



**AGENDA
CITY OF LAUREL
CITY/COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2020
5:35 PM
LAUREL CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

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.*

1. Roll Call

General Items

- [2.](#) Public Hearing: Growth Management Policy Review and Approval
- [3.](#) Public Hearing: USW Conditional Land Use for 1009 East 6th Street
- [4.](#) Public Hearing: Variance for Street Continuity for the Proposed Goldberg Sporting Estates Subdivision
- [5.](#) Public Hearing: Variances for Roadway Widths and Right-of-Way Dedication for the Proposed Goldberg Sporting Estates Subdivision

New Business

- [6.](#) Approve Meeting Minutes: September 16, 2020

Old Business

Other Items

7. Meeting Scheduling: Officially set for 3rd Wednesday

Announcements

8. Next Meeting: November 18, 2020

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:

2. Public Hearing: Growth Management Policy Review and Approval

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

A resolution of the Laurel City County Planning Board to recommend 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 July 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 September 16, 2020.

NOW THEREFORE 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 21st day of October 2020.

Laurel City County Planning Board
Judy Goldsby, Chair

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 be in. 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 an important agricultural, transportation and industrial junction which has helped develop the area over the past 130 years. The timing of this policy update is also important 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 Tribe was the principle Tribe in the Yellowstone Basin at the time of the first arrival by European explorers. 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 near the present site of Laurel and noted that it was a possible location for a trading post. Many decades later, in 1877, Chief Joseph led the Nez Perce over the Yellowstone River near Laurel during their retreat to Canada. 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 which 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, originally 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 across the country. The three major industries which have played a significant role in the growth of the city has been agriculture, the railroad, and oil. Local farms near current-day Laurel were settled prior to any official town being established. Popular crops for area farmers and ranchers included alfalfa, grains, and sugar beets. This

agricultural production was a major draw for the region outside of the rail yard's ability to ship goods. These farms were an important driver of the local economy despite the outsized role the railyard held 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 and Seattle, 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-barrell 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 export 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 community goals and objectives that guide the physical development of the city. 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, and
- ❖ Act as a guide and resource for city staff and other local stakeholders.

Community Vision

The Growth Management Policy gives local stakeholders the opportunity 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 work of the city 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, the quality of life residents would like to have. The



Growth Management Policy's goals, objectives, and recommendations for implementation are all 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 responsibility of the local governing body. 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 in-person meetings of the Laurel City-County Planning Board. The Planning Department continued to draft sections of the plan, meet with stakeholders virtually, and compile chapters despite this disruption.

Prior Efforts

Prior to this update, the most recently approved Growth Management Policy was completed and approved by Laurel City Council in December of 2013. Prior to the adoption of 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 important stakeholders in the development of the plan. Many groups were unable to give comment due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, which caused significant scheduling and contact issues. The chart below shows the groups that the City met with and those who were contacted but who did not follow-up or were unable to 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 of 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 course of 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 powerful 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 major routes and commercial areas.

The overall goals of this plan are to conserve open space while maximizing the areas currently in and directly adjacent to the city. A rehabilitation of Laurel's downtown and Southeast 4th Street is 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 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 a 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

It is important for municipalities to seize opportunities for growth. Having strategies in place 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 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 3: 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 wider array of housing options such as tiny homes, accessory dwelling units, and multi-family housing is a major goal. This type of 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 important 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, mapping of current infrastructure facilities, and identification of 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 are all important to ensure orderly and effective growth of the city. A Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is another vital infrastructure planning document which should be completed. Plans and engineering reports should clearly 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, water courses, 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 important 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 major 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. The establishment of a road network master plan is also important 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 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 major 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 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 to one another
- ❖ Adopt pedestrian and multi-modal friendly transportation standards and safety measures
- ❖ Explore options to improve and expand the Laurel Transit program as well as strategies to create other multi-modal transportation connections.
- ❖ Partner with local, regional, and statewide groups to further integrate Laurel into the wider passenger transportation network

Goal 3: Connect Transportation Decisions with Land Use Decisions

- ❖ Integrate land use planning and transportation planning to better manage and develop the transportation network.
- ❖ Utilize transportation projects to encourage intensive development patterns along major 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 greatly 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. A major focus of this chapter is to establish 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 in encouraging residents and visitors to explore different areas of the city. Increasing walkability and mixed-use development can also create greater housing and commercial opportunities.

The goals presented below are an effort to increase the attractiveness, usefulness, and quality of the commercial and economic sectors of the community. Expansion brings new opportunity and the area near the West Laurel Interchange has significant growth potential. This area could become a central area for growth and development for the Laurel community 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 Tax Increment Financing (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 and/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 major 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 important 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 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 prior to their approval and implementation
- ❖ Develop plans for the expansion of Fire, Police, and EMS facilities

Recreation Objectives, Policies and Strategies

The wide array of Laurel city parks is a great asset to residents. It is the goal to ensure that current and future city park land 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 park land is a useable and enjoyable amenity for residents. The City should study underutilized and/or burdensome park land parcels and consider re-use scenarios.

Historic 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 use of the park. It will be important to continue the ongoing improvement efforts and to develop policies to attract visitors from Yellowstone County and beyond. Riverside Park should be maintained as a historical, recreational, and economic asset into the future.

Goal 1: Develop park land 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 better serve the needs of the surrounding area

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 greenspace 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 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 effective 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 important to ensure that the city of Laurel can sustainably develop, seize opportunities for growth, and improve the quality of life for residents, visitors, and businesses. Consistent intergovernmental coordination will allow Laurel to be a partner and participant, rather than a bystander in regional growth.

It will be important 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 wider 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

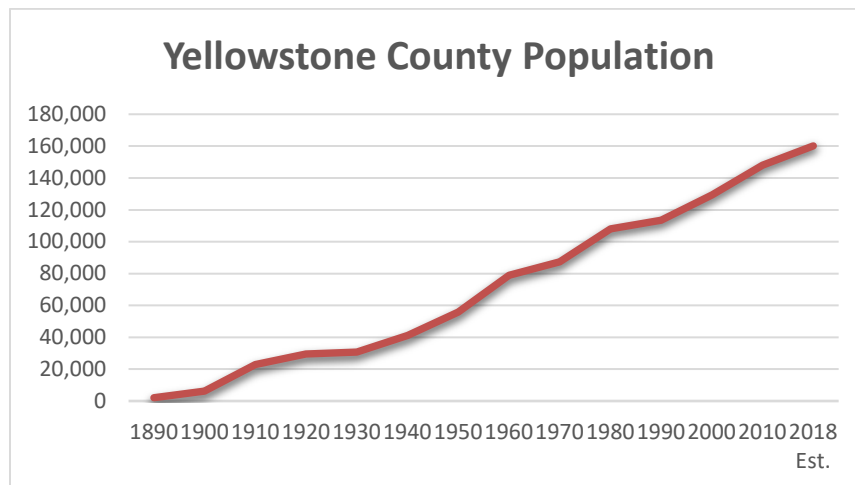
Goal 2: Coordinate with local and regional institutions to support and grow the Laurel community

- ❖ 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

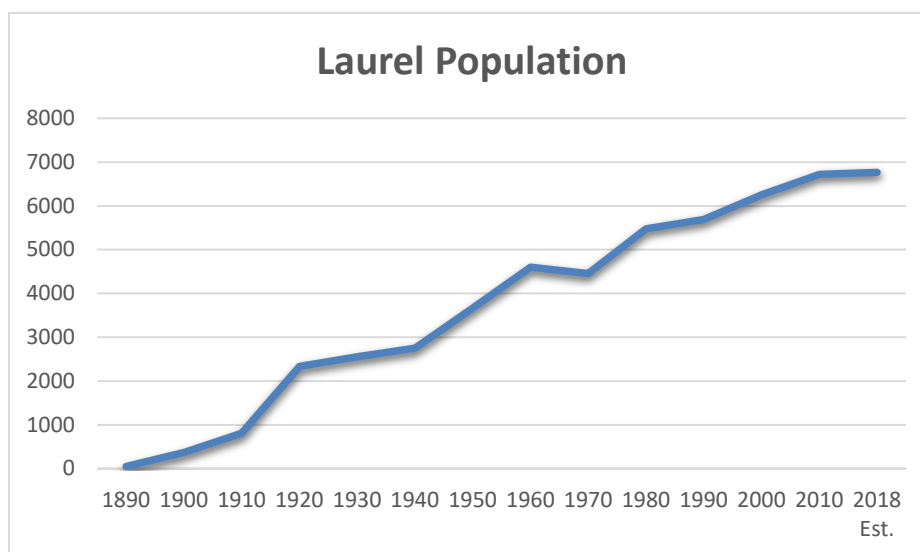
Population Trends

The City of Laurel 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 been a contributor 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 which may impact this such as the construction of the West Laurel Interchange for interstate I-90.



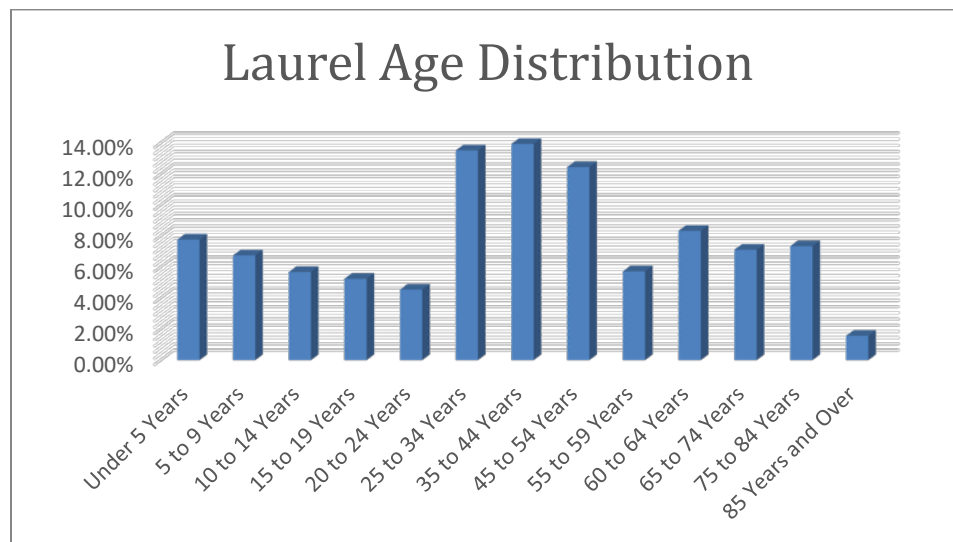
U.S. Decennial Census, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

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 the age of 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 Native	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 families in Laurel 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

79 percent of Laurel residents commute to work alone in a car, truck, or van. This is slightly higher than the national average of 76.4 percent. Laurel does have a higher than average rate of carpooling, with 13.66 percent versus the national average of 9.2 percent¹. Laurel residents travel an average of 21.5 minutes to work. This can be partially attributed to the fact that there are several Laurel residents who 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		

¹ Selected Economic Characteristics. 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

CHAPTER 5: EMPLOYMENT AND POPULATION FORECASTS

A diverse mix of businesses helps a city to 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 CHS Refinery. These two institutions are well established and are not anticipated to disappear. The City of Laurel hopes to further diversify the local economy and attract a variety of businesses and related employment. The growth policy focuses on revitalizing Laurel's downtown businesses, assessing how zoning can be updated to better meet the needs of businesses and employees, 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 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 good 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 important to attracting a diverse array of people to the community. Housing provides shelter but it also 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		

67 percent of all houses in Laurel are owner-occupied. This 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. 70 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 utilization of restaurants, shopping, and other services.

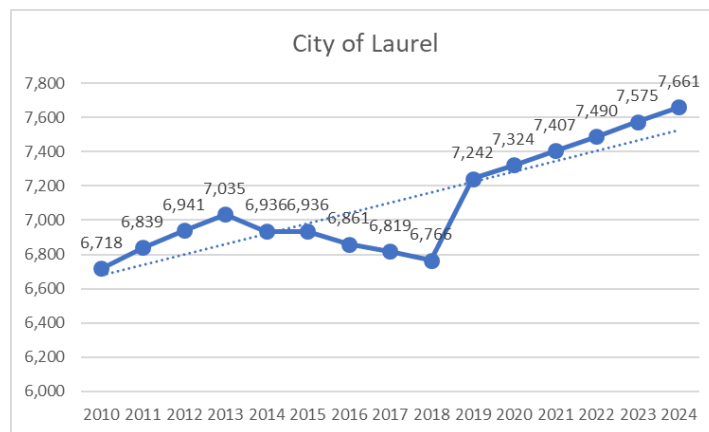
Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income	Estimate	Percent
Occupied units paying rent	898	100.00%
Less than 15.0 percent	115	12.81%
15.0 to 19.9 percent	183	20.38%
20.0 to 24.9 percent	52	5.79%
25.0 to 29.9 percent	161	17.93%
30.0 to 34.9 percent	121	13.47%
35.0 percent or more	266	29.62%
2013-2017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

78 percent of houses in Laurel are worth between \$100,000 and \$300,000. The median household value is \$169,900. This is very positive as affordable houses and rents allow for a more diverse array of people to become homeowners and to 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 5 years. This assumption takes into consideration 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 the state capital of Helena, 70 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 major development with the continued growth of the City of Billings, but the surrounding region remains sparsely populated and remains largely prairie, rangeland, and farmland.

Trends

The City of Laurel has developed slowly in the past few decades. 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 in nature. This similar land use is seen along Old Route 10 to the west of the city.

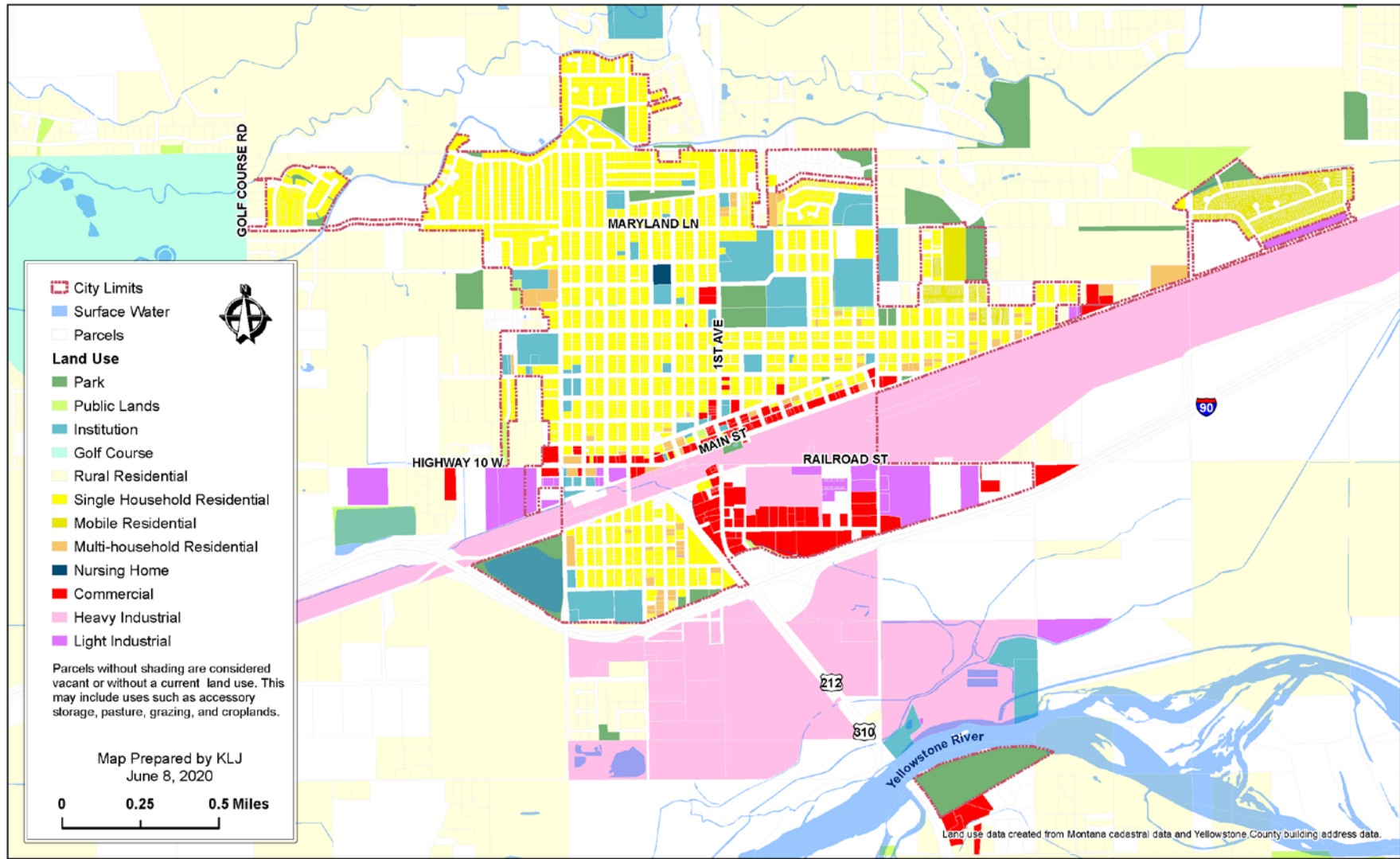
Existing Land Uses

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 densities, volumes, and types of housing. Laurel has a joint city-county planning board and has regulations which 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 in nature. It is important to provide a mix of residential styles and types to provide residents and prospective residents a choice of housing.

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 that is 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 that operate 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 center of the city and has many athletic fields, the 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. There are also many other smaller parks 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 originally built around the commercial rail yard that is currently operated by Montana Rail Link. This is the largest switching yard between Minneapolis and Seattle. The second major industrial property is the large refinery complex owned and operated by CHS Inc. The other major 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 along with 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. This is the result of multiple factors including 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. Laurel must be more forward and future thinking if it wants to thrive as a separate entity outside of Billings. This includes planning for commercial and industrial expansion, seizing growth opportunities, and adopting zoning and development standards that meet the city needs and attracts developers and new residents.

Residents of Laurel pride themselves on the small-town character of the community. City staff need to properly plan for growth and have the appropriate regulations in place to both grow and maintain the classic community character that residents enjoy. This balance includes putting in place 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 neighborhoods continue to maintain a more restrictive style code that limits certain residential uses, types, and sizes. Other neighborhoods have begun moving away from the strict guidelines toward a more inclusive model of allowing different styles, sizes, and types of housing in residential areas.

Some different types of housing 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. Development in residential neighborhoods can come through small changes. Studying the existing districts and updating setbacks and other restrictions can have a big impact on 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. There are many strategies that focus on adaptive reuse of structures which could be used for buildings downtown and throughout the rest of the city.

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 the acquisition and rehabilitation of unused and vacant properties 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 uses for land which may have been unused/vacant for many years.

