

Eligible water projects include acquisition of land that is integral to the project, consolidating water supplies, engineering, new sources, treatment, source water protection, storage and distribution.

Eligible applicants are municipalities, public or private community water systems and non-profit, non-community water systems. The current interest rate for loans is 3.75 percent with payment schedules not to exceed 20 years. Drinking Water Projects qualifying as disadvantaged may extend the term up to 30 years.

Applications are accepted year-round. Preliminary engineering analysis must be reviewed prior to submittal of application.

Montana Department of Environmental Quality, Water Pollution Control State Revolving Fund Loan Program

The Montana Legislature established the Water Pollution Control State Revolving Fund (WPCSRF) Loan Program for water pollution control projects. The program provides at or below market interest rate loans to eligible Montana entities. Cooperatively, DEQ and DNRC administer the Water Pollution Control State Revolving Fund Loan Program.

Eligible water quality projects include wastewater treatment plant improvements, interceptors, collectors and lift stations, lagoon construction and rehabilitation, engineering and project inspection, and land used for disposal purposes. All projects must be included in a project priority list and intended use plan for the fiscal year in which funding is anticipated, and the ability to repay loan funding must be demonstrated.

Eligible applicants are municipalities for wastewater projects as well as municipalities and private entities for nonpoint source projects. The current interest rate for loans is 3.75 percent with payment schedules not to exceed 20 years. Water Pollution Control projects qualifying as disadvantaged may extend the payment term up to 30 years. Applications are accepted year-round. Preliminary engineering analysis must be reviewed prior to submittal of application.

Montana Department of Commerce, Treasure State Endowment Program Construction Grants (TSEP)

The Treasure State Endowment Program (TSEP) awards matching grants to local governments for construction of local infrastructure projects. TSEP construction grants provide help in financing infrastructure projects throughout Montana. Eligible applicants include incorporated cities and towns, counties, consolidated governments, Tribal governments and county or multi-county water, sewer or solid waste districts.

A dollar-for-dollar match is required, but in cases of extreme financial hardship where the public's health and safety are seriously affected, grants up to 75 percent of the project costs may be awarded. Matching funds can be public or private funds. Construction grant applications are limited to a maximum of \$750,000. Applications are typically due the first week of May on even numbered years.

US Department of Agriculture, Water and Environmental Load and Grant Program (WEP)

Water and Environmental Programs (WEP) loans and grants provide funding for drinking water, sanitary sewer, solid waste and storm drainage facility projects in rural areas and cities and towns of 10,000 or less. WEP also makes grants to nonprofit organizations to provide technical assistance and training to assist rural communities with their water, wastewater and solid waste problems. Eligible projects include construction, repair and expansion of water, wastewater, storm water and solid waste systems.

Public bodies, non-profit organizations and recognized Indian Tribes are all eligible applicants for the program. This funding opportunity is capped at 75 percent of total project costs. Applications are accepted on a continual basis.

Economic Development Administration, Public Works Grant Program

The Economic Development Administration (EDA) provides public works investments to support construction or rehabilitation of essential public infrastructure and facilities to help communities and regions leverage their resources and strengths to create new and better jobs, drive innovation, become centers of competition in the global economy and ensure resilient economies.

Eligible projects are those pertaining to water and wastewater systems that address national strategic priorities, assist economically distressed and underserved communities, demonstrate a good return on EDA's investment through job creation or retention, demonstrate or support regional collaboration and employ public-private partnerships to use both public and private resources and/or leverage complementary investments.

Eligible applicants include municipalities, counties, and Indian Tribes. The maximum award attainable is 75 percent of project cost. Application deadlines are variable and would need to be determined at the time of application.

US Department of Interior, Water Grant Program System Optimization Review Grant

The Water Program focuses on improving water conservation, sustainability and helping water resource managers make sound decisions about water use. It identifies strategies to ensure present and future generations will have enough clean water for drinking, economic activities, recreation and ecosystem health. The program also identifies adaptive measures to address climate change and its impact on future water demands.

