



Beaverhead Co.

COMMUNITY PLANNING COMMITTEE

Final Recommendations from CPC – June 11, 2009.

Report and Recommendations for Planning

the Dillon Growth Area.

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Introduction

The Beaverhead County Planning Board and County Commissioners recognize that the area around Dillon has been experiencing growth and is likely to continue to grow. The development and growth trends in recent decades in southwest Montana have been some of the highest in the country and despite current economic conditions the forecast continues to support significant population growth.

The county determined that it could best ensure future growth in the Dillon area met the needs of local residents by having the community develop a vision and plan for growth. The county created a local planning committee – called a “Community Planning Committee (CPC),” to oversee the visioning/planning process and coordinate with the city and county to ensure a seamless and coordinated process. The County Planning Board and County Commissioners passed the resolution, creating the CPC which would “... provide the Dillon Planning Board and the Beaverhead County Planning Board a community vision and plan for the Dillon growth area for the next 20 years.” The resolution also stipulated the plan would be shared with both the city and county.



Rationale

Beaverhead County adopted its growth policy in 2005. The policy identifies growth impacts on a variety of county resources, therefore, the county’s plan needs to be updated from time to time to reflect new information and changing circumstances. Beaverhead County’s growth policy is designed to give elected officials a “blue print” to follow when making day to day decisions and for the planning board when making land use and subdivision recommendations to the County Commissioners. In addition to land use and growth policies, the plan also addressed a wide variety of other topics ranging from housing and economic development to natural resource issues and public facilities.

The City of Dillon also adopted a growth policy in March, 2009, building on an extensive revision of the 2002 growth policy. The policy sets a five year vision to “... provide a road map by which the City of Dillon can balance and

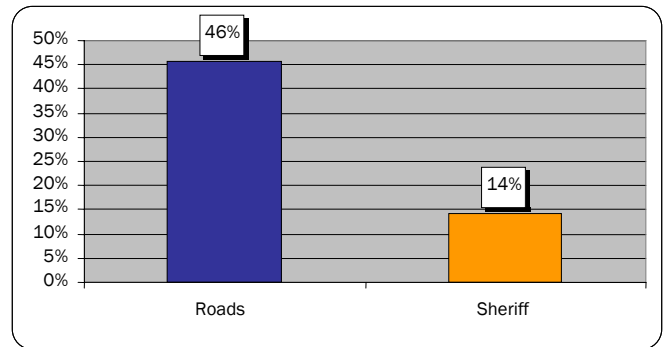
achieve its desire to create a strong local economy through controlled growth while preserving its agricultural heritage, historic buildings and western culture.”

The goals presented in the city policy are plans for; annexation of areas beyond the city limits, continued efforts to “work closely with the Beaverhead County Commissioners and the citizens of Beaverhead County to address growth issues outside the incorporated limits of the City of Dillon”, zoning of all areas within city limits, implementation of building codes based on the International Residents Code (IRC), extension of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP 2007) with timelines, and addressing issues relating to the need for higher quality housing and more affordable housing. Currently the Dillon Planning Board, City Judiciary, the Health and Welfare Committee and the Zoning Commission are continuing planning efforts outlined in the goals of the growth policy.

In 2007, Beaverhead County conducted a fiscal impact analysis of how future development patterns may impact the cost of providing services to residents. **The study concluded that a more compact development pattern saves the county about \$5.5 million in capital facilities investments and capital improvement costs for the road and sheriff departments over the course of the next two decades.** Over

\$300k annually could be saved in operations and maintenance cost if a more compact development pattern emerged compared to a sprawling pattern of development. This cost difference is roughly equivalent to a 19 mills countywide property tax according to the latest countywide assessed valuation. The analysis identified these services as the drivers of future tax increases.

Figure 1. Comparison of costs for a sprawling development pattern versus a more compact development pattern. 1



In response to the fiscal impact study, the county established a 1-Mile Growth Ring Task Force to “identify, analyze, review and make recommendations on growth related issues within the 1-mile area surrounding the City of Dillon to the city and county planning boards”.