Development Standards

The City of Laurel currently has multiple sets of development standards that include the Public Works Standards, rules governing utilities, and subdivision development requirements. Adoption of 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 the needs of county residents 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

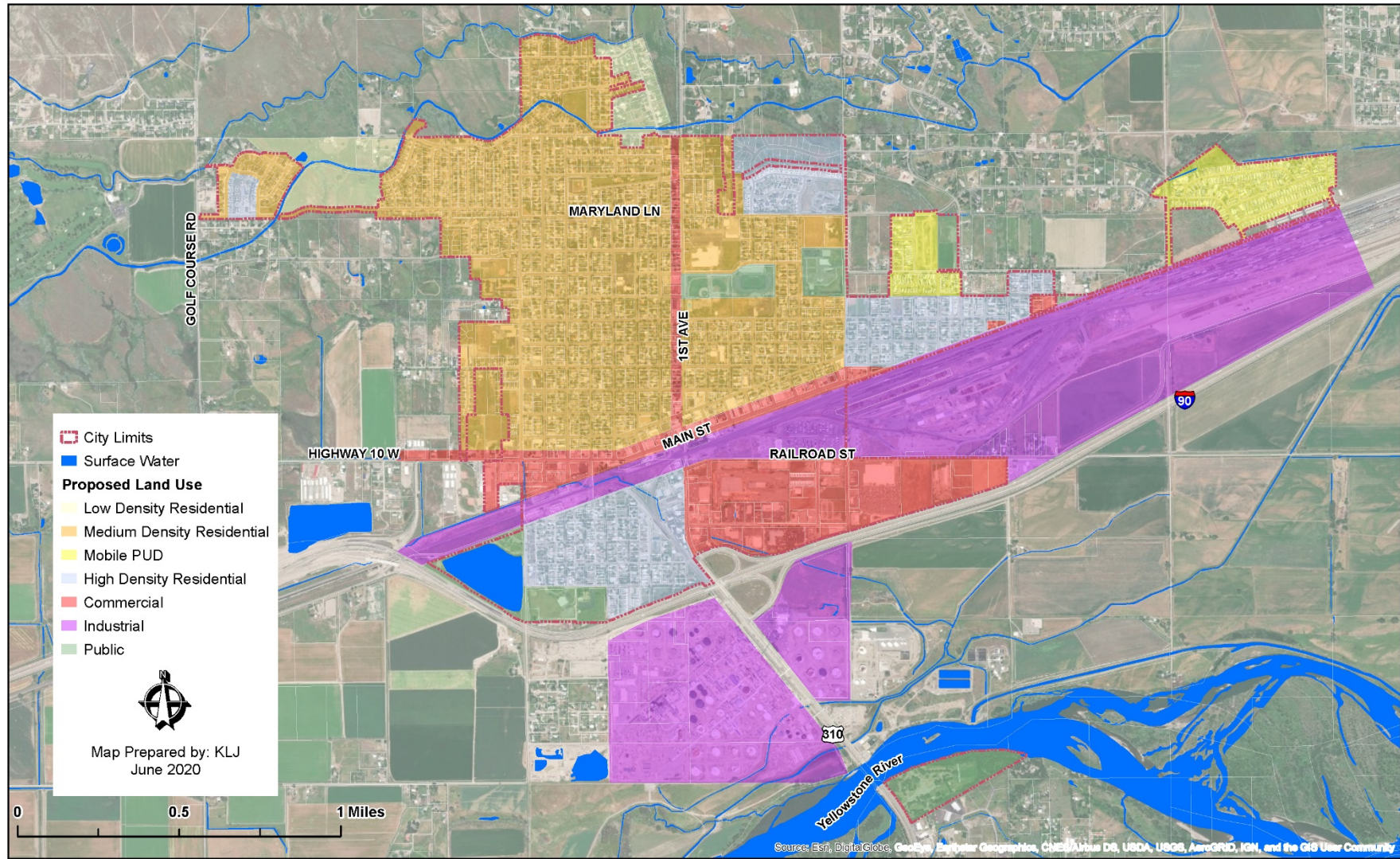
Planning for the expansion of city services and infrastructure is a vital component of bringing new growth to a community. Long term infrastructure and growth was not addressed by the city for many years. Installing new infrastructure is expensive but it is more costly to lose development opportunities 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 grant and loan programs. Many grant programs exist to extend infrastructure in order 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 as well as 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 major 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

The overall goal of this plan is to conserve open space while maximizing areas currently in and directly adjacent to the city. Parks and greenways will be important 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 for annexation will be determined and infrastructure extension costs will be discussed. Codes will be updated to maintain community character while simultaneously enabling development of new neighborhoods. Current and future commercial and industrial parcels will be identified to promote effective and intense use of land. The central business district will be a focus for 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 everyone

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, gatherings, and other efforts
- ❖ Connect with regional and state 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 its surrounding area

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

Goal 4: Update the Zoning Code to provide for a 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 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 address priority needs for infrastructure and development and identify appropriate funding resources

- ❖ 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

Annexation of properties outside the current city limits is necessary to have Laurel remain a viable, independent community. Annexing territory into a municipality helps a city grow geographically, economically, and socially. The actual city of Laurel has grown slowly over the past few decades, with very few new subdivisions and parcels annexing into the city despite many developments taking place 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 a necessity 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 benefits of annexation into the city.

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 key process to continue the growth and development of communities in Montana. Adding new territory to a community adds new opportunities for business, 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 municipality 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 the conversation for Laurel 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 into the city.

Priority Areas

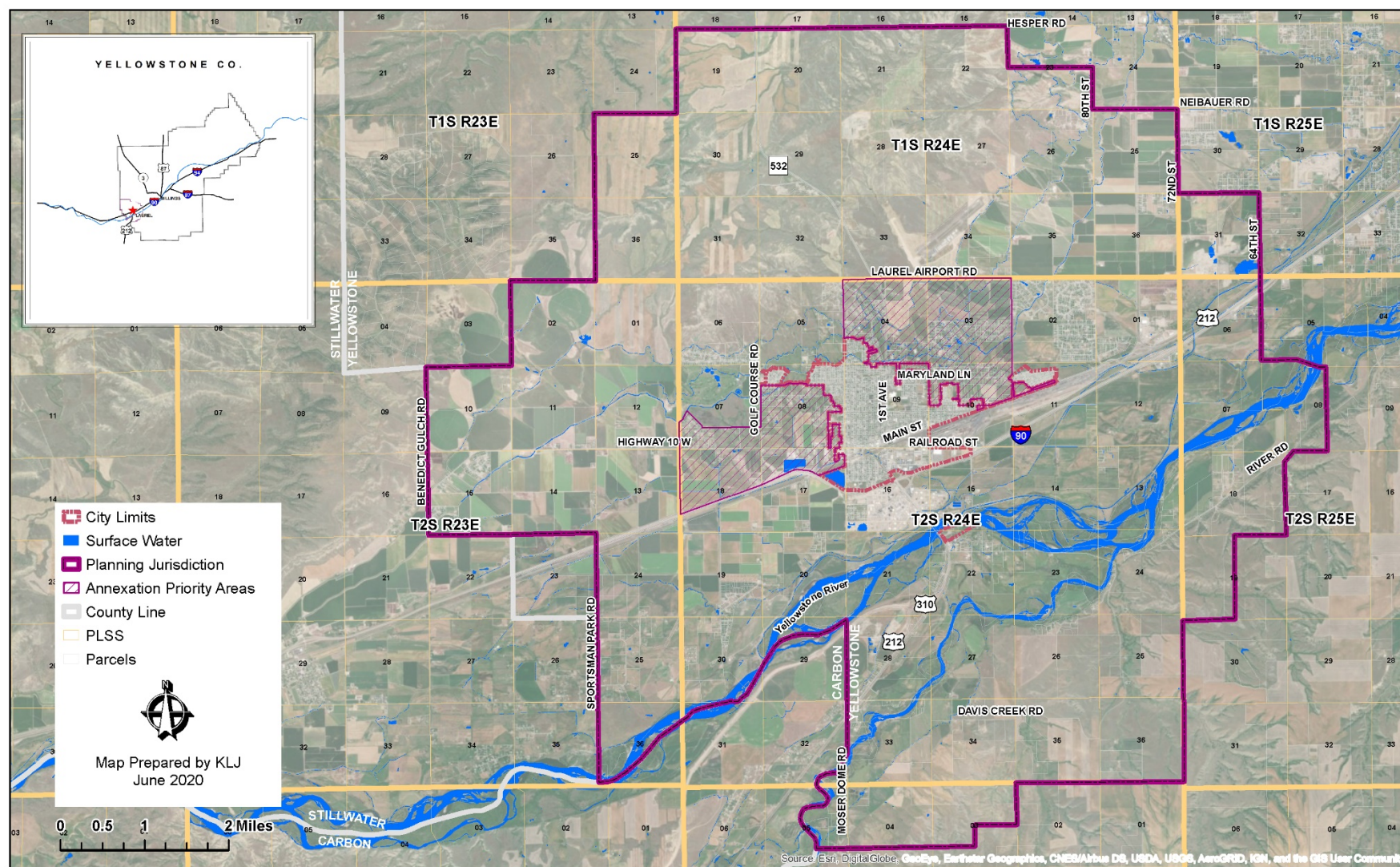
Establishing priority areas is important for setting an agenda for growth, starting discussions with property owners and developers, and preparing projects. A map of the Laurel Planning Jurisdiction and priority growth areas is presented on the next page.

Areas to the west of Laurel are a high priority for development due to their proximity to the city and established transportation corridors. Annexation of territory to the west presents the most viable options for growth. This area is already served by roadways 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, as well as 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.



Annexation Policies

Laurel has not annexed much territory 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 strict requirements of the policy 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 needs of the city 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 easily. Developing a CIP will help Laurel prioritize growth areas and build out public services that will 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 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 capital infrastructure

Goal 3: Manage fiscal responsibility with established and proposed annexation standards

- ❖ Ensure that the established standards are right and proper for the City of Laurel
- ❖ Ease 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

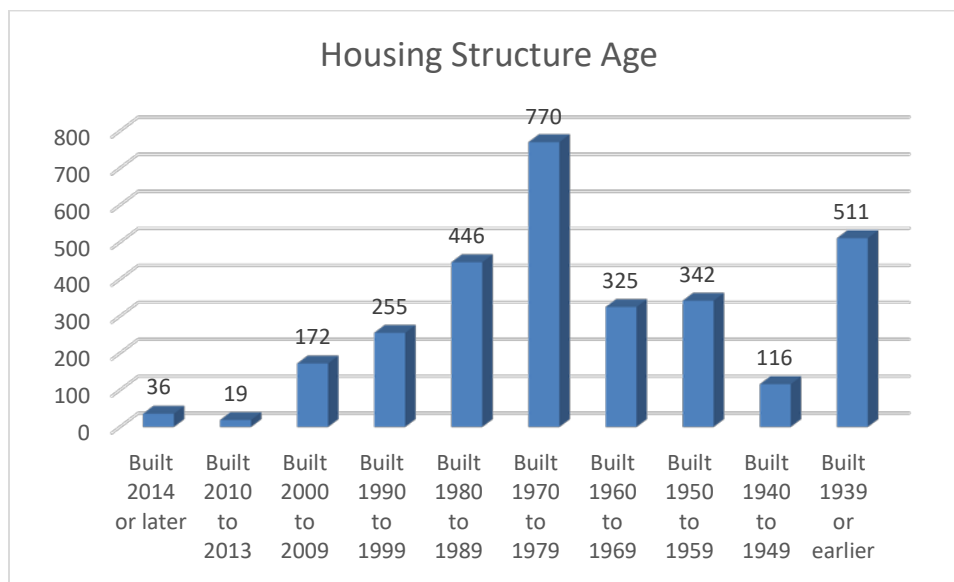
Overview

Housing is an essential element of any community. This chapter provides a summary of housing in Laurel and discusses some housing support programs that exist to help renters, and current and prospective homeowners. Having adequate, accessible, and affordable housing is an important 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 important to maintain a wide array of housing that meets the different demands of the market including rental properties, multi-family units, single family homes, and retirement homes.

Laurel's location has made it an attractive bedroom community to Billings. This opens opportunities for both traditional neighborhood residential housing and embracing the growing trends of building closer-knit, dense, connected neighborhoods for more urban and in-town development. It will be important for the city to think about housing and real estate trends as it grows. This will ensure that the housing needs of the current population 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 opportunities for homeownership and help raise the standard of housing available for residents.



2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

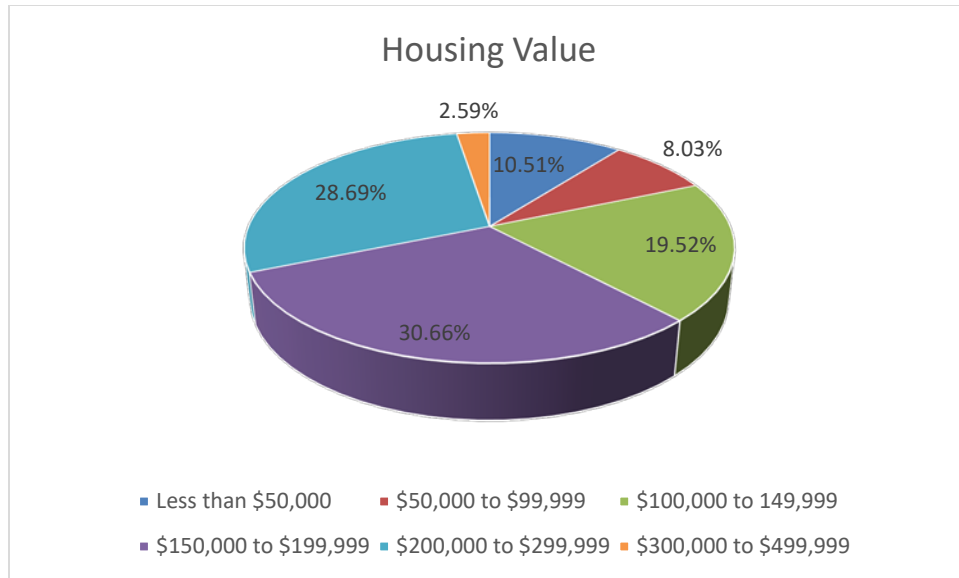
65 percent of Laurel’s housing stock is made up of detached single-family homes. Mobile homes make up the next greatest share of housing at 15 percent of units. This proportion of detached single-family homes has been the norm for Laurel and many other cities and towns throughout the United States. A growing trend to consider is that many younger and older Americans are seeking to downsize to smaller units and multifamily or connected units that are closer to shopping, amenities, and other essential and amenity services. It is important to think about these trends in order to embrace growth opportunities, whether it is 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 a variety of opportunities for diversifying the type and size of housing options to include rowhouses, townhomes, live-work (mixed-use) buildings, and more.

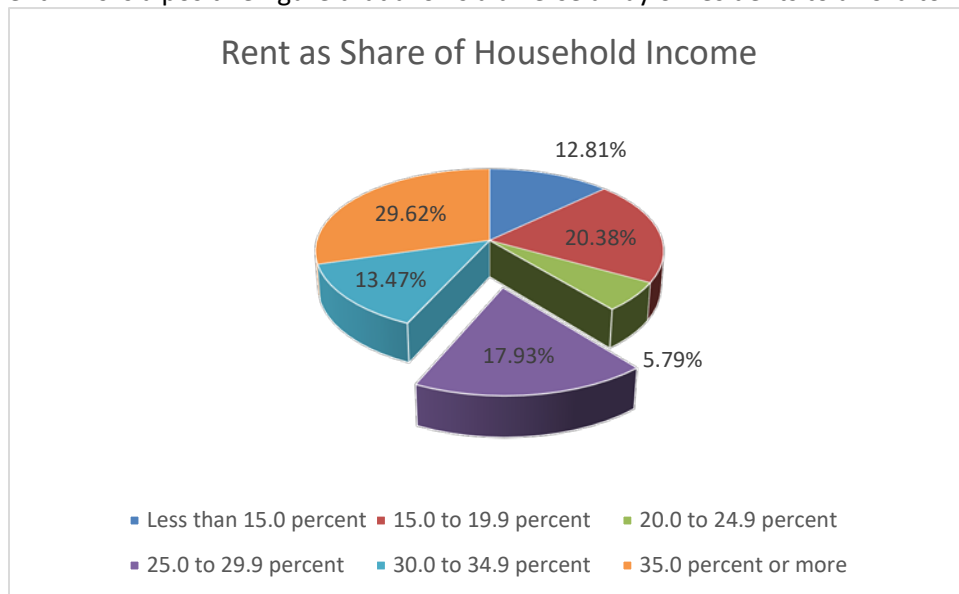
Housing Affordability

Many parts of the United States are facing issues with housing affordability. This 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 largest city in the state. The charts below provide an overview of both current housing value, and rental expenditures.



2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Rental affordability is an important factor in retaining residents, especially those who may work in service and retail industries. Overall, 57 percent of Laurel residents spend less than 30 percent of their income on rent. This is a positive figure that allows a diverse array of residents to afford to live in Laurel.



2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

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 in order to make it available for housing, farming, ranching, commercial space, historic preservation, or open space.

These organizations separate the price of land 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 important 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 works to incentivize dense housing development through tax relief, abatements, and bonuses. These zoning policies enable developers to maintain normal 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 the costs and benefits of each incentive 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
- ❖ 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 about 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, and 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 major 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 area near the West Laurel Interchange 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 into 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 needs of the city while establishing long-term capital infrastructure goals to expand and improve services. To help achieve these goals, it will be important for city staff and leadership to seek out federal, state, philanthropic, and other grant and loan programs to support the priorities that staff and stakeholders identify, to help ensure user fees remain reasonable for Laurel citizens.



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 in 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 were completed

in 2019. The wastewater system has a capacity of 1,120,000 gpd. 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 (gpd). 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 gpd. A water reserve was granted in 1978 that allowed for the anticipation of future growth and added an additional 6,380,000 gpd.

The original water distribution system was installed in 1908. Currently, there is 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 assure they are working properly.

The City provides water to all areas within the City Limits; however, there are 82 residential connections and one industrial connection 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 major 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 course and level of the river. One additional project that has been identified is the need for a second water reservoir to create extra storage capacity as the city grows. City staff 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 snow melt. 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 major 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 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 to keep roadways in good condition and lessens hazards for drivers 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, water courses, and wetlands as passive recreation areas, such as parks and greenways
- ❖ Study the feasibility of recycling programs and other means to reduce solid waste disposal

- ❖ Incorporate stormwater system planning into roadway and other infrastructure planning processes

Goal 2: Establish the Long-Term Capital and Infrastructure Plan 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 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 state agencies on major projects and studies
- ❖ Explore federal, state, and philanthropic infrastructure grant opportunities
- ❖ Determine positive impacts of the expansion and improvement of infrastructure
- ❖ Apply for funding opportunities that are appropriate for city priorities and projects and that allow the City to maintain reasonable user fees for services

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 which continues to this day. Successive developments of both residential subdivisions and commercial areas have not continued the original ordered network, which has caused problems for road continuity, provision of services, and orderly and consistent growth of the city 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 an important city goal. A priority for the city is to develop a multi-modal approach to streets and pathways. City staff will work to encourage intensive use of land already 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. Orderly growth of the transportation network will also be important to ensure neighborhoods and commercial areas are easily accessible to all. These transportation goals assist in increasing quality of life, connecting people to their community, increasing safety, and planning 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 of Laurel's traditional core has created issues for future growth.

Very few existing streets allow for unbroken travel from the east to west side of Laurel. New development took 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 is especially apparent west of 8th Avenue, which has many roads that seemingly go to nowhere. It will be important for Laurel to establish specific guidance 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 areas of the city.