Eligible projects include any plan of action that focuses on improving efficiency and operations on a regional or basin perspective. Eligible applicants include the state, Indian Tribes, irrigation districts, water districts or other organizations with water or power delivery authority.

A 50 percent match is required for this funding opportunity and the maximum award attainable is \$300,000.

Transportation Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Preserve, maintain, and improve the existing transportation system		
OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	TIME FRAME
Update the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)	Planning Dept City Council	Mid-term
Establish a systematic approach for the maintenance and repair of the road network.	Public Works City Council	Short-term
Develop a Capital Improvement Plan to identify and prioritize significant transportation projects	City Council Public Works Planning Dept	Short-term Mid-term
Establish a road network master plan to ensure street continuity, traffic flow, and neighborhood connectivity	Planning Dept Planning Board Public Works	Mid-term Long-term
Promote fiscal responsibility and high return on investment	Clerk-Treasurer City-Council Public Works	Immediate
Coordinate roadway improvement projects to coincide with underground infrastructure improvements	Public Works Planning Dept MDT	Immediate

Goal 2: Improve the mobility, safety, and accessibility of all users and modes of travel		
OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	TIME FRAME
Implement bicycle and pedestrian improvements and traffic calming measures to transform the downtown area into a pedestrian-friendly place	Planning Dept Public Works MDT	Mid-term Long-term
Create a looping bicycle/pedestrian trail and street system that connects different areas of Laurel	Planning Dept Planning Board	Long-term
Adopt pedestrian and multi-modal friendly transportation standards and safety measures	Planning Board Public Works City Council	Short-term Mid-term
Explore options to improve and expand the Laurel Transit program and strategies to create other multi-modal transportation	Planning Dept Clerk-Treasurer	Mid-term Long-term
Partner with local, regional, and statewide groups to further integrate Laurel into the more comprehensive passenger transportation network	Planning Dept Planning Board City Council	Long-term

Goal 3: Connect transportation decisions to land-use decisions		
OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	TIME FRAME
Integrate land-use planning and transportation planning to manage better and develop the transportation network.	Planning Dept Public Works MDT City Council	Short-term
Utilize transportation projects to encourage intensive development patterns along significant routes and existing areas of the City	Planning Dept Public Works	Short-term
Adopt and implement consistent system policies and maintenance standards	Public Works City Council	Short-term
Ensure the development of a sustainable transportation system that minimizes environmental impacts	Planning Dept Planning Board City Council	Long-term

Economic Development Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Develop downtown Laurel as a destination to live, work, and play		
OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	TIME FRAME
Institute placemaking projects to further enhance district character	Planning Dept LURA Chamber of Commerce	Short-term
Increase live-work opportunities for current and future residents and businesses	Planning Dept	Long-term
Apply Tax Increment Financing (TIF) funding to beautification, blight removal, and public improvement projects	LURA Planning Dept City Council	Mid-term Long-term
Identify and find solutions for unused or underused parcels as candidates for development	Planning Dept LURA	Mid-term

Goal 2: Create a resilient local economy		
OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	TIME FRAME
Strengthen core businesses and industries through communication and connections with technical support	Planning Dept Chamber of Commerce BSEDA	Immediate
Ensure that local economic activities are inclusive and accessible to all stakeholders	Chamber of Commerce BSEDA	Immediate
Implement policies that create stable and sustainable economic growth	Planning Dept City Council	Long-term
Work to highlight the shared benefits of working together as a community with local businesses stakeholders, and developers	Planning Dept Chamber of Commerce BSEDA	Immediate
Provide an economic ecosystem that allows for a wide array of businesses, industries, and developments to thrive	Planning Dept Chamber of Commerce Big Sky EDA Beartooth RC&D City Council	Mid-term Long-term
Study and implement policies to enhance local business demand and alternative strategies for value creation for the community	Chamber of Commerce BSEDA Beartooth RC&D	Long-term