¹ Fiscal Impact Analysis of Future Growth Scenarios, Beaverhead County, Montana 2007.

Seven recommendations were made:

1. Create a community vision for the 1 mile area.
2. Based on the vision develop a city-county growth plan.
3. Develop implementation plans (development codes, zoning ordinances).
4. Refine and coordinate an infrastructure plan.
5. Contract additional resources or partners and develop a funding mechanism.
6. Complete a plan within 1 year.
7. Enforce current ordinances and develop new regulations to manage growth.



Photo: Beaverhead County Chamber of Commerce

Senate Bill 201 created a voluntary city and city-county planning process under 76-1-601(4)(c) designed to help local governments get ahead of the impacts of growth and the infrastructure necessary to service growth efficiently. SB201

outlines a process for how to plan for growth and offers incentives for the planning process. One incentive is a funding mechanism to support the planning process. Once a community adopts a resolution that commits the county or city to undertaking SB 201 planning it enables that jurisdiction to collect the SB 201 per lot or unit planning fees authorized under 76-1-410.

The planning process begins with collecting or creating data on existing conditions and historic growth patterns. Projecting twenty years of future growth for the area sets the scope of the planning process. The analysis of the planning area should identify how and where future growth could adversely impact the criteria below and plan for how to avoid, mitigate, or significantly reduce these adverse impacts on:

- water available to agricultural water users and facilities;
- the ability of public facilities, including schools, to safely and efficiently service current residents and future growth;
- a local government's ability to provide adequate local services, including but not limited to emergency, fire, and police protection;
- the safety of people and property due to threats to public health and safety, including but not limited to wildfire,

flooding, erosion, water pollution, hazardous wildlife interactions, and traffic hazards;

- critical wildlife habitat and corridors and threatened or endangered wildlife;
- natural resources, including but not limited to forest lands, mineral resources, streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands, and ground water; and
- agricultural lands and agricultural production;

From the analysis a proposed land use map will be developed that can accommodate projected growth. This process should be driven by the information above to determine where growth can locate away from hazard areas and wildlife habitat, prime agricultural lands, and other important natural resources, and where growth can be serviced most efficiently as well as determining what local people would like the city or town and the surrounding area to look like in the future.

The governing body(s) may then draft and adopt new zoning and subdivision regulations, and market incentives that will be used to implement the plan. If the community chooses to implement the new plan through zoning they can then adopt the streamlined subdivision review process under 76-3-616.



Community Planning Committee Process

The CPC dedicated itself to public involvement and a transparent planning process. All CPC meetings were publically noticed and offered opportunity for community members to share their thoughts and ideas. In addition to regular work sessions, the CPC held public forums and open houses to give citizens an opportunity to learn about the planning process and incorporate feedback from citizens. The CPC held over 25 meetings in 13 months, all were open to the public and many reports were published in the Dillon Tribune.

Importance of Culture and Local Economy

Without a doubt residents valued their sense of place and the culture of a small town tied to the land. Every conversation cited the importance of the community's identity and desire to maintain the rich heritage of the area. Equally important was the need to strengthen and maintain the local economy recognizing that economic growth and prosperity occurs in communities with well organized plans and a strong vision for their future.

April 2008
CPC established

Committee Members: Larry Volkening - County Representative on City Planning Board, Kelly Rowe - County Planning Board, Eric Hammer - Citizen at large, Margareta Smith-Knopik - County Planning Board, Tom Blaz -Citizen at large, Mike Jonckheere -Citizen at large.

June 2008
Public forum on the planning process, SB201 and the growth model

July-September 2008
Surveys on community values. Developing a community vision

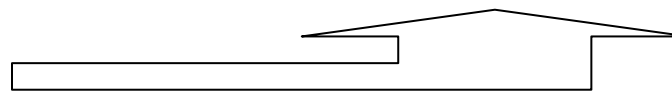
Fall 2008
Data analysis

November 2008
Open house – CPC progress and planning process

Winter-Spring 2009
Data analysis and community goal setting

May 2009
Final draft presentation to county planning board, county commission and public

Planning Cycle Repeats



Community Vision

It is virtually impossible for any community to control its own destiny if it does not have a well defined image of where it wants to head, and what it wants to avoid. It is these goals and objectives that essentially “sets the compass” as to where the community wants to go. They help provide the guidance for the day-to-day decisions when considered against the bigger picture².