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 provided solutions to the infrastructure deficits of the system. Utilizing this study along with 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, that 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 out 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 west end of the city. 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.

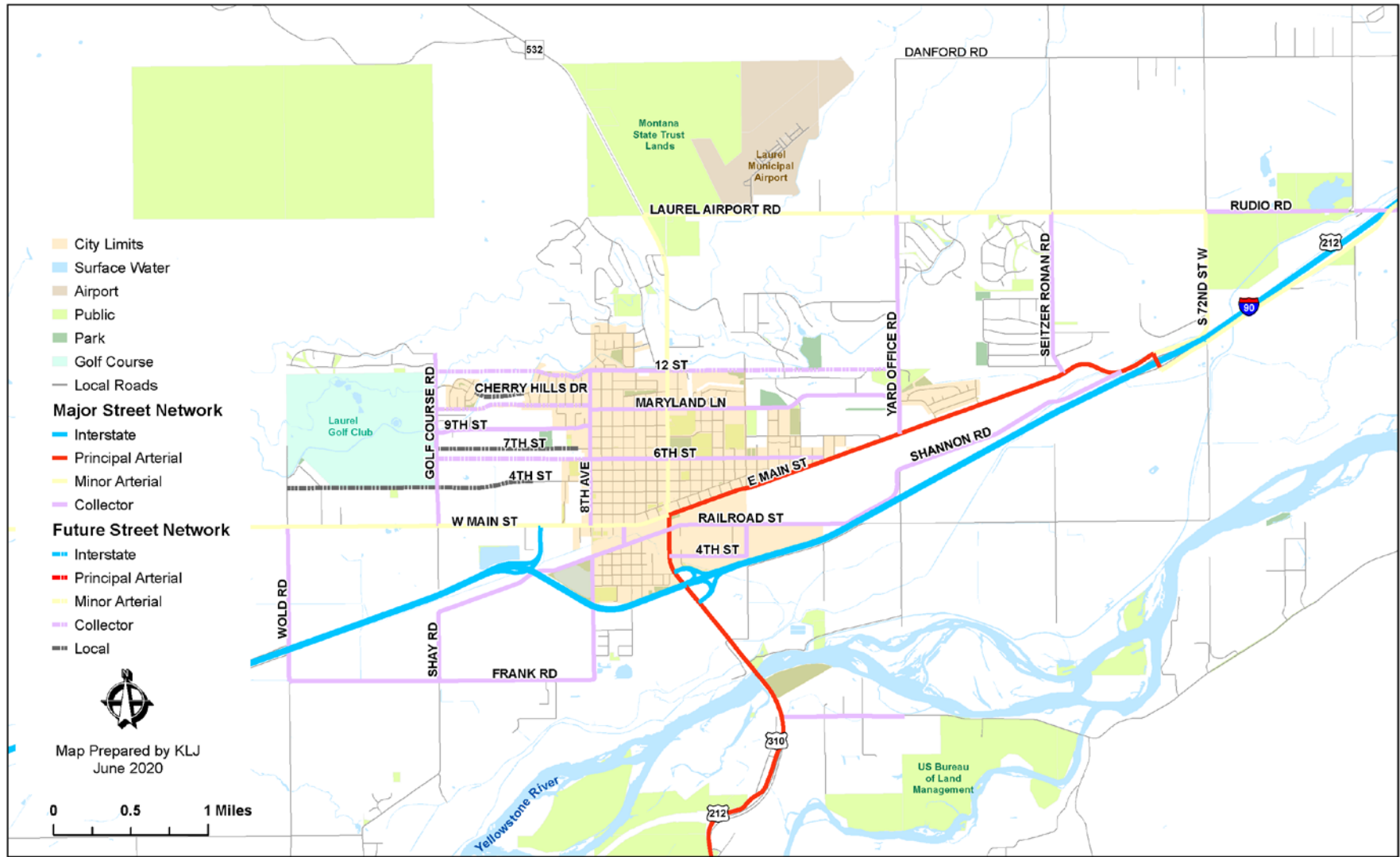
The Montana Department of Transportation recently completed construction of a north facing on/off ramp west of Laurel to connect to 19th Avenue West. This additional on/off ramp is expected to alleviate some access issues and provide new development opportunities. This additional access point is also 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 through provision of a healthy jobs base, revenue to the school district, and lower tax rates for residential and commercial properties.



The railroad is a major asset to the area but also acts as a hinderance for transportation within 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 on Interstate-90 and Exit 426 in Park City.



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 longest trip length within the city.
 - Provides the highest level of mobility, at the highest speed, for long uninterrupted travel.
- ❖ Minor Arterial
 - Interconnects urban principal arterials
 - Provides continuity for rural arterials that intercept urban boundaries
- ❖ Collector
 - Designed for travel at lower speeds and for 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. It was established to provide transportation services to the elderly and disabled population in the Laurel area. Laurel Transit currently provides on-demand transportation services within the city of Laurel, its surrounding area, and scheduled service to Billings. Laurel Transit operates Monday-Friday, 10:00AM – 4:00PM. The Billings scheduled service route begins at 7:30am. Laurel Transit has connected with local and regional agencies whenever possible to expand its services to better assist riders.



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 coordination with identified partners and Billings MET Transit could change this situation. Further growth and development of Laurel could also

necessitate greater in-town transit connections as well as a commuter route to Billings. The system could be improved through greater outreach with local groups and marketing of services to Laurel residents.

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 major 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 transportation projects to coincide with underground infrastructure improvements

Goal 2: Improve 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 to one another
- Adopt pedestrian and multi-modal friendly transportation standards and safety measures
- Explore options to improve and expand the Laurel Transit program as well as strategies to create other multi-modal transportation connections.
- Partner with local, regional, and statewide groups to further integrate Laurel into the wider passenger transportation network

Goal 3: Connect transportation decisions with land use decisions

- Integrate land use planning and transportation planning to better manage and develop the transportation network

- Utilize transportation projects to encourage intensive development patterns along major 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 major role in the economy but 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 becomes more accessible and online shopping and delivery become more readily used. Communities large and small 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, as well as larger statewide and national establishments can thrive.

The proximity of Laurel to Billings is a smaller scale example of how different factors impact local community economy. Laurel has been referred to as a bedroom community to Billings due to its proximity and the sheer number of Laurel residents who commute into Billings for work. 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.

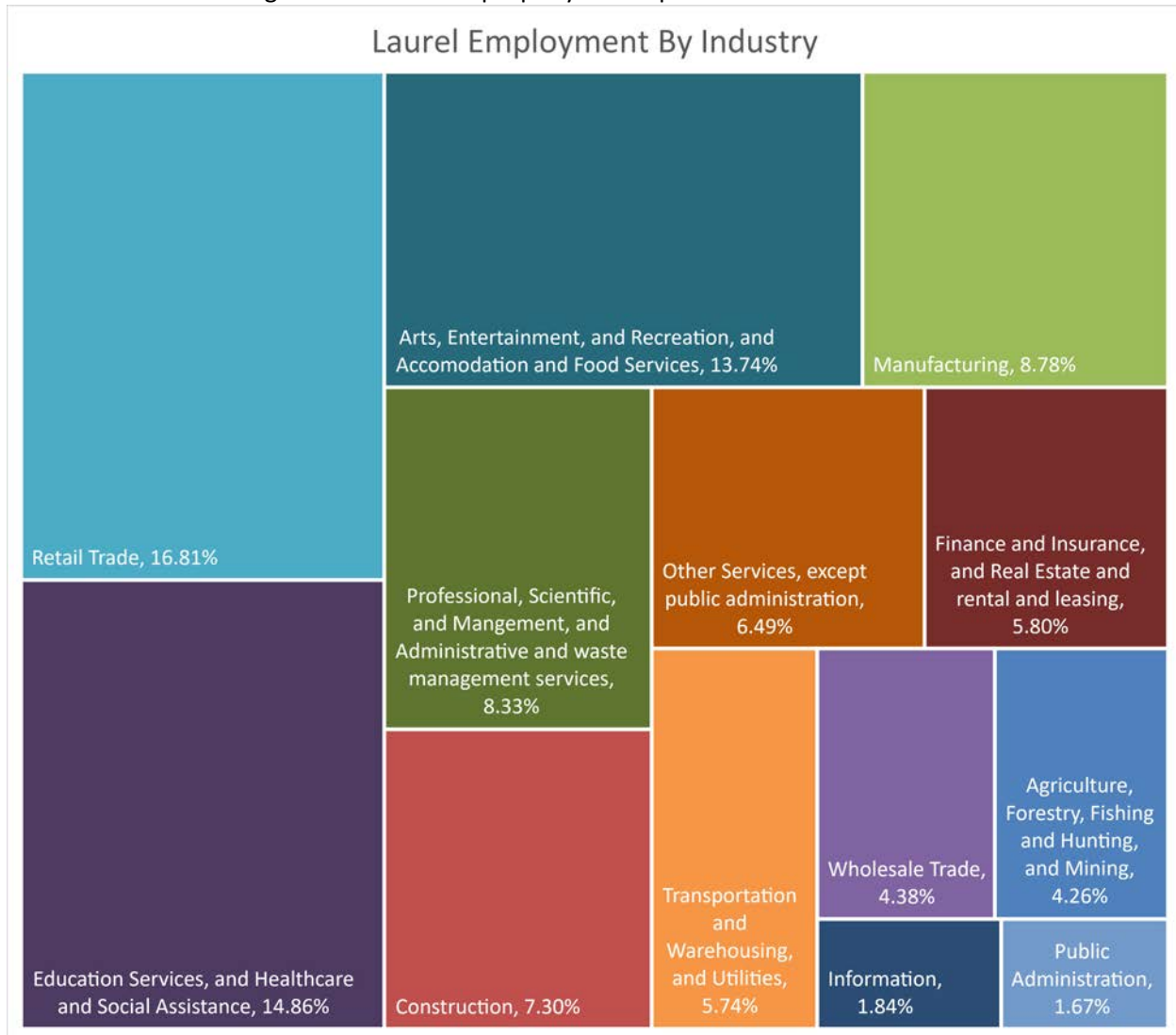
Laurel can still become a community where small businesses thrive, the downtown is healthy, and entrepreneurs take the risk to open a business even with its proximity to Billings. Creating a more attractive and active business community is not an impossible task. Goals have been established that can 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 breath new life into the community. Focusing policies and efforts 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 important 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 the percentage of people in those workforces. A diverse employment base helps to ensure a stable and resilient economy. Improving the core sectors of the city while opening-up opportunities for new growth is an important objective to help keep the local economy healthy.

There are also several major industries 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 not only provide livelihoods to many Laurel area residents but also support other industries and businesses in the Laurel planning area. It will be important to maintain good relationships with MRL and CHS to coordinate growth efforts and properly develop the Laurel area.



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Economic Development Organizations

There are a variety of groups that are active in the economic development field in the Laurel and Yellowstone County area. Big Sky Economic Development and Beartooth Resource Conservation & Development both 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 help foster a healthy business climate in the Laurel area for business owners, employees, and customers. The Chamber supports and hosts many community events including farmers 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 to improve the community as a whole.



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 certified economic development authority of the South-Central Montana region. 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 economic development for Laurel 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 into 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 Tax Increment Financing (TIF) funding to beautification, blight removal, and area public improvement projects
- ❖ Identify and find solutions for unused and 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 for 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 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 new 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 and/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. It is important for public officials to take a lead role by planning and implementing expansions and improvements of public services that maintain and improve the quality of life for their community.

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 better help the community. 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 13 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 the municipal boundaries of Laurel unless responding as backup to another law enforcement agency in the area.

The City of Laurel ensures that their officers are properly certified and trained above and beyond the state requirements. Officers must pass a twelve-week basic 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 own basic 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. This building is not sufficient for the needs of the departments located there. It will be important to seek out funding options to improve, expand, or construct additional facilities for these departments.

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, it's residents, the surrounding fire districts and the visitors to our city for any of their emergency fire rescue needs. We will do this through a 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 and 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 important to improve the delivery of high-quality services to the community through planning and implementation of new policies. The LVFD has begun 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 lines of communication 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 the needs of a growing community.

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 afforded the opportunity 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 4th of July celebration is well known throughout the state and brings awareness to the members of the LVFD and their work in Laurel. 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 requirements of partial paid staff for a department if the City of Laurel met the requirements for a Second-Class city of 7,500 residents or more. 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 adequately cover the fire service needs of the Laurel community long-term.

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 in a prompt and safe manner 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, 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 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 the needs and values of others 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 included the development of 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 mission of the library 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 general needs of the library's clients 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. 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 any other regional libraries. The Library is currently part of the Montana Shared Library Catalog Consortia through an agreement with the Montana State Library. This Consortia is made up of more than 140 libraries across the state consisting of public, academic, and special 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 important 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
- ❖ Establish regular maintenance procedures for parks, facilities, and public areas
- ❖ Study current facilities and services to identify gaps in services and plan for future needs

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 quality of life for residents, businesses, and institutions

Goal 3: Collaborate with city departments and stakeholders to determine necessary expansion and improvement of public facilities to meet community need

- ❖ Open lines of communication between city departments and institutions to gain input on major projects
- ❖ Study the state of current public facilities to identify deficiencies and issues
- ❖ Identify necessary upgrades, changes, or expansions of public facilities to best serve the Laurel area
- ❖ Consider the public service requirements of large-scale projects prior to their approval and implementation

CHAPTER 13: RECREATION PLAN

Overview

Access to recreational opportunities and park land is a key component of quality of life for communities, especially Montana communities. The parks and public areas owned and maintained by the City of Laurel are an asset to local and area residents. Access to walking, biking, hiking and other local amenities help boost the quality of life for residents and visitors. Many cities and towns have begun establishing greenways and trails to connect parks and open space with local neighborhoods. Incorporating efforts like these into Laurel planning and development strategies can help to enhance livability and help residents to be healthier and more active.

City staff 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. Creation of 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. It is important that park land is a fully useable amenity for residents. Parks should be developed and improved to act as neighborhood focal points. City staff should also study underutilized and/or burdensome park land parcels and consider re-use 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 BNSF Railroad and leased by MRL. Studying options for low impact reuse of this land as park land 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 use of the park. It will be important to continue the ongoing improvement efforts detailed in that plan and to develop policies to attract visitors from Yellowstone County and beyond. Riverside Park should be maintained as a historical, recreational, and economic asset into 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 upkeep of park facilities. The City of Laurel Park Board is made up of volunteers who provide oversight and input on park operations, maintenance, and activities.

Riverside Park is an important historic asset for the city, the region, and the state of Montana. There are many private and public groups that are active in historic preservation of this park, 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 park land as an accessible and important 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 improvements

- ❖ Review current park infrastructure and determine if improvements are necessary to better serve the needs of the surrounding area

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 travelers.

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 park priorities
- ❖ Consider the creation of a City Parks Department to oversee park operations and maintenance.
- ❖ Identify unused land that could be transformed into greenspace or trails for use by current and future residents and visitors.
- ❖ 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 with 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 are an important 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 health, economic wellbeing, and quality of life for the community. 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 great 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 primary 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 escarpments and the Yellowstone River's channel.

Wildlife Habitat

Rivers, Streams and Lakes

It is important to recognize the Yellowstone River as a critical part significant asset to Laurel. The Yellowstone River provides a stable water source for the city as well as 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 taking into consideration the needs of the local community for commercial, industrial, and residential needs.

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 source that stretches from the banks or boundaries of its channel to the base of higher elevation terrain that experiences flooding during periods of high discharge and or rainfall. Floodplains are natural drainage basins for the discharge of heavy precipitation. The Yellowstone River exhibits wide floodplains and variations in flow due to terrain. Flow rates are dependent upon the season and the amount of rain and snow melt. 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 counites 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 to public utilities such as water lines, sewer lines, and stormwater drainage systems. It is important 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 that has 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 yields of crops 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

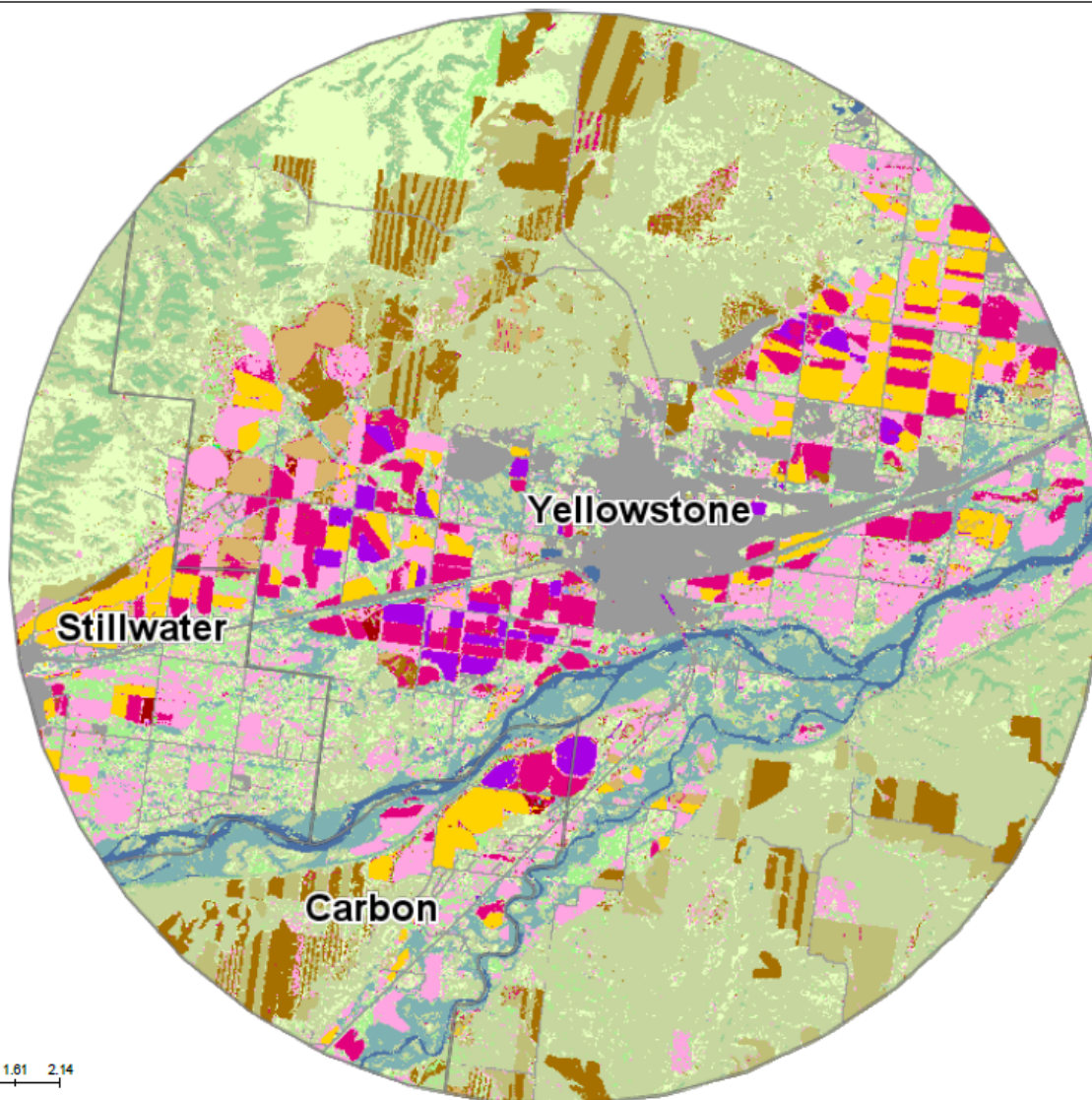
Land Cover Categories
(by decreasing acreage)