Goal 3: Collaborate with area organizations to support economic growth and local employment and training opportunities		
OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	TIME FRAME
Communicate with local groups to determine any needs and assistance	Planning Dept BSEDA Beartooth RC&D	Immediate
Create partnerships with local and regional groups to fill local service gaps and create needed programming	City Council City Departments County Commission	Mid-term
Take part in events and workshops to support local business initiatives and activities	Planning Dept Chamber of Commerce City Council	Immediate Short-term
Establish common ground with local and regional groups to provide resources and assistance	BSEDA Planning Dept	Mid-term Long-term
Connect residents and businesses with like-minded economic, financial, and entrepreneurship resources and opportunities	Planning Dept BSEDA Chamber of Commerce	Mid-term Long-term

Goal 4: Study options for new commercial and industrial properties in anticipated high-growth areas		
OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	TIME FRAME
Create a Corridor Master Plan for growth in and around the intersection with Old Route 10 and the West Laurel Interchange	Planning Dept City Council	Mid-term
Study options and determine priorities for the possible establishment of Tax Increment Financing Districts (TIFs) and Targeted Economic Development Districts (TEDDs)	City Council Planning Dept BSEDA Beartooth RC&D Planning Board	Short-term Mid-term
Review and pursue opportunities for clustered commercial or industrial parks	Planning Dept BSEDA Beartooth RC&D City Council Chamber of Commerce	Short-term Mid-term
Develop funding strategies to provide services for priority growth areas.	Planning Dept Public Works Clerk-Treasurer	Short-term Mid-term

Economic Development Funding Opportunities

Community Development Block Grant Program

Each year the US Entity of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) allocates grant funding to the Montana Department of Commerce for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. Funds are intended to benefit low or moderate-income persons, aid in prevention or elimination of slums or meet urgent community development needs. CDBG is broken into five different funding categories: Planning, Public Facilities, Housing and Neighborhood Renewal, Neighborhood Stabilization Program and Economic Development.

Eligible applicants include counties, incorporated cities and towns, and consolidated city-county governments. Deadlines are staggered throughout the year with planning grants being offered one year and construction grants the following year generally.

Montana Department of Commerce, Montana Main Street Program

The mission of the Montana Department of Commerce Main Street program is to be a coordinating resource for communities seeking to revitalize their historic downtown or core commercial districts and to provide technical assistance to communities of all sizes. The underlying premise of the Montana Main Street Program is to encourage economic development within the context of historic preservation.

In 2011, the project began gearing toward community development. The Montana Main Street Program was awarded a Preserve America sub grant from the Montana State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) in 2011. The purpose of the grant was to focus on core and downtown planning and to build capacity under the Main Street program. It was this sub grant that focused the program toward community development.

Public Facilities and Services Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Provide consistent and high-quality public services to the community		
OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	TIME FRAME
Develop standard operating procedures to ensure consistency for city departments	City Council Public Works Planning Dept EMS Fire Dept Police Dept	Mid-term Long-term
Develop maintenance procedures for parks, facilities, and public areas.	Public Works	Mid-term
Study current facilities and services to identify gaps and determine projected needs in services	City Council Public Works	Mid-term

Goal 2: Respond to the changing nature of the community		
OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	TIME FRAME
Plan for the expansion of public facilities in priority growth areas	Planning Dept City Council City Departments	Short-term Mid-term
Invest in public facilities that are accessible to everyone in the community	Public Works	Long-term
Study how to improve city services to boost the quality of life for residents, businesses, and institutions	Planning Dept Public Works	Long-term