With extensive public outreach, the CPC garnered public input from surveys distributed at the County Fair and local retailers, public meetings and distributing cameras to document what residents value most about their community³. The CPC focused on resident values and the community’s vision for the future early in the planning process understanding that their analysis of existing conditions and trends and ultimate recommendations must reflect the citizens’ goals and values.

The CPC distilled the public input into a single vision statement capturing the essence of the Dillon area:

As members of the community we believe that our strength lays in our unique, small-town community that boasts a clean, healthy and safe environment for our citizens. Our diverse economy and strong Western heritage is tied to the land which supports a rich agricultural tradition, clean water, open space, wildlife and bountiful opportunities for recreation.

Our Shared Values

- ◆ Friendly small-town community feel
- ◆ Western heritage
- ◆ Working landscapes and agriculture
- ◆ Open space and opportunities for recreation
- ◆ Clean water and a healthy environment
- ◆ Access to outdoor recreation and trails
- ◆ Good schools
- ◆ Diverse and vibrant economy
- ◆ Our unique history



Residents frequently photographed outdoor recreation opportunities as an amenity they value. 60-70% of survey respondents identified outdoor activities such as hiking and fishing as an important part of the local lifestyle⁴.

² Beaverhead County Growth Policy 2005 p.4

³ Community Vision for the Dillon Planning Area 2008

⁴ Community Vision for the Dillon Planning Area 2008

Figure 2. Community attributes most valued by residents: top three reported 1) access to public lands/hunting/fishing 2) financial prosperity and economic opportunity 3) scenic views⁵

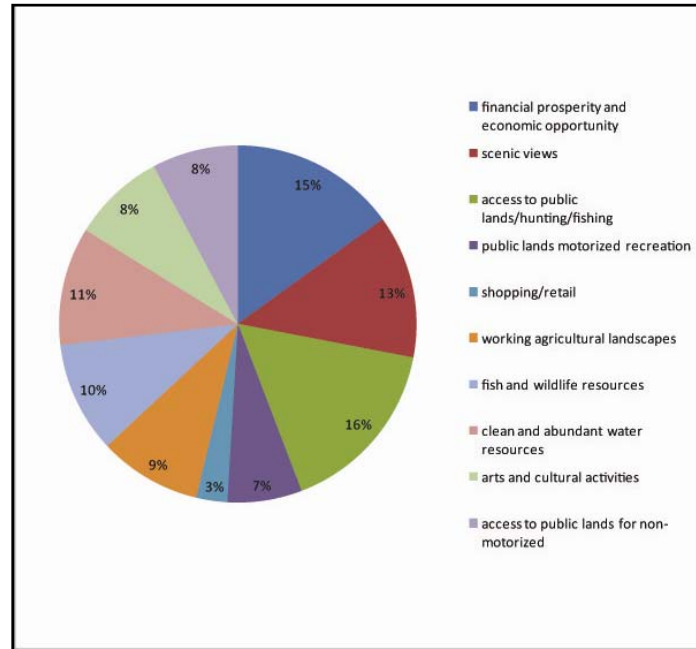
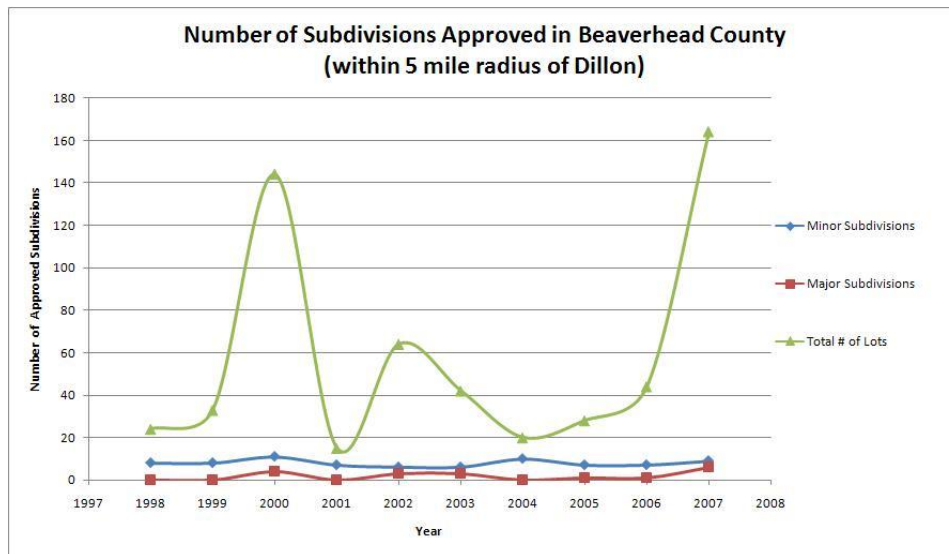