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

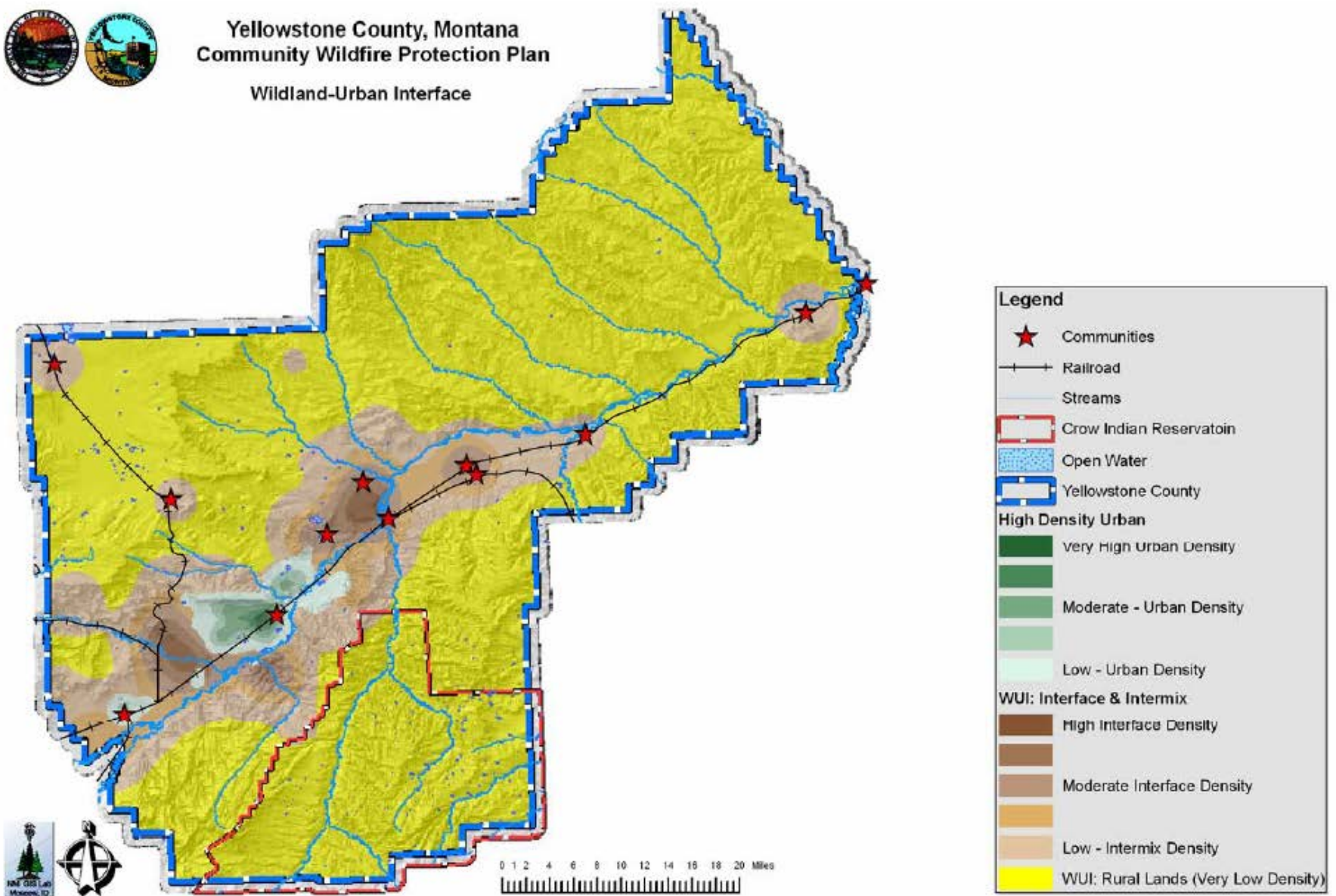


Wildland-Urban Interface and Significant Infrastructure



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 goal of the planning process was to improve fire prevention, reduce hazardous fuels, restore, fire-adapted ecosystems, and to 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 process. Decades of wildland fire suppression and long-standing land use practices have altered the plant community and has 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 on others
- ❖ Achieve a balanced pattern of growth to ensure environmental concerns are considered during 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 match 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 effective 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.

Provided below is a discussion of each of the types of growth policy implementation tools. 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. Prior to establishing an urban renewal district, municipalities are required to prepare and adopt an urban renewal plan. 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 no or low levels of growth.

However, for communities anticipating or experiencing high levels of growth, the use of multi-year capital improvement programs is an important tool to plan for public expenditures associated with 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 this Growth Policy are based on an assessment of current information and data. The 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 various 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?
 By the County \$ _____
 By the municipality, if applicable, \$ _____
 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

TABLE 1, LAND USE OBJECTIVES

Objective: Ensure developable land is available to accommodate anticipated population increases.		
Utilize the Land Use and Business Development map to assist in guiding development and extending the service area within the City.	<i>Planning Board</i> City Council	Immediate
Retain existing residents, including the young adult population, and accommodate new people, including energy sector workers and their families, moving into the community.	<i>BSEDA</i> City Council	Immediate
Objective: Accommodate future growth in areas that can be efficiently served by public services.		
Encourage county land use policies and development standards adjacent to Laurel that are compatible with city land use and development standards and land uses and infrastructure.	<i>Planning Board</i> County Commission	Short-term
Investigate the use of an urban service boundary or adequate public facilities ordinance to promote efficient extensions of infrastructure.	<i>Planning Board</i> City Council	Short-term
Objective: Implement land use policies and strategies to promote investment in Laurel and development of commercial uses		
Identify areas in the City of Laurel that would meet the MCA criteria for establishing a redevelopment plan.	<i>BSEDA</i> City Council	Short-term
Review the City code of ordinances to determine if existing regulations are imposing a constraint on new development.	<i>City Council</i>	Mid-term

Objective: Establish land use compatibility policy in planned future growth areas, including policy to limit incompatible development in existing agricultural areas.

Establish future land use policy to guide decisions on rezoning and land use map amendment applications.	<i>Planning Board</i> City Council County Commission	Short-term
Enforce zoning standards to mitigate adjacent land use incompatibilities.	<i>Planning Board</i> City Council	Immediate
Establish zoning standards that address land use transitions and compatibility with existing rural residential developed properties.	<i>Planning Board</i> City Council	Mid-term
Require recordation and notification of buyers of residential properties in proximity of agricultural land uses and operations such as harvesting, grazing of animals, etc.	<i>Planning Board</i> City Council County Commission	Short-term

Objective: Improve the physical appearance of existing neighborhoods and high visibility properties to retain a clean and safe sense of place.

Enforce zoning landscaping standards and consider establishing open space requirements for development projects.	<i>Planning Board</i> City Council	Immediate and short-term
Establish a street tree/landscaping program for community gateways and selected commercial sites.	<i>Planning Board</i> City Council County Commission	Long-term
Enhance code enforcement of properties not maintained or in need of repair.	City Council	Immediate
Report the identification of abandoned or derelict properties to the County Sanitarian who has the authority to investigate and decide if a public nuisance exists. If such a determination is made the matter will be brought to municipal court.	<i>City Council</i> <i>County Commission</i> County Sanitarian	Immediate
Continue to amend the City of Laurel zoning ordinance to promote high quality development.	<i>Planning Board</i> <i>Zoning Commission</i> City Council	Short-term
Update and enforce ordinances in City of Laurel.	<i>Planning Board</i> City Council	Short-term

HOUSING

TABLE 2, HOUSING OBJECTIVES

Objective: Increase the availability of housing choices for all people including low and fixed-income residents, senior citizens, homeless and disabled persons.		
Encourage development of apartment buildings in the City of Laurel to provide more housing options for residents with fixed incomes.	BSEDA Planning Board City Council County Commission	Short-term
Work with the owners of undeveloped vacant properties. Financial incentives such as tax abatement or directly monthly payments to the property owner should be considered.	County Commission City Council	Immediate
Objective: Increase availability of housing in the community, with special emphasis on increasing the supply of affordable and workforce housing.		
Use surplus city, county, town and school district owned land to establish public-private partnerships for developing affordable and workforce housing.	County Commission City Council School Districts	Short-term
Implement revisions to the zoning ordinance to encourage residential development and redevelopment in existing neighborhoods.	Planning Board City Council	Immediate
Promote Neighbor Works-Montana housing programs which include but are not limited to home buyer assistance (including income-based loans), foreclosure intervention, home maintenance guides, purchase of mobile homes, etc.	BSEDA City Council	Mid-term
Objective: Reduce the number of substandard housing units by securing outside funding for repair and rehabilitation.		
Establish a local housing rehabilitation program and seek state and federal funds to support its activities.	BSEDA	Short-term
Apply for Montana Department of Commerce Community Development Block Grant funds that can be used to develop a housing assistance program.	BSEDA	Short-term

Objective: Reduce the number of substandard housing units by securing outside funding for repair and rehabilitation.

Seek funding from the Montana Entity of Commerce Home Program non-competitive homeowner rehabilitation funds.	<i>BSEDA</i>	Short-term
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Objective: Make targeted public investments in neighborhoods to stimulate private investment.

Seek Montana Department of Commerce Community Block Grant Program funds for public facility projects in neighborhoods.	<i>City Council</i>	Short-term
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Objective: Establish minimum standards for temporary workforce housing.

Establish zoning and subdivision standards for the appropriate location, size, design standards, reclamation procedures and infrastructure for temporary worker housing.	<i>Planning Board</i> <i>County Commission</i> <i>City Council</i>	Immediate
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TRANSPORTATION

TABLE 3, TRANSPORTATION OBJECTIVES

Objective: Improve traffic safety and maintain existing streets and roads.

Formalize an adequately funded street and road maintenance program that is responsive to citizen complaints and uses criteria to prioritize street maintenance projects.	<i>City Council</i> <i>County Commission</i>	Long-term
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Establish, implement and enforce load limits on streets to reduce damage to streets, truck traffic congestion and noise and visual impacts of heavy truck traffic.	<i>Planning Board</i> <i>City Council</i>	Short-term
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Establish access management regulations in the City of Laurel zoning ordinance and the subdivision regulations.	<i>Planning Board</i> <i>Zoning Commission</i> <i>City Council</i>	Mid-term
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Objective: Plan for new streets and roads in future growth areas by preserving right-of-way for street and road extensions.

Implement a Future Roadway Functional Classification map to coordinate alignment of extended or new streets and in growth areas to maximize connectivity of the street network.	<i>Planning Board</i> City Council	Immediate
Prepare specifications for new roads based on the projected overall traffic volume and truck traffic volume, including the expected weight of loads.	<i>City Council</i> <i>County Commission</i>	Mid-term
Establish street connectivity standards in the City of Laurel zoning ordinance.	<i>Planning Board</i> <i>Zoning Commission</i> City Council	Short-term

INFRASTRUCTURE

TABLE 4, INFRASTRUCTURE OBJECTIVES

Objective: Maximize the functional life of existing water, sewer, storm water and solid waste facilities.

Establish and/or maintain an inspection and maintenance program for sewer, water and drainage facilities	<i>City Council</i>	Short-term
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Objective: Coordinate infrastructure planning with future land use policy and future growth areas.

Coordinate future infrastructure investment with future land use designations.	<i>City Council</i> <i>Planning Board</i>	Short-term
Develop a financially feasible five-year capital improvement plan (CIP) for infrastructure improvements in designated growth areas.	<i>City Council</i>	Mid-term
Create compatible development standards for streets, roads, water, and sewer in the county that can be annexed into the City.	<i>Planning Board</i> City Council County Commission	Mid - term

Objective: Establish policies that clearly define financial responsibilities for infrastructure improvements associated with existing and new development.

Refine policy and regulation on infrastructure cost sharing associated with development by providing preferential terms for development that clearly promote multiple Growth Policy goals and objectives.

*Planning Board
City Council*

Short-term

Monitor funding programs and apply for infrastructure project grant funds. (Details on several grant programs that support community infrastructure projects are provided below).

City Council

Immediate

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.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES, POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

TABLE 5, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

Objective: Develop economic strategies that create a diverse local economy with employment opportunities for all ages.

Develop a marketing brand for the City of Laurel and Yellowstone County to market to potential businesses and future residents.	<i>BSEDA</i> <i>City Council</i> County Commission	Short-term
Survey existing businesses to identify needed skill sets and to identify ways the County or City can aid in improving business operations and productivity.	<i>BSEDA</i>	Mid-term
Maintain SEMDC as the one-stop service center that distributes information about available regional, state and federal technical assistance, loans and grant programs for expanding and start-up businesses.	<i>BSEDA</i> City Council County Commission	Short-term
Acquire an existing commercial building or construct a new facility to serve as a business incubator.	<i>BSEDA</i>	Long-term
Refine existing economic development strategies to target under-represented industries with forecasted high demand for jobs.	<i>BSEDA</i>	Mid-term
Capitalize on energy-sector growth and expand businesses to support primary energy industries.	<i>County Commission</i> <i>City Council</i>	Mid-term
Seek state and federal funds to increase telecommunications infrastructure in the community (specifically bandwidth) to increase efficiency of businesses, enhance the technology courses offered at the city high school and attract new businesses that require high-capacity telecommunications infrastructure.	<i>BSEDA</i> City Council	Short-term
Continue to support start-up businesses by providing technical assistance and temporary financial assistance such as low interest guaranteed loans.	<i>BSEDA</i>	Short-term

Objective: Enhance the community's quality of life to stimulate private investment.

Develop a main street grant program to fund façade and other property improvements to enhance visual aspects of the core of Laurel	<i>BSEDA</i>	Short-term
Establish a business improvement district or special district to fund streetscape improvements in the core of Laurel.	<i>BSEDA</i> City Council	Mid-term
Continue to promote the use of the revolving loan fund that is intended to provide gap lending for business development.	<i>BSEDA</i>	Immediate
Promote more special events by civic organizations to increase business activity and enhance the community's quality of life.	<i>BSEDA</i>	Mid-term

Objective: Maximize the use of outside economic development funding opportunities.

Take maximum advantage of existing economic development technical assistance and loan and grant programs offered by USDA Rural Development, the Montana Community Development Corporation, and Southeastern Montana Development Corporation.	<i>BSEDA</i> City Council County Commission	Short-term
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Objective: Ensure existing job training services provide skills needed by existing and targeted businesses.

Modify existing job training programs to be responsive to employment trends, specifically forecasted high-demand occupations.	<i>BSEDA</i>	Long-term
Promote establishment of a college satellite facility or a trade school or nursing program in the City of Laurel. Develop/promote remote learning programs to reduce transportation costs for college students and increase the number of college- aged students who can remain in the community.	<i>City Council</i> <i>County Commission</i> <i>BSEDA</i>	Short-term
Consider expanding the number of high school courses that offer college credits and enter into Articulation Agreements with nearby colleges to receive formal acknowledgement of course credentials.	<i>School Districts</i>	Short-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 OBJECTIVES, POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

TABLE 6, PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES OBJECTIVES

Objective: Improve effectiveness and efficiency of government programs and services.		
Encourage continued and expanded joint use of public facilities to provide cost effective local services.	County Commission City Council CPRD Board School Board Medical Board	Short-term
Coordinate County and City services and share facilities/equipment to increase efficiency of providing local services.	County Commission City Council	Short-term
Evaluate effectiveness of the existing differentiated water rates measured by per capita water consumption.	City Clerk City Council	Short-term
Objective: Provide responsive public services that improve the health, welfare and safety of City residents.		
Create a brochure or marketing materials to increase the number of volunteer firefighters and ambulance service first responders and emergency medical technicians.	Emergency Services Coordinator Fire Department Chief Ambulance Director	Short-term
Facilitate expansion of the existing assisted living facility to address the unmet high demand for this housing option for senior citizens.	City Council	Mid-term
Establish a back-up Emergency Operations Center (EOC) facility that would be used during a declared emergency in the event the EOC in the courthouse is damaged or destroyed.	Emergency Services Coordinator County Commission	Short-term
Prepare new marketing strategies and outreach efforts to identify special need populations in the community.	Emergency Services Coordinator	Short-term

Objective: Enhance public involvement and timely/accurate notification of City and County projects.

Continue to encourage public participation in decisions on public projects and services.	<i>County Commission</i> <i>City Council</i>	Immediate
Utilize citizen task forces to research and evaluate the feasibility of new or expanded programs and community enhancement projects.	<i>County Commission</i> <i>City Council</i>	Short-term

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION OBJECTIVES, POLICIES & STRATEGIES

The city interacts with a number of agencies and organizations including but not limited to, Laurel Schools, Eastern Montana Drug Task Force (EMDTF), Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FW&P), DEQ, DNRC and Yellowstone County which shares the library, weed management, senior citizen services, public health services, probation, and county landfill in the Laurel area.

Laurel has inter-local agreements with the school regarding cooperative efforts, shared use of facilities and other areas of mutual interest. The Laurel volunteer fire department has a mutual aid agreement with Yellowstone County Fire Services.

The Laurel Police Department works with the EMDTF, assists Yellowstone County on calls near Laurel and works closely with the Montana Highway Patrol.

Ongoing efforts will be maintained. These efforts include the mayor or administrative staff meeting with the Yellowstone County Commissioners, and school administrator at least once a year to discuss ongoing cooperative efforts and coordination. The Yellowstone County Commissioners appoint four members to serve on the City-County Planning Board which has jurisdiction of matters related to growth adjacent to the city of Laurel, yet outside the limits of the incorporated boundaries of the city. A copy of the Laurel Comprehensive Growth Plan will be submitted to the County Commissioners for review and comment prior to the adoption by the City Council.

TABLE 7, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION OBJECTIVES

Objective: Establish an annexation policy encouraging coordination with the County.		
Develop a coordinated city-county policy about annexation of developed properties addressing the transition from rural to urban services and fiscal impacts associated with the annexation.	Planning Board City Council County Commission	Short-term
Establish extraterritorial zoning one mile beyond Laurel city limits. To implement this policy the City of Laurel would need to adopt its own city subdivision regulations.	Planning Board City Council	Short-term
Objective: Develop a TIF district to create economic incentives and spur growth in Laurel's core		
Create TIF district with reasonable boundaries.	City Council BSEDA	Short-term
Complete Determination of Blight study for selected district.	City Council Planning Board BSEDA	Short-term
Work to establish who will be responsible for managing various aspects of the TIF district.	BSEDA City Council Planning Board	Short-term
Create an Urban Renewal Plan in accordance with MCA conditions addressing blight.	Planning Board	Mid-term
Hold public hearings, adopt the plan and receive certification by the Montana Department of Revenue.	City Council Montana Dept of Revenue	Mid-term
Determine taxable value of the district and calculate tax increment. Develop financing strategy for tax increment funds.	City Council BSEDA	Mid-term
Utilize tax increment funds to implement improvements in district.	City Council Planning Board BSEDA	Long-term
Objective: Maintain acceptable levels of service in developed areas as the City of Laurel and grow.		
Establish policies that set minimum levels of service for essential services such as schools, fire, police, water and sewer.	City Council School Districts	Mid-term

Objective: Support development of agriculture in the community.