Goal 3: Work with city department and local stakeholders to determine the priority expansion of public facilities and services		
OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	TIME FRAME
Open lines of communication between city departments and local stakeholders to gather input on major projects	City Departments MDT County Commission	Immediate
Consider the public service requirements of large-scale projects before their approval and implementation	Planning Dept Public Works	Immediate
Develop plans for the expansion of Fire, Police, and EMS facilities	Planning Dept Public Works Fire Dept Police Dept EMS	Short-term Mid-term

Recreation Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Develop parkland as an essential and enjoyable amenity for residents		
OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	TIME FRAME
Ensure new developments have appropriate park space for recreation and general use	Planning Dept Public Works City Council	Immediate Short-term
Study how existing parks can be improved through new facilities, changed layouts, or additions	Public Works Planning Dept	Mid-term Long-term
Review current park infrastructure and determine if improvements are necessary to serve the needs of the surrounding area better	Public Works Planning Dept	Long-term

Goal 2: Promote Riverside Park as a vital historic, civic, and recreation resource for residents and visitors		
OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	TIME FRAME
Adhere to the projects and strategies presented in the 2018 Riverside Park Master Plan	Planning Dept Public Works City Council	Immediate
Seek grant funding for structural and site improvements	Planning Dept City Council	Immediate
Develop historic markers for Riverside Park and its historic structures	Planning Dept YC Historic Pres. Board Western Heritage Center	Mid-term
Study options for connecting Riverside Park to the city proper through infrastructure improvements, civic engagement, or other means	Planning Department Public Works City Council	Long-term
Establish signage and marketing for the assets and resources of Riverside Park to area residents and visitors	Planning Dept YC Historic Pres. Board Western Heritage Center	Mid-term

Goal 3: Create an interconnected system of parks, greenspace, and trails that are accessible to all		
OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	TIME FRAME
Create a city-wide Park System Master Plan to develop project priorities	Planning Dept Park Board	Mid-term
Consider the creation of a City Parks Department to oversee park operations and maintenance	Public Works Park Board City Council	Long-term
Identify unused land that can be transformed into green space or trails for use by the public	Park Board Public Works Planning Dept	Mid-term Long-term
Update the zoning and development codes to encourage the creation of bicycle and pedestrian trail corridors	Planning Dept	Short-term Mid-term

Natural Resource Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Protect Laurel's natural resources and traditional environment		
OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	TIME FRAME
Provide options for landowners for conserving portions of their land while developing others	Planning Dept Planning Board City Council	Short-term Immediate
Achieve a balanced pattern of growth to ensure environmental concerns are considered during the development	Planning Dept	Long-term
Manage the local water resources as a healthy, integrated system that provides long-term benefits from enhanced environmental	Planning Dept Public Works	Immediate

Goal 2: Incorporate sustainable development patterns in the Laurel subdivision and land use codes		
OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	TIME FRAME
Review and update existing zoning and subdivision regulations to ensure environmental preservation and conservation are addressed	Planning Board Planning Dept	Short-term
Review and update landscaping ordinances as needed to best suit Laurel's natural environment	Planning Board	Mid-term
Manage rivers, floodplains, wetlands, and other water resources for multiple uses, including flood and erosion protection, wildlife	Planning Dept Planning Board	Immediate

Goal 3: Connect with local, regional, and state agencies and stakeholders to improve the natural environment in and around Laurel		
OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	TIME FRAME
Sponsor environmental cleanup and rehabilitation programs that include the City, school district, community organizations, and residents	City Council	Mid-term
Participate in regional watershed studies to achieve adequate long-term flood protection	Planning Board	Long-term
Explore the possibility of creating a conservation corridor along the Yellowstone River	Planning Dept Park Board County Commission	Long-term

Intergovernmental Coordination Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Establish lines of communication with local, county, and state partners		
OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	TIME FRAME
Create an accurate directory of government representatives and staff	Clerk-Treasurer	Immediate
Update governmental stakeholders regarding ongoing projects and work in the Laurel area	City Council Planning Dept	Short-term
Develop working relationships with legislators, staff, and stakeholders at different levels of government	City Council Department Heads	Immediate

Goal 2: Coordinate with local and regional institutions to support and grow the Laurel community		
OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	TIME FRAME
Work with economic development groups to seize opportunities for business growth	Chamber of Commerce BSEDA Beartooth RC&D City Council	Immediate
Connect area businesses with institutions and governmental groups that can support their mission	Chamber of Commerce BSEDA Beartooth RC&D	Immediate
Communicate with area legislators to provide information on growth patterns and development in the Laurel area.	City Council Planning Dept	Short-term
Maintain open communications with state agencies and the Board of County Commissioners to confirm compliance with statewide codes and operational needs.	City Council Department Heads	Long-term

Ongoing inter-governmental coordination efforts will be maintained. The City of Laurel has inter-local agreements with the School District on cooperative efforts, the shared use of facilities, and other areas of mutual interest. The City interacts with a number of agencies and organizations including but not limited to the Laurel School District, Eastern Montana Drug Task Force (EMDTF), Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP), Department of Environmental Quality, (DEQ), Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC), and the many departments and shared Yellowstone County jurisdictions.

It will be important to maintain regular communications between City officials and the many local, county, regional, and state groups to discuss ongoing efforts and coordination activities. The County Commissioners have a direct impact on the Laurel area through the four members they appoint to the Laurel City-County Planning Board. This is done due to the mixed city-county make-up of the Laurel planning area that encompasses the city as well as areas within the County jurisdiction. A copy of the 2020 Laurel Growth Management Policy will be submitted to the Yellowstone County Commissioners for review and comment prior to the official adoption by the City Council.

File Attachments for Item:

13. Resolution No. R20-81: A Resolution Granting A Variance To The Laurel Subdivision Ordinance Development Requirements To Approve The Proposed Krieghoff Loop As Currently Designed To Not Align And Continue The Existing Right-Of-Way For Mulberry Avenue Located South Of The Proposed Goldberg Sporting Estates Subdivision

RESOLUTION NO. R20-81

A RESOLUTION GRANTING A VARIANCE TO THE LAUREL SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED KRIEGHOFF LOOP AS CURRENTLY DESIGNED TO NOT ALIGN AND CONTINUE THE EXISTING RIGHT-OF-WAY FOR MULBERRY AVENUE LOCATED SOUTH OF THE PROPOSED GOLDBERG SPORTING ESTATES SUBDIVISION

WHEREAS, the current property owners of what is known as Goldberg Sporting Estates Subdivision is seeking variances from Laurel Municipal Code (“LMC”) 16.04.060.B.8 which provides that “Streets that are a continuation of streets in contiguous territory shall be so aligned as to assure that their centerlines shall coincide and shall have matching names. In cases where straight continuations are not physically possible, such centerline shall be continued by a centerline offset of not less than one hundred twenty-five feet; and

WHEREAS, the property owners’ representative filed a Variance Request Application seeking a variance from the above-requirement for a street within their subdivision as provided in the application which is by this reference made a part of the record in this proceeding; and

WHEREAS, the Laurel City-County Planning Board acting as the City’s Zoning Commission held a public hearing on the variance on October 21, 2020 at 5:35 pm. The Zoning Commission received one public comment in opposition to the request, and no comments in support of the requested variance; and

WHEREAS, the Zoning Commission’s record and decision is contained in the City-County Planning Board meeting minutes which are incorporated as part of this resolution as well as all documents submitted into the record by the applicant and City’s Planning Director; and

WHEREAS, the Zoning Commission considered all of the documentary evidence in the record, City Staff recommendation, and the public comment presented at the public hearing, and recommends the City Council deny the requested variance;

WHEREAS, the City Council held a public hearing concerning this matter on November 10, 2020.