Support specialized agricultural businesses that produce high-value, high-demand products.	<i>MSU Extension</i>	Mid-term
Encourage continued and expanded use of state and federal land for agricultural purposes.	<i>County Commission</i>	Immediate
Promote community gardening programs in the city and the county to encourage residents to plant more local produce and create/expand farmer markets in Laurel	<i>MSU Extension</i>	Short-term

File Attachments for Item:

3. Public Hearing: USW Conditional Land Use for 1009 East 6th Street



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 14, 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 has been placed on the October 21, 2020 Planning Board meeting agenda.

- 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.

- 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

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

CITY OF LAUREL, MONTANA CONDITIONAL USE APPLICATION



Date received: 9/9/20

Twelve copies of this form, along with the appropriate fee, shall be submitted to the Planning Board Secretary on the first day of the month prior to the month in which the application shall be heard by the Zoning Commission. The Planning Board Secretary shall note the time of receipt, keep one copy, send one copy to the Planning Director, and forward the remainder to the members of the Zoning Commission. The Planning Board Secretary shall publish notice of a public hearing in the local newspaper at least 15 days prior to the Zoning Commission meeting at which the application will be considered; adjacent property owners of record within 150 feet of the application property shall also be notified by mail by the Zoning Commission. **The applicant or the authorized agent must attend the public hearing before both the Zoning Commission and the City Council.**

1. Name of Land Owner: oil chemical and Atomic workers International union Pioneer
2. Address: 1009 east 16th St.
3. Phone #: 406-855-3412 (REP FOR UAW 11-443) local 443 (USNR 11-443)
4. Legal Description of Property asking for Conditional Use:
lots 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23 and 24 in block 6
of the Nutting Subdivision.
5. Address of property or general location: 1009 east 16th St
6. Map Showing Property Location with Circle Drawn within 150' thereof: ☒
7. List of Property Owners of Record within the 150' Perimeters. (Obtained from the County Clerk and Recorder's Office first (4th floor of County Courthouse) and the Department of Revenue Office second (14th floor of Wells Fargo Bank Building in downtown Billings).
8. Existing Zoning: RLMF
9. Specific Land being Requested: Use as union hall,
Planning major improvement to site (Demo current structure &
Rebuild hall & parking & landscaping)
10. Reason for Request: Original Variance Expired - R13-50
11. Scaled Drawing of the property showing the proposed use and improvements, adjacent land use, fences, driveways, etc.: ☒
12. Other Information as may be required by the City. N/A
13. Review fee paid and date paid: 9/23/20 \$550 residential
N/A. \$1,100 commercial

After the public hearing for the conditional use, the Zoning Commission shall delay its recommendation to the City Council no longer than 30 working days. The City Council shall publish notice of and conduct a second public hearing before the Council, consider the recommendation of the Zoning Commission, and make its decision.

Scheduled before Planning Board: 10/21/20 Scheduled before City Council: 11/10/20
Final Approval: _____

Chapter 17.62

CONDITIONAL LAND USES

Sections:

- 17.62.010 Purpose.**
- 17.62.020 Requirements.**
- 17.62.030 Application process.**

17.62.010 Purpose.

The purpose of conditional land uses is to provide for specific uses, other than those already allowed in each zoning district, which may be compatible uses in the district under certain safeguards or conditions. The conditional land use permitting process is intended to provide a detailed and comprehensive review of such proposed, compatible developments and to insure the interest of the public, the community, and the larger neighborhood area are protected. Conditional uses, once granted by the city, are sight specific and run with the land. Land use changes not specifically included in the approval of a conditional use are a violation of the city zoning ordinance. (Ord. 03-4 (part), 2003)

17.62.020 Requirements.

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. (Ord. 03-4 (part), 2003)

17.62.030 Application process.

Twelve copies of the conditional use application form and required review fee shall be submitted to the planning board secretary thirty working days prior to the regularly scheduled zoning commission/planning board meeting at which the application will be considered. The planning board secretary shall note the time of receipt, keep one copy, send one copy to the city planner, and forward the remainder to the members of the zoning commission.

A. The zoning commission shall publish notice of public hearing in the local newspaper at least fifteen days prior to the zoning commission meeting at which the application will be considered; adjacent property owners of record within one hundred fifty feet of the application property shall also be notified by mail by the zoning commission. The applicant

NO. 34 - WARRANT DEED - Conveyance - First Page

3 1/2

Know All Men by These Presents:

That SCHOOL DISTRICT #7, YELLOWSTONE COUNTY, MONTANA, by its
 Trustees a corporation, organized and existing under the laws
 of the State of Montana, in consideration of
 the sum of Six Thousand and no/100 - - - - -
- - - - - Dollars (\$6,000.00), the receipt whereof is hereby admitted,
 does hereby grant, bargain, sell, convey, warrant and confirm unto JACKSON PARKER, President
FRED QUINN, JR., Vice-President, and MARSHALL HUNTINGTON, Secretary-
Treasurer, and their successors in office, as Trustees for the PIONEER
LOCAL NO. 143, of the Cyl Workers International Union of C.I.O., of
Laurel, Montana and to their successors and assigns, FOREVER, the
 following described real property, situated in the city or town of Laurel
 County of Yellowstone, State of Montana, to-wit:
Lots 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23 and 24
in Block 6, of the Nutting Subdivision, City of Laurel,
according to the official plat now on file and of record
in said county.

This deed is given subject to all easements, irrigation,
 ditch rights and restrictions of record and appertaining to
 the chain of title hereto.

TOGETHER, with all and singular the tenements, hereditaments,
 and appurtenances thereto belonging or in anywise appertaining.



And the said GRANTOR hereby covenants that it will forever WARRANT and DEFEND
 all right, title, and interest in and to said premises, and the quiet and peaceable possession thereof, unto
 the said GRANTEE their successors and assigns, against the
 acts and deeds of said grantor, and all and every person and persons whomsoever lawfully claiming or to
 claim the same.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, said GRANTOR has caused its corporate name to be subscribed
 and its corporate seal to be affixed, by its proper officers, thereunto duly authorized, on this 23rd
 day of February, A. D. 1954.

ATTEST:
Rodney L. Harman
 Clerk of School Dist. #7 Secretary

SCHOOL DISTRICT #7, YELLOWSTONE
COUNTY, MONTANA
 By Charles C. Galloway
 Chairman of the Board President
Oliver F. Wood
Kenneth R. Zimmerman
W. A. [Signature]
K. R. W. [Signature]
 Trustees

(County Clerk's Note:
 "No Corporate Seal Attached")

BOOK 481 PAGE 212

STATE OF MONTANA.

County of Yellowstone

On this 23rd day of February in the year 1954, before me

the undersigned

Charles C. Giblin, Kenneth G. Hageman, a Notary Public for the State of Montana, personally appeared K. R. Walton, T. E. Shay, and Oliver F. Wolf (known to me or proved to me on oath of _____)

to be the Trustees of the corporation that executed the within instrument and acknowledged to me that such corporation executed the same.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my Official Seal the day and year in this certificate first above written.



Notary Public for the State of Montana.

Residing in Laurel, Montana

My Commission expires July 21, 1955

NOTE: Acknowledgment should be made by either president or secretary.

522878

Warranty Deed-Corporation
(S. E.)

School District #7, Yellow-
stone County, Montana
TO

Trustees of Pioneer Local

No. 443 of Oil Workers Intl.

Dated Feb. 23, 1954

STATE OF MONTANA,

Yellowstone
Copy of the within instrument was
Filed for Record this 22nd day of

April At D. 1954

at 10:13 o'clock A. M., and

recorded in Book 481 of Deeds

Page 211 of the Records of

Yellowstone County,

State of Montana

CHRIS RUBICH

County Recorder

By Mike Giovanni Deputy

Fees \$1.90 pd by ck

Return to Thomas L. Bradley

Laurel, Mont.

TM. 1-10

No. 3 - WARRANTY DEED - OF

STATE PUBLISHER CO., HELENA, MONT.

This Indenture, Made the 6th day of July

A. D. one thousand nine hundred and Sixty-Six

BETWEEN VIRGIL ZIMMERMAN, ALBERT RACKI and BYRNE MANLEY, TRUSTEES
of OIL, CHEMICAL AND ATOMIC WORKERS INTERNATIONAL UNION, PIONEER LOCAL
No. 2-443, of Laurel, Montana, parties of the FIRST PART
and OIL, CHEMICAL AND ATOMIC WORKERS INTERNATIONAL UNION, PIONEER
LOCAL No. 2-443, Laurel, Montana, a Montana corporation,

the part of the SECOND PART;

WITNESSETH, that the said parties of the FIRST PART, for and in consideration of the
sum of TEN DOLLARS AND OTHER VALUABLE CONSIDERATION Dollars (\$10.00 & ON)
lawful money of the United States of America to them in hand paid by said party of the
SECOND PART, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged; do by these presents grant,
bargain, sell, convey, warrant and confirm unto the said parties of the SECOND PART, and to
its heirs and assigns forever, the hereinafter described real estate situated in the city or town of
Laurel County of Yellowstone and State of
Montana, to-wit:

Lots 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, and 35,
in Block 1, of the Building Subdivision, City of Laurel,
according to the official plat on file and of record
in the office of the Clerk and Recorder of Yellowstone
County, Montana, subject to all easements, irrigation,
easement rights and restrictions of record and appertaining
to the chain of title hereto.

The above-described property is subject to a declaration
of trust recorded in Book 430, Page 90, Records of the Clerk
and Recorder of Yellowstone County, Montana, which trust is
hereby revealed by the undersigned as successor trustees of
the original trustees who filed said declaration of trust.

TOGETHER with all and singular the hereinbefore described premises together with all appurtenances, hereditaments and appurtenances thereto belonging or in anywise appertaining, and the reversion and reversions, remainder and remainders, rents, issues, and profits thereof; and also all the estate, right, title, interest, right of dower and right of homestead, possession, claim and demand whatsoever, as well in law as in equity, of the said parties of the FIRST PART, of, in or to the said premises, and every part and parcel thereof, with the appurtenances thereto belonging, TO HAVE AND TO HOLD, all and singular the above mentioned and described premises unto the said party of the SECOND PART, and to its heirs and assigns forever.

And the said parties of the FIRST PART, and their heirs, do hereby covenant that they will forever WARRANT and DEFEND all right, title and interest in and to the said premises and the quiet and peaceable possession thereof, unto the said party of the SECOND PART, its heirs and assigns, against all acts and deeds of the said parties of the FIRST PART, and all and every person and persons whomsoever lawfully claiming or to claim the same.

(Consideration less than \$100.00 - no revenue stamps required)

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the said parties of the FIRST PART have hereunto set their hands and seals the day and year first hereinbefore written.

Signed, Sealed and Delivered in
the presence of

Virgil Zimmerman (SEAL)
Albert Racki (SEAL)
Byrne Manley (SEAL)

STATE OF MONTANA

County of Yellowstone

On this 6th day of July in the year nineteen hundred and Sixty-Six before me the undersigned, a Notary Public for the State of Montana, personally appeared Virgil Zimmerman, Albert Racki and Byrne Manley

known to me

(or proved to me on oath of _____)

to be the person s whose name s are subscribed to the within instrument and acknowledged to me that they executed the same.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my Notarial

Seal the day and year first above written.

Joseph F. Magle

Notary Public for the State of Montana

Residing at Billings, Montana

My Commission expires April 3, 1968

781500

WARRANTY DEED

(S. F.)

Virgil Zimmerman

TO Private

Ed Oliver, Attorney

Working International Union

Pension Plan

Dated 7-1-66

STATE OF MONTANA

I Certify that the within instrument was Filed for Record this 6 day of

July, A. D. 1966

at 4:40 o'clock P. M., and

Recorded in Book 842 of Deeds

on Page 657 of the Records of

County of Yellowstone

State of

By J. F. Magle

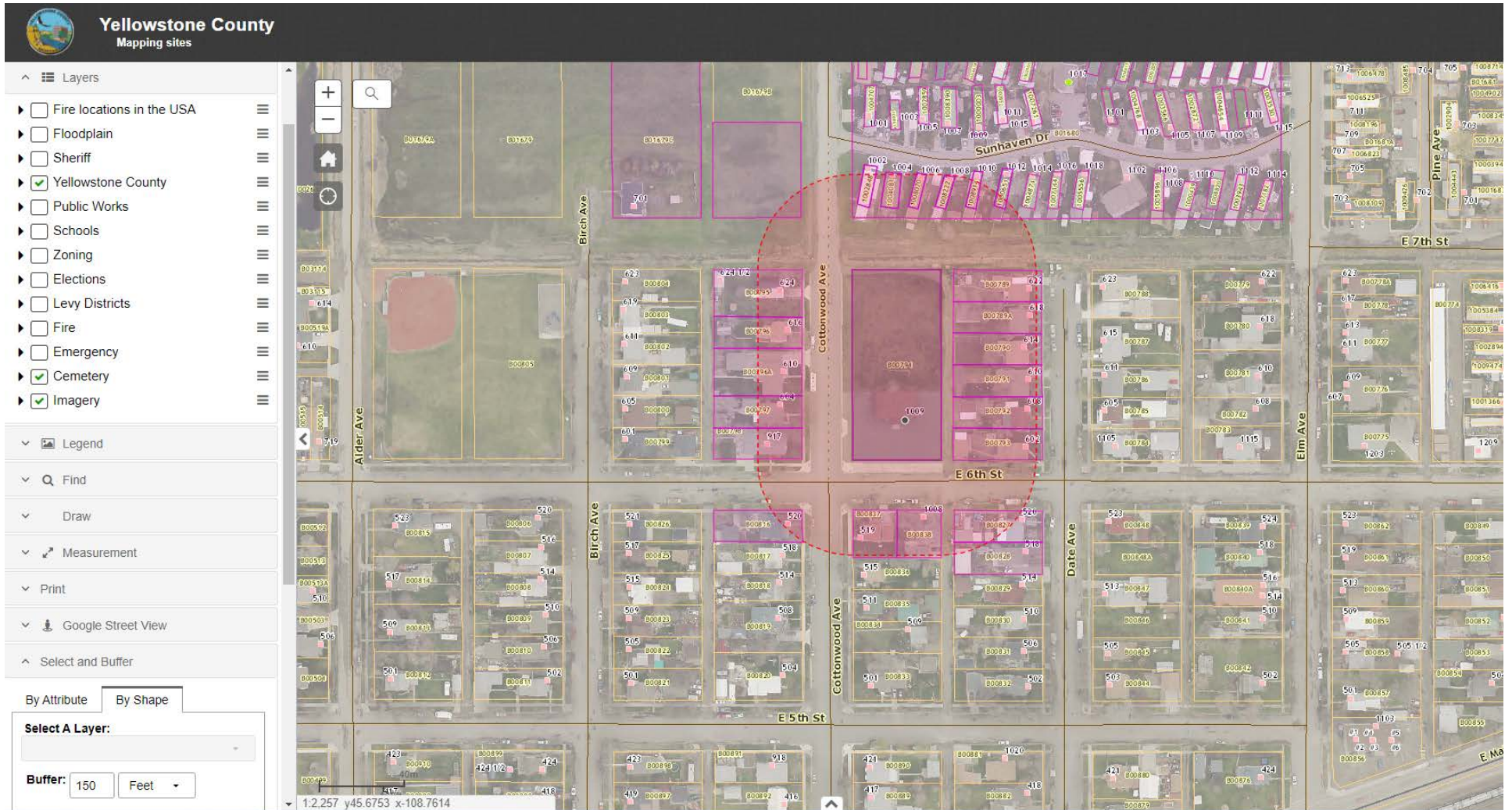
Fees \$ 4.00 Deputy

Return to J. F. Magle

P.O. Box 1581

BILLINGS, MONT.

USW Conditional Land Use Application - 1009 East 6th Street with 150ft buffer



USW Conditional Land Use Application - Property Owners within 150ft			
Owner name	Tax Code	Legal Description	Address
PENNY, ARTHUR W & CAROL P	B01679C	NUTTING BROS SUBD, S10, T02 S, R24 E, BLOCK 2, Lot 7	701 BIRCH AVE
SUNHAVEN LLC	B01680	NUTTING BROS SUBD, S10, T02 S, R24 E, BLOCK 3, Lot 1 - 45, AMND BLK 3-4	1102 SUNHAVEN DR
FORSYTH, MARJORIE A	1002848	S10, T02 S, R24 E, 1999 BONNAVILLA 15X75 TITLE: E503230 SN: NEB99A27570 100*	1002 SUNHAVEN DR
BARSTAD, TAMMY HOTH	1004081	S10, T2S, R24E, SERIAL 11217, TITLE # AA0258978, MAKE CHAMPION, MODEL LIFESTYLE*	1004 SUNHAVEN DR
COTTER, JAMES MICHAEL	1008070	S10, T2S, R24E, SERIAL # G3064, TITLE # AA2491792, MAKE GALLATIN, YEAR 1979, SI*	1006 SUNHAVEN DR
LANDOR, CLARISSA J	1008222	S10, T02 S, R24 E, SERIAL # R50272, TITLE # M794947, MAKE MARLETTE, YEAR 1975, *	1008 SUNHAVEN DR
PIERSON, FRANK E	1008914	S10, T02 S, R24 E, 1972 CENTURY 14X76 TITLE: M442079 SN: 11215 1010 SUNHAVEN*	1010 SUNHAVEN DR
ME BALLINGER TRUST	1000651	S10, T02 S, R24 E, SERIAL # 137000HC500310A, TITLE # AA2400168, MAKE COMMANDER, *	1012 SUNHAVEN DR
LARSON, BRUCE	B00816	NUTTING SUBD, S10, T02 S, R24 E, BLOCK 10, Lot 1 - 2	520 COTTONWOOD AVE
HOLLEY, DENNIS W & HEATHER M	B00828	NUTTING SUBD, S10, T02 S, R24 E, BLOCK 11, Lot 3 - 4	518 DATE AVE
FELLER, WILLIAM L & DARLENE I &	B00827	NUTTING SUBD, S10, T02 S, R24 E, BLOCK 11, Lot 1 - 2	520 DATE AVE
WAGNER, COLE M &	B00838	NUTTING SUBD, S10, T02 S, R24 E, BLOCK 11, Lot 22, E2 LT 22-24	1008 E 6TH ST
HOMEWOOD, DANIEL	B00837	NUTTING SUBD, S10, T02 S, R24 E, BLOCK 11, Lot 22, W2 LT 22-24	519 COTTONWOOD AVE
HAGLAN, WILLIAM & WENDI	B00798	NUTTING SUBD, S10, T02 S, R24 E, BLOCK 7, Lot 11 - 12	917 E 6TH ST
VRALSTED, TIMOTHY J	B00797	NUTTING SUBD, S10, T02 S, R24 E, BLOCK 7, Lot 9 - 10	604 COTTONWOOD AVE
SMITH, TONY C & SHAWNA E	B00796A	NUTTING SUBD, S10, T02 S, R24 E, BLOCK 7, Lot 6 - 8	610 COTTONWOOD AVE
MULLANEY, SHAWN & AMY MAYE	B00796	NUTTING SUBD, S10, T02 S, R24 E, BLOCK 7, Lot 4 - 5	616 COTTONWOOD AVE
TAYLOR, FRANK W & CHARITY L	B00795	NUTTING SUBD, S10, T02 S, R24 E, BLOCK 7, Lot 1 - 3	624 COTTONWOOD AVE
SYDES-FNIDLAY, LISA J	B00793	NUTTING SUBD, S10, T02 S, R24 E, BLOCK 6, Lot 11 - 12	602 DATE AVE
SANDAU, CHARLES D & CAROLINE D	B00792	NUTTING SUBD, S10, T02 S, R24 E, BLOCK 6, Lot 9 - 10	608 DATE AVE
CAHHAL, TERRY D &	B00791	NUTTING SUBD, S10, T02 S, R24 E, BLOCK 6, Lot 7 - 8	610 DATE AVE
LEHMAN, JAMES D	B00790	NUTTING SUBD, S10, T02 S, R24 E, BLOCK 6, Lot 5 - 6	614 DATE AVE
COOLEY, MATTHEW	B00789A	NUTTING SUBD, S10, T02 S, R24 E, BLOCK 6, Lot 3 - 4	618 DATE AVE
SWECKER, JON D	B00789	NUTTING SUBD, S10, T02 S, R24 E, BLOCK 6, Lot 1 - 2	622 DATE AVE
PACE PIONEER LOCAL 8-443	B00794	NUTTING SUBD, S10, T02 S, R24 E, BLOCK 6, Lot 13 - 24	1009 E 6TH ST

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Laurel City-County Planning Board and Zoning Commission will conduct a public hearing on a conditional land use application submitted by Steve Jansma of United Steel Workers 11-443 for operating a Union Hall at 1009 East 6th Street Laurel, MT which is zoned Residential Limited Multi-Family (RLMF). The Zoning Commission hearing is scheduled for **5:35 P.M., in the City Council Chambers at City Hall, 115 West 1st Street, Laurel, Montana, on Wednesday, October 21, 2020.**

Additionally, the City Council has scheduled a public hearing and consideration of approval for the conditional use. The City Council hearing is scheduled for **6:30 P.M., in the City Council Chambers at City Hall, 115 West 1st Street, Laurel, Montana, on Tuesday, November 10, 2020.**

The United Steel Workers Local has maintained the union hall at 1009 East 6th Street for many years. They have proposed to demolish and replace the aging building currently on site with an up-to-date building with improved facilities. Union Halls and other meeting halls are not described in Chapter 17.16 – Residential Districts. This lack of description requires a conditional land use permit to be approved prior to any demolition and construction activities to develop a new facility for future use.