WHEREAS, based on the evidence contained in the record, including the Zoning Commission’s File, the City Council of the City of Laurel hereby finds it is in the best interests of the residents of the City of Laurel to allow the variance since:

1. granting the variance in this case relates only to a special condition that is specific to the applicant;
2. the current hardship was not created by the applicant;
3. the variance requested appears to be within the spirit, intent and purpose of the zoning regulations; and
4. granting the variance will not injure or result in an injustice to others.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the property owners’ variance request is hereby approved for the Goldberg Sporting Estates Subdivision as requested in the application and the City Council Record; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, pursuant to the variance, the Property Owners may disregard the street connectivity requirements for the property described herein and within the City Council Record.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the City Council on November 24, 2020 by Council Member

_____:

PASSED and APPROVED by the City Council of the City of Laurel, Montana this 24th day of November 2020.

APPROVED BY THE MAYOR this 24th day of November, 2020.

CITY OF LAUREL

Thomas C Nelson, Mayor

ATTEST:

Bethany Langve, Clerk/Treasurer

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Sam S. Painter, Civil City Attorney

File Attachments for Item:

14. Resolution No. R20-82: A Resolution Granting A Variance From The City's Subdivision Ordinance Development Requirements To Approve A Thirty (30) Foot Right-Of-Way Dedication Along Yard Office Road And A Fifty-Six (56) Foot Wide Private Internal Road For Goldberg Sporting Estates Subdivision 4th Filing.

RESOLUTION NO. R20-82

A RESOLUTION GRANTING VARIANCES FROM THE CITY'S SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS TO APPROVE A THIRTY (30) FOOT RIGHT-OF-WAY DEDICATION ALONG YARD OFFICE ROAD AND A FIFTY-SIX (56) FOOT WIDE PRIVATE INTERNAL ROAD FOR GOLDBERG SPORTING ESTATES SUBDIVISION 4TH FILING.

WHEREAS, the current property owners of what is known as Goldberg Sporting Estates Subdivision is seeking variances from Laurel Municipal Code ("LMC") 16.04.060.C.8 which requires standard width dedication of public rights of way and standard street widths for all roads, public and private; and

WHEREAS, the property owners' representative filed a Variance Request Application seeking variances from the requirements for the streets and rights of way at issue as provided in the application which is by this reference made a part of the record in this proceeding; and

WHEREAS, the Laurel City-County Planning Board acting as the City's Zoning Commission held a public hearing on the variances on October 21, 2020 at 5:35 pm. The Zoning Commission received no public comment regarding the requested variances; and

WHEREAS, the Zoning Commission's record and decision is contained in the City-County Planning Board meeting minutes which are incorporated as part of this resolution as well as all documents submitted into the record by the applicant and City's Planning Director; and

WHEREAS, the Zoning Commission considered all of the documentary evidence in the record, City Staff recommendation, and the public comment presented at the public hearing, and recommended denying the requested variances to the City Council; and

WHEREAS, the City Council held a public hearing concerning this matter on November 10, 2020.

WHEREAS, based on the evidence contained in the record, including the Zoning Commission's file and recommendation, the City Council of the City of Laurel hereby finds it is in the best interests of the residents of the City of Laurel to allow the variances since:

1. granting the variance in this case relates only to a special condition that is specific to the applicant;
2. the current hardship was not created by the applicant;
3. the variance requested appears to be within the spirit, intent and purpose of the zoning regulations; and
4. granting the variance will not injure or result in an injustice to others.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the property owners' requested variances are hereby approved for the Goldberg Sporting Estates Subdivision; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, pursuant to the variance, the Property Owners may disregard the standard right of way dedication and street width for the property described herein and within the City Council Record.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the City Council on November 24, 2020 by Council Member

_____.

PASSED and APPROVED by the City Council of the City of Laurel, Montana this 24th day of November 2020.

APPROVED BY THE MAYOR this 24th day of November, 2020.

CITY OF LAUREL

Thomas C Nelson, Mayor

ATTEST:

Bethany Langve, Clerk/Treasurer

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Sam S. Painter, Civil City Attorney