The conditional land use permitting process is intended to provide a detailed and comprehensive review of the proposed use and ensure that the interest of the public, the community, and surrounding neighborhood are protected. Conditional uses that are granted by the city are site specific and run with the land. Land use changes not specifically included in the approval of the conditional use are a violation of the city zoning ordinance.

Public comment is encouraged and can be provided in person at the public hearings on October 21st and November 10th. Public comment can also be made via email to the Planning Director, or via letter to the Planning Department office at 115 West 1st Street Laurel, MT 59044. A copy of the conditional use application and supporting documentation is available for review upon request at the Planning Department office. Questions regarding this public hearing may be directed to the Planning Director at 628.4796 ext. 5, or via email at cityplanner@laurel.mt.gov.

USW Conditional Land Use Application – Exterior Concept Image



17.16.010 - List of uses.

Table [17.16.010](#) designates the special review (SR) and allowed uses (A) in residential districts.

Table 17.16.010

	RE 22,000	R 7,500	R 6,000	RLMF	RMF	RMH	PUD	SR	RT
Accessory building or use incidental to any permitted residential use customarily in connection with the principal building and located on the same land parcel as the permitted use		A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Animals (see zoning district description for specifics)								A	
Automobile parking in connection with a permitted residential use		A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Bed and breakfast inn		SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR
Boarding and lodging houses		SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR
Cell towers (see Sections 17.21.020—17.21.040)									
Cemetery		SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	
Child care facilities									
Family day care home		A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Group day care home		A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Day care center		SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR
Churches and other places of worship including parish house and Sunday school buildings		SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	A	SR
Communication towers (see Sections 17.21.020—17.21.040)									
Community residential facilities serving eight or fewer persons		A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Community residential facilities serving nine or more persons		SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR
Orphanages and charitable institutions		SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	A	SR
Convents and rectories		SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	A	SR
Crop and tree farming, greenhouses and truck gardening									
Day care facilities		SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR
Kennels (noncommercial)		A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Dwellings Single-family		A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Two-family			A	A	A		A		
Multifamily				A	A		A		
Manufactured homes									
Class A						A			
Class B						A			
Class C						A			
Row Housing				SR	SR		A		
Family day care homes		A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Greenhouses for domestic uses		A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Group day care homes		A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Home occupations		A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Parking, Public		SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR
Parks, playgrounds, playfields, and golf courses community center buildings—operated by public agency, neighborhood or homeowners' associations		A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Planned developments							A		
Post-secondary school		A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Preschool		SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR
Public service installations		SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR
Schools, commercial		SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR
Schools, public elementary, junior and senior high schools		A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Towers (see Sections 17.21.020—17.21.040)									

Chapter 17.62 - CONDITIONAL LAND USES

17.62.010 - Purpose.

The purpose of conditional land uses is to provide for specific uses, other than those already allowed in each zoning district, which may be compatible uses in the district under certain safeguards or conditions. The conditional land use permitting process is intended to provide a detailed and comprehensive review of such proposed, compatible developments and to insure the interest of the public, the community, and the larger neighborhood area are protected. Conditional uses, once granted by the city, are sight specific and run with the land. Land use changes not specifically included in the approval of a conditional use are a violation of the city zoning ordinance.

(Ord. 03-4 (part), 2003)

17.62.020 - Requirements.

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.

(Ord. 03-4 (part), 2003)

17.62.030 - Application process.

Twelve copies of the conditional use application form and required review fee shall be submitted to the planning board secretary thirty working days prior to the regularly scheduled zoning commission/planning board meeting at which the application will be considered. The planning board secretary shall note the time of receipt, keep one copy, send one copy to the city planner, and forward the remainder to the members of the zoning commission.

- A. The zoning commission shall publish notice of public hearing in the local newspaper at least fifteen days prior to the zoning commission meeting at which the application will be considered; adjacent property owners of record within one hundred fifty feet of the application property shall also be notified by mail by the zoning commission. The applicant or

the authorized agent must attend the public hearings before both the zoning commission and the city council.

- B. The conditional use application shall include twelve copies of:
 - 1. Conditional use application form;
 - 2. Legal description of the property;
 - 3. Address or general location of property;
 - 4. Existing zoning;
 - 5. Specific land use being requested;
 - 6. Reason for request;
 - 7. Scaled drawings of the subject property, proposed use, existing buildings and improvements, adjacent land use, fences, etc.;
 - 8. Other information as may be needed by the zoning commission;
 - 9. Name, address and telephone number of owner of record;
 - 10. Name, address and telephone number of agent of owner of record;
 - 11. List of current property owners adjacent to and within one hundred fifty feet of the parcel for which a conditional use permit is sought;
 - 12. Review fee.
- C. After the public hearing for the conditional use, the zoning commission shall delay its recommendation to city council no longer than thirty working days. The city council shall publish notice of and conduct a second public hearing before the council, consider the recommendation of the zoning commission and make its decision.

(Ord. 03-4 (part), 2003)

RESOLUTION NO. R13-50

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL GRANTING A VARIANCE
FROM THE CITY'S NONCONFORMING USE REGULATION.**

WHEREAS, LMC 17.56.030 states that no building used for a nonconforming use shall be enlarged, extended, reconstructed or structurally altered; and

WHEREAS, the owners of property located at 1009 East 6th Street seek a variance to tear down the current structure and reconstruct a new building at the present location due to the building's dilapidated condition; and

WHEREAS, the owners submitted their request for a variance to the Laurel-Yellowstone City-County Planning Board. The Planning Board held a public hearing on the matter no protests were heard; and

WHEREAS, the Laurel-Yellowstone City-County Planning Board considered all of the documentary evidence in the applicant's file and the testimony of the owners and recommends the approval of the variance, subject to the following conditions:

1. The variance shall be good for three years from approval on unimproved property.
2. The applicant shall apply for a building permit.
3. Property shall be kept free of noxious weeds.
4. All storm water must be kept on site.

WHEREAS, the City Council held a public hearing concerning this matter on August 6, 2013. No objections were noted or received into the record.

WHEREAS, 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 owner's request for a variance from the nonconforming use zoning requirement is hereby approved for the property located at 1009 East 6th Street.

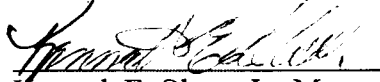
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the variance is site specific to this address, and the variance granted herein is subject to the four conditions listed herein.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the City Council on August 6, 2013, by Council Member Poehls.

PASSED and APPROVED by the City Council of the City of Laurel, Montana this 6th day of August, 2013.

APPROVED BY THE MAYOR this 6th day of August, 2013.

CITY OF LAUREL

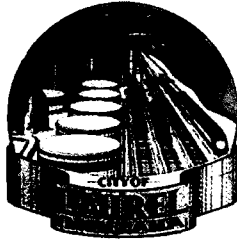

Kenneth E. Olson, Jr., Mayor

ATTEST:


Shirley Ewan, Clerk/Treasurer

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


Sam S. Painter, Civil City Attorney



LAUREL CITY-COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

STAFF REPORT

TO: Laurel City Council
FROM: Monica Plecker, Laurel Planner
RE: Variance for 1009 East 6th Street
HEARING
DATE: August 6, 2013

DESCRIPTION/LOCATION:

Alyssa Vandersloot has submitted an application for variance on behalf of United Steel Workers 11-443. The request is to reconstruct a nonconforming use. The property is legally described as NUTTING SUBD, S10, T02 S, R24 E, BLOCK 6, Lot 13 - 24

The property is currently zoned Residential Limited Multifamily

STAFF FINDINGS:

1. The applicant is requesting a variance from Laurel Municipal code 17.56.030 to reconstruct a nonconforming use. LMC 17.56.030 states that "no building used for a nonconforming use shall be enlarged, extended, reconstructed, or structurally altered".
2. The property is currently used as a union meeting hall which is considered an assembly hall. Assembly halls are not allowed in the RLMF zoning classification.
3. A map identifying the property and letter of application are attached.
4. As per the requirements of LMC 17.72.070, a public hearing on the matter shall be held before the zoning commission before being heard by the Laurel City Council. As per B. of the section, public notice was published in the Laurel Outlook and adjacent property owners were notified by certified mail more than 15 days prior to the public hearing.

STAFF UPDATE:

1. On June 6th the Planning Board was presented with the application for variance and a public hearing was held.
2. Two people spoke as proponents for the variance requests saying that they believed it needed to be replaced and that it is not currently ADA compliant.
3. At the June 6th meeting the planning board voted to delay action because the applicant could not be present.
4. The Planning Board met on June 27th. Alyssa Vandersloot and Keith Crookston, both members of the United Steel Workers presented information on the request.
5. United Steel Workers representatives stated that the building has not just been a location for the union to meet but a community facility as well. He added that with the aging and dwindling condition of the building they have had to limit what activities can be held because of safety concerns and its lack of handicap accessible facilities. He added the building did not pass its most recent inspection.
6. The Planning Board voted unanimously to approve the variance since the Union has owned and used the facility since 1954 which is prior to the enactment of zoning regulations (LMC 17.60.020 (7)). Furthermore the planning board agreed that a hardship is present due to the safety hazards of the aging building.
7. The Planning Board also recommended the staff conditions presented.

ZONING COMMISSION CONSIDERATIONS AND RECOMMENDATION:

The Zoning Commission shall review and made determinations on the following chapters and sections of the Laurel Municipal Code (LMC):

1. According to Chapter 17.60.020 of the LMC the Zoning Commission may not recommend granting a land use variance:
 1. Unless the denial would constitute an unnecessary and unjust invasion of the right of property;
 2. Unless the grant relates to a condition or situation special and peculiar to the applicant;
 3. Unless the basis is something more than mere financial loss to the owner;
 4. Unless the hardship was created by someone other than the owner;
 5. Unless the variance would be within the spirit, intent, purpose, and general plan of this title;
 6. Unless the variance would not affect adversely or injure or result in injustice to others; and
 7. Ordinarily unless the applicant owned the property prior to the enactment of this title or amendment.

2. As per LMC 17.72.060 the Zoning Commission shall make a recommendation to the City Council to:

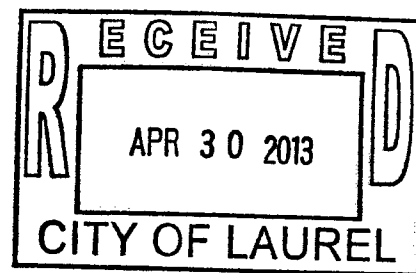
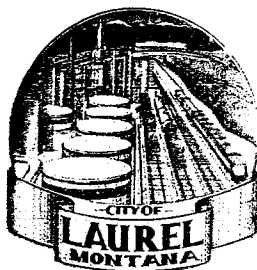
1. Deny the application for amendment to the official map;
2. Grant action on the application for a period not to exceed thirty days;
3. Delay action on the application for a period not to exceed thirty days;
4. Give reasons for the recommendation.

STAFF SUGGESTED CONDITIONS:

If the Planning Board recommends approval of the land use variance, the following conditions are suggested:

1. The variance shall be good for 3 years from approval on unimproved property.
2. The applicant shall apply for a building permit.
3. Property shall be kept free of noxious weeds.
4. All stormwater must be kept on site.

PO Box 337
Laurel, MT 59044



Laurel Variance Request Application

This application covers appeals from decisions of the Planning Department (and sometimes other officials) and for requests for variances concerning setbacks, structures, heights, lot coverage, etc.

The undersigned owner or agent of the owner of the following described property requests a variance to the Zoning Ordinances of the City of Laurel as outlined by the laws of the State of Montana.

1. Name of property owner: United Steel Workers 11-443
2. Name of Applicant if different from above: _____
3. Phone number of Applicant: 406-208-7714
Alyssa Vandersloot Recording Secretary
4. Street address and general location: 1000 E 6th St.
5. Legal description of the property: Pace Pioneer local 8-443
6. Current Zoning: Residential
7. Provide a copy of covenants or deed restrictions on property.

I understand that the filing fee accompanying this application is not refundable, that it pays part of the cost of process, and that the fee does not constitute a payment for a variance. I also understand I or my agent must appear at the hearing of this request before the Planning Board and all of the information presented by me is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature of Applicant: Alyssa Vandersloot

Date of Submittal: 4/30/2013

Dear Laurel residents,

The United Steel Workers union is submitting an application for a variance for the union hall located at 1006 east 6th street. The plan for this variance is to tear down and build a new union hall on the same property it sits on today.

The United Steel Workers union came to on September 12, 1940, formerly known as the Oil Chemical and Atomic Workers Union 2-443. The union has always participated and supported the local community. We believe that if we are able to build a new building this will only better the community. The building that exists now was built somewhere in the 1920s-1930s and overtime has just deteriorated. Plans are to build a building that will be able to host dinners and receptions with ease as well as the locals main office.

The existing building is approximately 60Lx40W, with two levels. Plans are to build a building that would be approximately 100Lx80W this would be a single level building. The building will be energy efficient and have a nice curb appeal, we plan on the exterior having a half rock or brick face (city hall has pictures of what the projected building will resemble). The parking lot that exists now will remain with repairs that are needed.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Alyssa Vandersloot

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Alyssa Vandersloot'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping 'A' and a long, horizontal tail stroke.

Recording secretary Local 11-443

The attached is a letter for application of a variance for the United Steel Workers Union hall located at 1009 East 6th st. in Laurel, Mt. the following is in reference to Laurel Municipal Code 17.60.20

- 1.) United Steel Workers Union does believe that denial would constitute as an unnecessary or unjust invasion of the right of property, because the need for major building repair, in this case to build a new building.
- 2.) The grant relates to a condition and situation special and peculiar to the applicant because it will allow the United Steel Workers to build and new building were the existing building takes up vacancy.
- 3.) The basis is not a mere financial loss to the United Steel Workers.
- 4.) Hardship was not created by any party to the United Steel Workers.
- 5.) The variance will be within the spirit, intent, purpose and general plan of this title.
- 6.) The variance will not affect any party adversely or injure or result in injustice to any party.
- 7.) *The United Steel workers did not own the existing property prior to the enactment of this amendment.*

File Attachments for Item:

4. Public Hearing: Variance for Street Continuity for the Proposed Goldberg Sporting Estates Subdivision



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 14, 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

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.

File Attachments for Item:

5. Public Hearing: Variances for Roadway Widths and Right-of-Way Dedication for the Proposed Goldberg Sporting Estates Subdivision



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 14, 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

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.

July 21, 2020

City of Laurel Planning Department
P.O. Box 10
Laurel, MT 59044



To Whom it May Concern:

The Developer of Goldberg Sporting Estates, First Filing, a 73-lot proposed residential development and 15 lot proposed commercial development, is submitting this written petition respectfully requesting a variance from Sections 16.04.060.B.7 and 16.04.060.C.8 and Table 16.4.C.1 in the City of Laurel Subdivision Regulations 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."

"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 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:

- 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.



- The City of Laurel Long Range Transportation Plan - 2014 classifies Yard Office Rd 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 the 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.

City of Laurel Subdivision Regulations Section 16.11.1.A the following are addressed:

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

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 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.

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;*

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.

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 County providing benefit to the taxpayer base.

4. *The variance will not in any manner place the subdivision in nonconformance with any adopted zoning regulations; and*

Response: This requested variance will not in any manner place the subdivision in nonconformance with the adopted zoning regulations.



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

Response: The proposed ROW dedication width not only aligns with 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.C.1 within section 16.04.060.C.8 of the City of Laurel municipal code.

Feel free to contact PE Project Manager Scott Aspenlieder with any questions or concerns at (406) 384-0080 or scott@performance-ec.com.

Sincerely,

Scott Aspenlieder, PE
Project Manager



Goldberg Sporting Estates, First Filing

Mailing Address - Adjacent Owners

By: KMS

Date : 10/04/2019

<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>
Barry Robinson	P.O. BOX 22306
NANCY JEAN LAUSCH	1608 E MARYLAND LN
TODD MCKEEVER	1702 E MARYLAND LN
KEVIN & JESSICA ZARD	1722 E MARYLAND LN
SHAWN & BRITA JONES	1806 E MARYLAND LN
JANET MCDOWALL	1820 E MARYLAND LN
BILL BICKLER	1906 E MARYLAND LN
DALE & LAURA MUSSETTER	1328 RIDGE DR
NEIL GUNDERSON CONSERVATION/DAWN LARMIR	--
WILBUR SCOTT & PATSY EWERS	2034 E MARYLAND LN
ALDER RIDGE ESTATES, LLC	175 N 27TH ST STE 940
SHARON FOX	1366 CLARHILL RD
RED GATE #3 LLC	4640 RIMROCK RD
COTTER PROPERTIES, LLC	407 6TH AVE
J&M HOLDING LLC	P.O. BOX 577
HUMBLE CREEK, LLC	P.O. BOX 967
TIM & ANN MCCOLLOUGH	1702 ELEANOR ROOSEVELT DR
LARRY ALLEN	1612 E 8TH ST
EDWARD & CANDISE ONOSZKO	1602 E 8TH ST
PATRICIA HART	P.O. BOX 455

BEING LOT 18 OF NUTTING BROTHERS SUBDIVISION, 2ND FILING & LOTS 19-25 OF NUTTING BROTHERS
SUBDIVISION, 3RD FILING SITUATED IN THE NE 1/4 OF SECTION 10, T 02 S, R 24 E, P.M.M.
LOCATED IN CITY OF LAUREL, YELLOWSTONE COUNTY, MONTANA

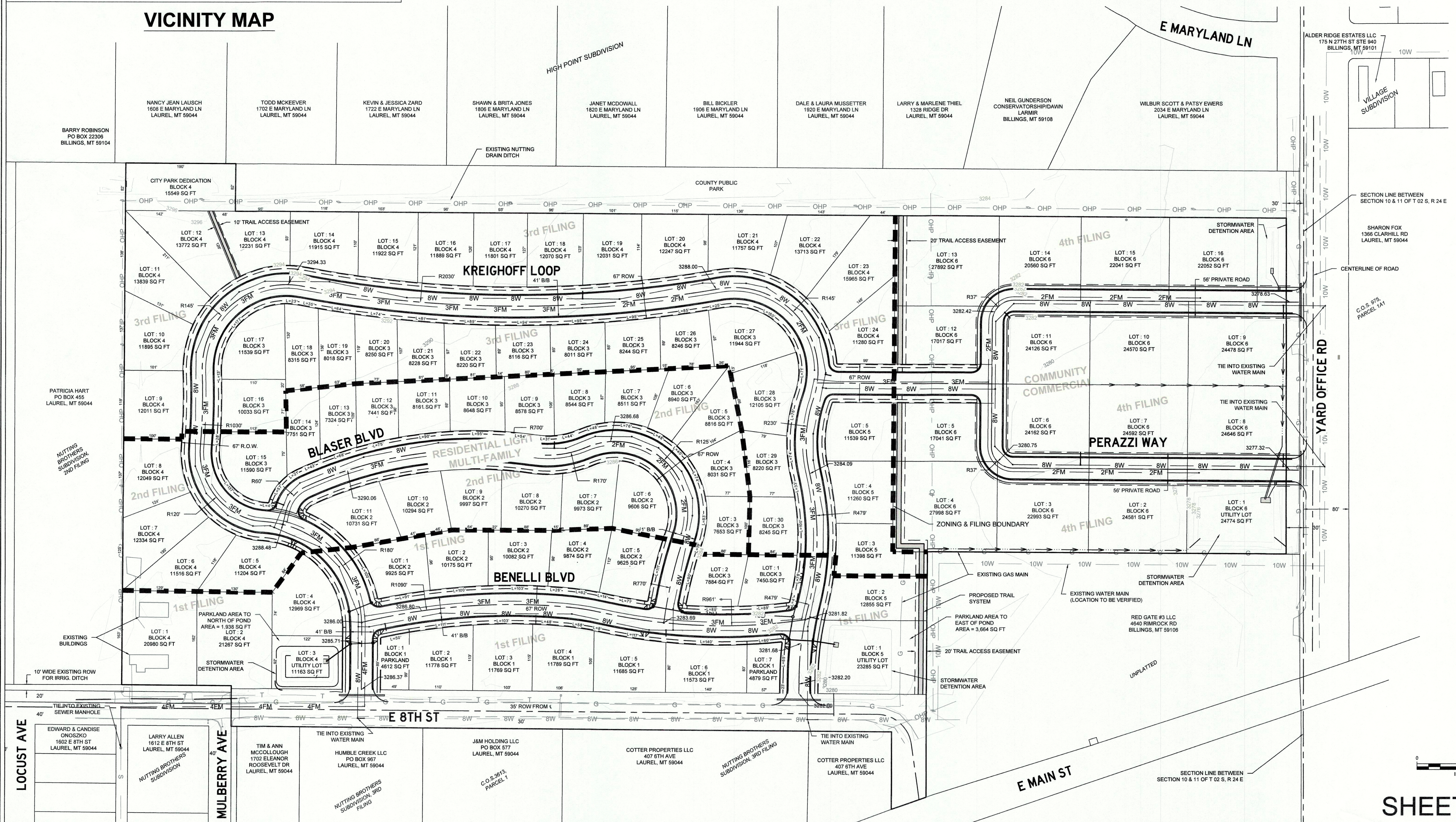
PROPERTY OWNER: GOLDBERG INVESTMENTS, LLC



PROPOSED ZONING: RLMF & CC

SITE DATA	
# OF LOTS	88
MAXIMUM LOT AREA	± 0.64 AC
MINIMUM LOT AREA	± 0.17 AC
TRAIL / PARKLAND AREA	± 1.10 AC
LINEAL FEET OF STREETS	± 5,874 LF
GROSS TOTAL ACREAGE	± 36.77 AC
NET RESIDENTIAL ACREAGE	± 17.90 AC
GROSS RESIDENTIAL ACREAGE	± 27.79 AC
NET COMMERCIAL ACREAGE	± 8.05 AC
GROSS COMMERCIAL ACREAGE	± 8.98 AC

VICINITY MAP



CITY HALL
115 W. 1ST ST.
PUB. WORKS: 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 Director of Public
Works

Department of Planning

February 7, 2019

Performance Engineering
Craig Dalton
7100 Commercial Ave #4
Billings MT 59101

Re: Yard Office Major Subdivision Pre-Application -Meeting Summary/Required Information

Dear Mr. Dalton:

The following is a Summary of the Pre-Application meeting conducted with City Staff on the above described Subdivision within the City of Laurel Subdivision Jurisdiction conducted on Monday, February 4, 2019.

Meeting Attendees:

City of Laurel

Kurt Markegard, Jamie Sweeker, Tim Reiter, Matt Wheeler, Stan Langve, Forrest Sanderson

Developer

Craig Dalton, Katrina Svingen, Tony Golden

General Information:

Legal:

Lot 18 Nutting Brothers 2nd Filing and Lots 19 – 25 Nutting Brothers 3rd Filing in Section 10, Township 2 South, Range 24 East

Summary:

The project submitted for consideration includes 77 Residential Lots ranging in size from approximately 8,000 square feet to 22,500 square feet in size and 5 Commercial Lots approximately 1.3 to 2.9 acres in size.

Zoning:

The property is currently under consideration for Annexation and Initial Zoning by the City of Laurel. The requested zoning is Residential Light Multi-Family (RLMF) and Community Commercial (CC). It is

important to note that should the annexation or requested zoning be denied or modified by the City Council you may be required to reconsider or abandon this subdivision proposal.

Public Review Process:

The proposal is a Major Subdivision as defined in the Laurel Subdivision Regulations. As such, the following steps and timelines are applicable:

1. Complete Application submitted to City; §16.12.030 B, LMC
2. The Planner shall complete an Element Review within five (5) working days after submittal notice of findings shall be sent to the Developer and/or the Agent §16.16.030 C 1, LMC
3. If all Elements are included, the Planner shall complete a Sufficiency Review of the application within fifteen (15) working days after completion of the Element Review. Notice of findings shall be sent to the Developer and/or Agent. §16.16 C 2 and 3 LMC
4. Once the Application contains all the Elements and is deemed Sufficient a 60-working day public review timeline shall commence. During this timeline, a public hearing will be noticed and scheduled before the Laurel – Yellowstone Planning Board. Prior to a decision being rendered by the Laurel City Council. §16.16 C 3 LMC

Discussion Points:

- Fire has concerns that there will be sufficient water within the development for fire protection.
- Lot layout (Planning, Required Setbacks Water, Sewer, Streets, Parking, and Traffic).
- Follow the Design Standards in the Regulations §16.16 LMC
- The water system must be looped with isolation valves both internal and external.
- Traffic. A TIS will be required that looks at intersections with Highway 10, East 8th, Yard Office as well as the intersection of Alder near the school.
- Connectivity of this subdivision to surrounding properties is important to future development in the neighborhood. East 8th should be extended to Yard Office Road.
- Rights-of-way need to meet minimum standards. The ROW for Yard Office may need to meet Arterial Road standards.
- Sanitary Sewer. Sewer in the area is shallow and a lift station may be necessary. Concerns were expressed about surcharging the system as well as timing of lift station operation with the existing lift station.
- Solid Waste. The Developer may use the Laurel service with roll outs. The choice of service provider is governed by Montana Law and decision is up to the developer.
- Storm Water. Follow the rules and regulations for Utilities.
- Parkland. 11% of net area in residential lots. Parkland does not include areas for storm water detention/retention or for other facilities such as the lift station.
- Parking. Design must reflect if on-street parking will be allowed. Concern with multi-family and provision of adequate area for parking. Inadequate parking reservation is a major problem for Law Enforcement.
- Street Lighting. Strongly recommend that the lighting be incorporated into design rather than after the fact.
- Off site improvements to existing public improvements will be required with the First Filing in anticipation of total build out.

- Stainless steel bolts and shafts will be required for all fixtures because of corrosive nature of soils and groundwater in the area.
- Be sure to address items identified in either the Environmental Assessment or Summary of Probable Impacts and propose mitigations.
- Provide a comprehensive Subdivision Improvements Agreement. (Appendix K)
- You may want to provide the Montana Department of Transportation a copy of your plan as the project is anticipated to have measurable impacts on the intersections of Highway 10 with Yard Office Road and Eleanor Roosevelt Drive.

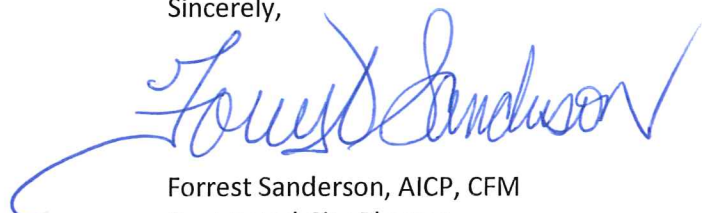
In addition to addressing the Discussion Points listed above, you will need to submit the information identified Appendix D of the Laurel Subdivision Regulations along with the required review fees.

1. Submit four (4) 24"x 36" plat and supplements;
2. Submit nine (9) 11"x 17" plats and supplements.

My hand-written notes and the Pre-Application Meeting Checklist are attached and are hereby incorporated into this summary by reference and are made a portion of this summary.

Should you have any questions concerning the Laurel Subdivision Regulations, the Review Process or the information required for Public Review, please contact me.

Sincerely,



Forrest Sanderson, AICP, CFM
Contracted City Planner

Enclosures: Fee Schedule, Preliminary Plat Application, Meeting Checklist (dated 3/28/18), Meeting Notes (dated 3/28/18)

cc: Kurt Markegard, File City, File KLJ, City-County Fire Department

Forrest Sanderson

From: Scott Aspenlieder <scott@performance-ec.com>
Sent: Friday, February 15, 2019 1:08 PM
To: Forrest Sanderson
Cc: Kurt Markegard; Sam Painter - Thompson Painter Law; Craig Dalton
Subject: RE: Annexation Agreement - Major Components

Forrest

Thanks for your clarification. We'll wait to hear from Sam and Kurt for further clarification on Questions 2 and 4 as they're important to have clear expectations set going in. Thanks for your help.

Thanks,

Scott Aspenlieder, P.E.
scott@performance-ec.com
Office: (406) 384-0080
Mobile: (406) 461-8392



608 North 29th Street • Billings, MT 59101
www.performance-ec.com

From: Forrest Sanderson [mailto:Forrest.Sanderson@kljeng.com]
Sent: Friday, February 15, 2019 12:01 PM
To: Scott Aspenlieder <scott@performance-ec.com>
Cc: Kurt Markegard <kmarkegard@laurel.mt.gov>; Sam Painter - Thompson Painter Law <sam@thompsonpainterlaw.com>
Subject: RE: Annexation Agreement - Major Components

Scott:

1. I don't really have an issue with the future dedication of the extension of Eleanor Roosevelt/East 8th to Yard Office as the development plan progresses but the connectivity issue was discussed as part of the pre-application both to Yard Office and from this development to the lands adjacent to. By taking this approach it will give you and the design team a chance to work the extension into the plan in a manner that is most advantageous to both the Developer and City of Laurel.
2. As I read Resolution R-08-22 (Attached) Annexation Criteria and Requirements Section A 3rd bullet, it appears that the intent of the City is that you will be required to install all of the existing or proposed public improvements but I have included Kurt and the City Attorney on this response for clarification on the matter and will defer the Decision to the Employees/Counsel of the City for the Final Answer.
3. You are correct, the internal subdivision infrastructure will be addressed via the SIA for each subdivision filing as the development progresses and it will be at this point the extension of Eleanor Roosevelt/East 8th along with infrastructure will be addressed.
4. The house on Lot-18 really complicates the annexation issue. There are resolutions and ordinances of the City that prohibit septic and drainfields within the City and from what I understand the structure is on a private 2" water line that does not meet with City regulations post annexation. It also has the potential to bring Section

B (2nd and 3rd paragraphs) in to play with respect to external improvements. The advantage is the two-year window for completion and a legitimate argument could be raised that you would have 2-years post Final Annexation to connect the house to water and sewer in accordance with the Laurel Standards for Public Works Improvements, the MPWSS, and the Laurel Rules and Regulations Governing Utility Services and Streets. Again, I will defer final determination on this issue to the City Employees/Attorney for the final answer on the interpretation possible timelines and application of the requirements of R-08-22.

At this point my suggestion is work the easy sections forward and we will get clarifications on these outstanding points!

Forrest Sanderson, A.I.C.P. and C.F.M.



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2611 Gabel Road
Billings, MT 59102-7329
kljeng.com

From: Scott Aspenlieder <scott@performance-ec.com>
Sent: Friday, February 15, 2019 11:06 AM
To: Forrest Sanderson <Forrest.Sanderson@kljeng.com>
Cc: Craig Dalton <craig@performance-ec.com>
Subject: RE: Annexation Agreement - Major Components

Forrest

Couple things jump out to me at this point that need direct attention/clarification.

1. Dedicating the ROW for a connection from 8th through to Yard Office seems premature at this point. I'm concerned that we're only at the planning stages and not ready to commit what that connection would be. Seems like we can easily address that as part of the SIA when we go through subdivision. I just don't think we're ready for it right now and I don't want to do it based on a preliminary layout only to be asking the City to work with us to adjust it if the plan changes.
2. I assume we're only paying for improvements to our side of the roads adjacent to the development (8th/Eleanor Roosevelt and Yard Office) as is done in Billings. If the City has a different idea or thought on that we need to talk about it. Other communities/counties have gotten into significant legal trouble requiring off-site improvements that are neither adjacent to the subject development or are not identified by the traffic study (ie intersections). Just want to make sure we're all clear on that and off on the right foot. It wasn't terribly clear to us coming out of the Pre-App meeting what the City's expectations were.
3. Engineer's Estimate and bonding for improvements makes sense for the directly adjacent improvements identified in #2 above. I think that's what you were referring too but wanted to make sure all internal stuff was taken care of in the SIA of a subsequent development.
4. The existing house on Lot 18 can be hooked up to water fairly easily but a connection to sewer was assumed to be worked into the development of a subsequent subdivision. The existing house discharges out the back to the north with the drainfield in the back. Sewer service would be much easier to incorporate and manage to collection mains internal to a subdivision without tearing up 8th and searching for a sewer main in that area. If we hooked up to water within the two years after annexation and sewer when the main is installed to lots adjacent to that house internal to the subdivision is that doable. Sewer connection to existing collection south of 8th isn't a good or viable option I don't believe.

I'll start crafting the Annexation Agreement on the issues below if you can give me some feedback on the 4 points above that would be much appreciated. Thanks!

Thanks,

Scott Aspenlieder, P.E.
scott@performance-ec.com
Office: (406) 384-0080
Mobile: (406) 461-8392



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From: Forrest Sanderson [<mailto:Forrest.Sanderson@kljeng.com>]
Sent: Friday, February 15, 2019 10:07 AM
To: Scott Aspenlieder <scott@performance-ec.com>
Subject: Annexation Agreement - Major Components
Importance: High

Scott:

Your team can use the following bullet points as a guide on the issues for the Annexation Agreement:

- ✓ Quiet the Title to the 30 feet of the property adjacent to Yard Office Road.
- ✓ Dedicate East 8th to the City of Laurel as Residential Collector (70') ROW.
- ✓ Dedicate Eleanor Roosevelt to the City of Laurel as Residential Collector (70') ROW (Where you can).
- ✓ Dedicate additional ROW for Yard Office (Where you can) to the City of Laurel as Commercial Collector (80') ROW.
- ✓ Dedicate additional ROW as Residential Collector (70') such that Eleanor Roosevelt/East 8th provides connectivity to Yard Office Road. This will be required with the first filing of subdivision so it is best to just do it now.
- ✓ Prepare a Final Annexation Exhibit showing:
 - All lands included in the annexation
 - All existing Rights-of-Way adjacent to or proposed to be dedicated to the City of Laurel as part of the annexation;
 - All Park lands or other public lands that will be included with the annexation.
- ✓ Provide an Engineers' Estimate of Cost for:
 - The cost of Engineering design of Water, Sewer, Street, Curb, Gutter, Sidewalks and a Bike Pedestrian path in all of the to be annexed ROW where the infrastructure does not meet the minimum standards of the Laurel Standards for Public Works Improvements, the MPWSS, and the Laurel Rules and Regulations Governing Utility Services and Streets.
 - The cost of Construction of the designed improvements, discussed above, to the Water, Sewer, Street, Curb, Gutter, Sidewalks and a Bike Pedestrian path where the infrastructure does not meet the minimum standards of the Laurel Standards for Public Works Improvements, the MPWSS, and the Laurel Rules and Regulations Governing Utility Services and Streets.
 - A performance bond or other security, consistent with the Laurel Subdivision Regulations (Title 16) at 125% of the Engineers Estimate of Probable Cost to complete the design and construction of the improvements discussed above. The Engineers Estimate of Probable Costs may be submitted to the Contract City Engineer for review and comment prior to acceptance and Final Annexation approval.
 - The executed security mechanism will be required at the time of application for Final Annexation.
- ✓ A signed and notarized acknowledgment by the Developer that is binding upon their heirs, successors and assigns that all required improvements to the off-site public improvements will be completed within two (2)

years of the approval of the Final Annexation or that the City of Laurel may utilize the performance bond or other acceptable securities to complete the improvements outlined above.

- ✓ The City agrees to assign Laurel RLMF and Laurel CC Zoning to the subject properties at the time of Final Annexation Approval in accordance with the petition of annexation and request of initial zoning as submitted by the Developer.
- ✓ That the Developer may apply for Preliminary Subdivision Plat approval during the term of the Annexation Agreement but that NO FINAL PLAT will be approved until such time that the City APPROVES the Final Annexation of the property. Final annexation will NOT occur until such time as the terms of the Annexation agreement have been met.
- ✓ The City of Laurel recognizes the significant costs associated with the improvements necessary to the existing Roads, Water, Sewer, Curb, and Gutter and will consider the creation of a 'Late Comers Agreement' to spread these costs to other benefited properties via the Subdivision processes should the Developer so desire and request.
- ✓ A revised Waiver of all right to protest, including judicial review the creation of any Special Improvements District. This waiver shall be deemed by the City to be a Covenant that runs with the land, the form of which must be approved by City Staff and the City Attorney.
- ✓ The City will assign the properties to be annexed to an Election Ward at the time of Final Annexation consistent with the Montana Code Annotated.
- ✓ At the time of Final Annexation Approval, the existing house on Lot-18 must:
 - Either be removed from the property; OR
 - Connected to the Laurel Water System in a manner consistent with the Laurel Standards for Public Works Improvements, the MPWSS, and the Laurel Rules and Regulations Governing Utility Services and Streets.
 - Connected to the Laurel Waste Water Collection and Treatment System in a manner consistent with the Laurel Standards for Public Works Improvements, the MPWSS, and the Laurel Rules and Regulations Governing Utility Services and Streets.
 - That any outstanding fees or assessments, including but not limited to System Development Fees, shall be paid to the City of Laurel.
- ✓ Should the property have water rights, irrigation or otherwise, that they will be 100% transferred to the City of Laurel at the time of Final Annexation Approval.
- ✓ That with the exception of the house on Lot-18, that the balance of the property will be served by the Laurel Solid Waste Services.

I hope that this list will give you the backbone of the agreement and I fully recognize that there may be other items that you may want to include in the agreement as you move forward.

The Council Schedule for the next month is:

2/19	Action
2/26	Work Session
3/5	Action
3/12	Work Session
3/19	Action

Given the time I would expect for you to complete the annexation agreement I submit that we are looking at the Work Session on March 12 and Action on 3/19. In order to make this schedule work, we would need your draft agreement for Staff and Legal review on or before 2/27. Just so you know, Kurt will be on vacation from 2/20 to 2/27 and his input will be crucial to the review and approval process.

If you have questions please feel free to give me a call!

Forrest Sanderson, A.I.C.P. and C.F.M.



406-373-7240 Direct
406-794-1460 Cell
2611 Gabel Road
Billings, MT 59102-7329
kljeng.com

Laurel City Planner

From: Laurel City Planner
Sent: Wednesday, October 30, 2019 3:41 PM
To: Craig Dalton
Cc: Scott Aspenlieder; 'Tony Golden (tgolden.realty@gmail.com)'; Katrina Svingen
Subject: RE: Goldberg Sporting Estates - Preliminary Plat Pre-Submittal
Attachments: LMC - Schedule of Fees 2018.pdf

Hi Craig,

I spent some time reviewing the Preliminary Plat and draft SIA with Kurt. We have identified some concerns with the preliminary plat and SIA. I have provided some links to our Subdivision Code which will be important for your review.

- [Chapter 16.03 – Subdivision Review Procedures](#)
- [Chapter 16.04 – Development Requirements](#)
- [Chapter 16.10 – Dedication of Parks, Trails, And Open Space](#)
- [Chapter 16 – Appendix C – Pre-Application Meeting Form](#)
- [Chapter 16 – Appendix D – Preliminary Plat Requirements](#)
- [Chapter 16 – Appendix E – Preliminary Plat Application](#)

Some items discussed in our initial 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

I suggest specifically reviewing Ch. 16-04.060 – Streets and Roads, as this section contains some points which will need to be addressed. It would be best to review the codes and develop your rationale for the current preliminary design decisions or begin to update the draft documents.

It would be best if we could plan to set up a pre-application meeting to have an in-depth discussion about the proposed subdivision and the requirements of our subdivision codes and our public works standards. I have also attached Laurel's Schedule of Fees for your review. Please let me know if you have any questions or comments. Thank you for your time and I look forward to hearing from you.

Regards,
Nick Altonaga
City Planner

406.628.4796, Ext. 5 (office)
406.628.2241 (fax)
naltonaga@laurel.mt.gov

City of Laurel
PO Box 10
115 West First St.
Laurel, MT 59044-0010



From: Laurel City Planner
Sent: Tuesday, October 22, 2019 9:54 AM
To: Craig Dalton <craig@performance-ec.com>
Cc: Scott Aspenlieder <scott@performance-ec.com>; 'Tony Golden (tgolden.realty@gmail.com)' <tgolden.realty@gmail.com>; Katrina Svingen <katrina@performance-ec.com>
Subject: RE: Goldberg Sporting Estates - Preliminary Plat Pre-Submittal

Hi Craig,

Thank you for the email. I will take a look at this preliminary plat and SIA and get back to you by early-mid next week with my initial comments. I look forward to working with you on this process.

Regards,
Nick Altonaga
City Planner

406.628.4796, Ext. 5 (office)
406.628.2241 (fax)
naltonaga@laurel.mt.gov

City of Laurel
PO Box 10
115 West First St.
Laurel, MT 59044-0010



From: Craig Dalton <craig@performance-ec.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 22, 2019 9:32 AM
To: Laurel City Planner <naltonaga@laurel.mt.gov>
Cc: Scott Aspenlieder <scott@performance-ec.com>; 'Tony Golden (tgolden.realty@gmail.com)' <tgolden.realty@gmail.com>; Katrina Svingen <katrina@performance-ec.com>
Subject: Goldberg Sporting Estates - Preliminary Plat Pre-Submittal

Good Morning Nick,

Please find the attached preliminary plat and SIA for the Goldberg Estates Subdivision. While this is not an official preliminary plat submittal, I wanted to get this over to you to review and provide feedback prior to our official submittal

coming in November. Upon our official submittal the statutory timelines will start so I am hoping we can get most of the details addressed prior to that time. Upon your review, please contact me to discuss questions/comments you may have.

Thank you,

Craig Dalton, P.E.
Project Manager/Principal
craig@performance-ec.com
Office: (406) 384-0080
Mobile: (406) 459-8456



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Laurel City Planner

From: Laurel City Planner
Sent: Thursday, November 21, 2019 4:21 PM
To: Katrina Svingen
Cc: Craig Dalton; Scott Aspenlieder; Tony Golden
Subject: RE: GSE Prelim Plat Meeting Notes - 11.08.19
Attachments: Yard Office - Resolution No. R19-43 - AA - Waiver.pdf; Pre_Application_LTR2019022.pdf; LMC - Schedule of Fees 2018.pdf; Rules and Regulations Governing Utility Services and Streets Div. 1.pdf; Rules and Regulations Governing Utility Services and Streets Div. 2.pdf; Standards for Public Works Improvements 2003.pdf; Yard Office Annexation Agreement CC APPROVED.pdf

Hi Katrina,

First and foremost, I was reviewing Yard office and GSE files and have not been able to locate fully signed/executed copies of the Annexation Agreement and Waiver of Right to Protest for the lots in the subdivision. I have attached the City of Laurel's approved resolution which has unsigned copies of the Annexation Agreement and Waiver of Right to Protest which were found to be up to city standards. I have also attached a clearer copy of the AA and Waiver PDF to ensure any final signed version is clear. Right now I recommend moving onto an official preliminary plat application. At this point city staff are looking at the proposed preliminary plat piece by piece. Moving onto the official process would allow staff to fully review the preliminary plat and all required supporting documentation.

The Current situation:

- Subdivision Pre-Application Meeting took place on February 4, 2019.
- Summary of Subdivision Pre-Application Meeting was prepared by Forrest Sanderson dated February 7, 2019. (Attached)
- No preliminary plat application was submitted.
- No Preliminary Plat application fee was submitted.

Before submitting a preliminary plat application and supporting documents I would suggest to:

- Review the approved Annexation agreement
- Review the subdivision pre-application meeting summary sheet
- Review Chapter 16 for specific regulations
- Update the preliminary plat and supporting documents to ensure that the items included with the AA and pre-App meeting summary been included/addressed in the preliminary plat and SIA
- Ensure that the preliminary plat conforms to Chapter 16.
- Provide us with a signed Annexation Agreement and Waiver of Right to Protest for filing with the YC Clerk and Recorder

Please ensure that the Preliminary Plat and documents follows the rules laid out in [Ch. 16 - Subdivisions](#).

Below I have also linked important and pertinent subchapters in Ch. 16.

- [16.03 – Subdivision Review Procedures](#)
 - 16.03.030 – Major Preliminary Plat application submittal
- [16.04 – Development Requirements](#)
- [16.05 – Guarantee of Public Improvements](#)

- 16.05.020 – Security Guarantee, Part C, Sequential Development.
- [16.09 – Environmental Assessment](#)
- [16.10 – Dedication of Parks, Trails, and Open Space](#)
- [Ch. 16 Appendix E – Preliminary Plat Application](#)
- [Ch. 16 Appendix F – Required Supporting Documents for Major Preliminary Plat Applications](#)

Some Follow-Up on comments from our previous conversations:

Kurt would like to see a full road connection between the CC and RLMF portions of the subdivision for both traffic flow and ensuring utility access. He reported that a 20ft wide utility easement was not sufficient for running utilities as per Laurel standards, which would need a 30ft easement.

Overall I want to ensure that subdivisions coming into the city conform to our codes. We can go back and forth on discussions regarding road connectivity inside and outside of the subdivision and designs but the bottom line would be that anything that does not follow our code would require a variance.

At this point I see the parkland dedication location as very low priority and would not need to be brought to council for their suggestion. I just want to ensure that the cash-in-lieu and the acreage/sqft amounts are correct. I also reviewed Chapter 16.05.020 Part C which discusses phased (Sequential) development. We can use this to guide how we ensure the phases of development move smoothly.

If you have any questions about this please let me know. Thank you for your time and I look forward to hearing from you.

Regards,
Nick Altonaga
City Planner

406.628.4796, Ext. 5 (office)
406.628.2241 (fax)
naltonaga@laurel.mt.gov

City of Laurel
PO Box 10
115 West First St.
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From: Laurel City Planner

Sent: Tuesday, November 19, 2019 8:11 AM

To: Katrina Svingen <katrina@performance-ec.com>

Cc: Craig Dalton <craig@performance-ec.com>; Scott Aspenlieder <scott@performance-ec.com>; Tony Golden

<tgolden.realty@gmail.com>

Subject: RE: GSE Prelim Plat Meeting Notes - 11.08.19

Hi Katrina,

I will be finalizing comments and try to send them by the end of the workday today. Thanks for checking in.

Regards,
Nick Altonaga
City Planner

406.628.4796, Ext. 5 (office)
406.628.2241 (fax)
naltonaga@laurel.mt.gov

City of Laurel
PO Box 10
115 West First St.
Laurel, MT 59044-0010



From: Katrina Svingen <katrina@performance-ec.com>

Sent: Monday, November 18, 2019 10:16 AM

To: Laurel City Planner <naltonaga@laurel.mt.gov>

Cc: Craig Dalton <craig@performance-ec.com>; Scott Aspenlieder <scott@performance-ec.com>; Tony Golden <tgolden.realty@gmail.com>

Subject: RE: GSE Prelim Plat Meeting Notes - 11.08.19

Morning Nick,

Just wanted to follow up with you and see if you have comments ready for the Goldberg Sporting Estates Subdivision?

-Katrina

Katrina Svingen, P.E.
Associate Engineer
katrina@performance-ec.com
(406) 384-0080



608 North 29th Street • Billings, MT 59101

From: Laurel City Planner <naltonaga@laurel.mt.gov>

Sent: Friday, November 8, 2019 1:04 PM

To: Katrina Svingen <katrina@performance-ec.com>

Cc: Craig Dalton <craig@performance-ec.com>; Scott Aspenlieder <scott@performance-ec.com>; Tony Golden <tgolden.realty@gmail.com>

Subject: RE: GSE Prelim Plat Meeting Notes - 11.08.19

Hi Katrina,

Thanks to you and Craig for the conversation this morning. I will work to try and have my comments and follow-ups done by the end of next week. Feel free to contact me with any other questions or comments in the meantime. Thanks again.

Regards,
Nick Altonaga
City Planner

406.628.4796, Ext. 5 (office)

406.628.2241 (fax)

naltonaga@laurel.mt.gov

City of Laurel
PO Box 10
115 West First St.
Laurel, MT 59044-0010



From: Katrina Svingen <katrina@performance-ec.com>

Sent: Friday, November 8, 2019 11:35 AM

To: Laurel City Planner <naltonaga@laurel.mt.gov>

Cc: Craig Dalton <craig@performance-ec.com>; Scott Aspenlieder <scott@performance-ec.com>; Tony Golden <tgolden.realty@gmail.com>

Subject: GSE Prelim Plat Meeting Notes - 11.08.19

Nick,

As a follow up to our phone call this morning, here's a marked up PDF with comments, concerns and points for moving forward. I've made a bullet list below as well and outlined who has committed to doing different tasks going forward.

- (1) Street connectivity within the Subdivision
 - o Possible private road connecting residential and commercial areas
 - o Nick to comment on any concerns with proposed private road with public access easement for the commercial area and connection road between residential and commercial area.
- (2) Street and intersection design
 - o PE to double check minimum distances (50' for internal roads and 100' for external road connections)
- (3) Road continuity with the adjacent Laurel street system

- Question about continuity with Mulberry Avenue
 - Reasoning for location includes:
 - Mulberry is a dead end that does not connect to E Main Street,
 - Approximately 240' separation between access points off of Eleanor Roosevelt Dr, and
 - Proposed entrance is aligned with existing driveway of business to the south (Cotter's Sewer, Septic, and Portable Toilet Services)

(4) Parkland Dedication/Cash-in-Lieu

- PE to double check numbers for parkland areas and ensure existing public park to north and stormwater pond areas are not included in proposed areas
- Nick mentioned Section 16.10.010C of code that outlines governing body recommendations for parkland...City of Laurel to comment on preference or okay proposed parkland dedication with additional cash-in-lieu option.

(5) Road Dedication

- Dedication of Eleanor Roosevelt Dr to be shown on the plat

(6) Phased development

- Deed restriction and release example for Nick (included in this email)

Thanks again for taking the time to go over the project and let us know if you want clarity on anything or have any additional questions concerning the proposed preliminary plat.

-Katrina

Katrina Svingen, P.E.
Associate Engineer
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608 North 29th Street • Billings, MT 59101

File Attachments for Item:

6. Approve Meeting Minutes: September 16, 2020



**AGENDA
CITY OF LAUREL
CITY/COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2020
5:35 PM
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

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.*

1. Roll Call

Chair called the meeting to order at 5:35PM

Evan Bruce
Roger Geise
Dan Koch
Ron Benner
Gavin Williams
Judy Goldsby

Nick Altonaga (City of Laurel)

General Items

2. Approve Meeting Minutes: August 19, 2020

Ron Motioned to Approve the Minutes from August 19, 2020 as written.

Evan Seconded.

Motion Carried.

3. Public Hearing: Review and Comments on Laurel High School Sign Replacement

Planning Director Altonaga provided an overview of the Laurel High School Sign and the required public process.

Wayne Fjare, Facilities Director of Laurel Public Schools was in attendance. He provided details on the sign that they plan to install. The sign will be an electronic reader board, and will be 20 inches higher off the ground, and a much higher resolution. The current sign is not working, so this will be a full replacement.

Ron asked if this will be a video sign?

Wayne answered that yes it will be able to do full video.

The Chair and other members want the School District to know that this is outside of the zoning parameters. It would not look good to allow signs like this.

Members reported that it might not look good when the district has developments like this. It might not look good when we allow the School District to install this type of sign versus private businesses being denied for these types of signs.

Gavin spoke for the sign. He reported that he is a Laurel High School graduate and is happy to see something presenting information about the school. There are a lot other issues distracting people than animated signs for the High School. Sign could boost community relations and help with making the school district more a part of the community.

Ron disagreed with it not being a distraction, stating that it might cause issues with more distraction, especially with kids and students crossing during the day.

Judy: There are some allowable uses for the sign, including 30 second repeats. We can work with the sign maker to come up with a middle ground.

Wayne stated that they do not want to create a hazard or an issue for the community. I will bring these concerns back to the School Board.

Nick will send along a set of baseline rules for the sign to pass along to the Board.

Roger: Would just like some more parameters, Board meetings, sporting events, upcoming events, Games, etc.

There were no proponents or opponents present at the hearing.

The Chair closed the Public Hearing.

New Business

4. Growth Management Policy - Chapter Review

Nick presented the Growth Policy for review. Nick reported that it has not changed much since the last review, but all chapters have been prepared.

Board members reviewed the plan and discussed a number of items.

Is there any update from MDT on road development off the new Interchange? It would impact Laurel if there are plans for more road network connections such as Buffalo Trail or towards the south.

Nick reported that there is nothing major that he is aware of.

Roger asked if there is any interest in companies developing by the new interchange?

Nick reported that no one has contacted him and is unaware of any other city departments hearing anything about development near there.

Ron: **Chapter 10:** Local routes and maintenance section: Add verbiage for adding roads, COMPLETING roads, improving roads. (Many roads are not full width and are lacking curbs and gutters). Have a goal of future development

Gavin: **Page 29: Chapter 4** – Student/Teacher ratio – Exactly the same as the United States? Please double check this. Try to find a better data source for this?

Ron: Should there be a disclaimer for the facts and figures? Possibly a **bibliography**? Should state the data sources?

Nick stated that he will see if that is the normal way things are done, or if it will be necessary, with only a few separate sources of information.

Nick asked the board members to please review the document and get back to him with any comments or concerns. He then discussed the updated schedule for review and approval of the Growth Management Policy.

Old Business

Other Items

5. Upcoming Items

Nick provided a summary of some projects that will be coming up in the next few months. These included The review and approval of the Growth Policy, the proposed Goldberg Sporting Estates which is under review by the Planning Department, and a Conditional Land Use Permit for 1009 East 6th Street.

Ron: Can Kurt be present at the meeting to discuss the Water and Sewer system for the upcoming subdivision?

Roger: Have you addressed any of the issues with Regal Land Development?

- Karen and the Planning Director are working on these issues.
- City Council has also discussed their concerns at length.

Ron: Many people have built their fences directly on the property line to the Soccer fields. Have you addressed the issue with fence setbacks or difficulty for players to retrieve balls?

- Planning has not been aware of this issue but can look into the issue.

Roger: Any movement on the Downtown District development or planning?

Nick reported that he would like to put together a downtown revitalization plan after the Growth Policy is completed, possibly next spring or summer.

Members generally discussed downtown development and possible projects to help the district.

- Different projects taking place
- Possible projects that could improve the area
- Nick mentioned the numerous vacant lots that could be used for infill development.

Judy discussed the recent session with outside Rural development specialists with Laurel Revitalization League to help with Laurel.

Ron: We need to see ourselves like the Heights, slow steady, consistent development to not have everyone just go to Billings for services.

Members discussed options for downtown and outside funding supports and parcels available for development or redevelopment. We could position ourselves as a regional hub for the nearby rural communities.

Announcements

6. Next Meeting: October 21, 2020

Ron Motioned to Adjourn.

Roger Seconded.

Motion Carried.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:44PM.

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.