Figure 3. Growth Trends



Beaverhead County and the Dillon area have been experiencing a steady rise in population since the 1970s. While the rate of increase has been more modest than in some other SW Montana counties, even modest gains in population can add stress to local services, change the fabric of the community and alter the landscape and land uses.

⁵ Community Vision for the Dillon Planning Area 2008

The CPC needed to project future growth patterns for their analysis. The Sonoran Institute Growth Model was identified as a useful decision-support and planning tool for their purposes. The process of implementing the model, as well as the results of the modeling exercise, serve as vehicles to initiate broad-based discussions regarding community growth and development and desired future conditions in that regard.

The basic premise of the growth model is to capture information about past and on-going development trends and use that information to project into the future the amount and distribution of residential development. In this process, data describing landscape characteristics, including existing development, infrastructure, services, and socio-economic and demographic data, are used to inform projections.

Information from five other counties (Missoula, Ravalli, Madison, Gallatin, and Park) was used in this application of the model to provide a regional representation of growth from 2000 to 2007. Taking a regional approach like this leverages information from neighboring counties to more fully capture the processes driving growth, and thus better represent growth in any given county.

Results of the modeling exercise are expressed as the change in number of dwelling units by year (a single-family house contains one dwelling unit, a duplex contains two dwelling units, and so on).

The model makes four 7-year predictions, as such predictions are made for 2014, 2021, 2028, and 2035 (Figure 5). Predictions indicate an annual growth rate of approximately 1.7% between 2007 and 2021, and 2.26% over the 28-year modeling timeframe. Figure 6 provides a contextual view of growth in Beaverhead County since 1950.

	2000	2007	2014	2021	2028	2035
Change	0	320	406	469	639	807
Total	3,342	3,662	4,068	4,537	5,176	5,983

Figure 4. Change in and total number of dwelling units in Beaverhead County from 2000 to 2035. (2000 and 2007 are actual data, 2014-2035 are model predictions).

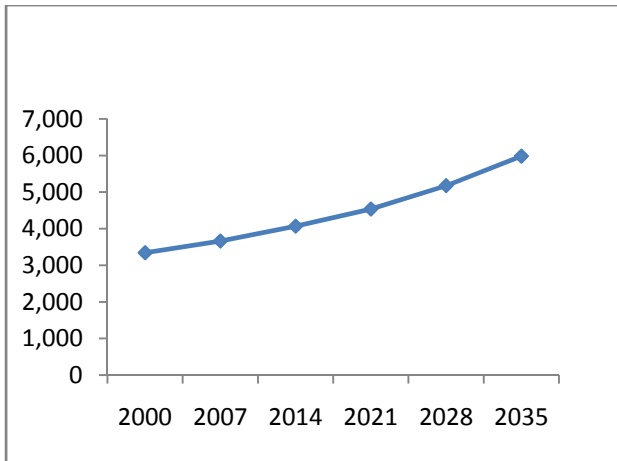


Figure 5. Number of dwelling units in Beaverhead County from 2000 to 2035. (2000 and 2007 are actual data, 2014-2035 are model predictions).

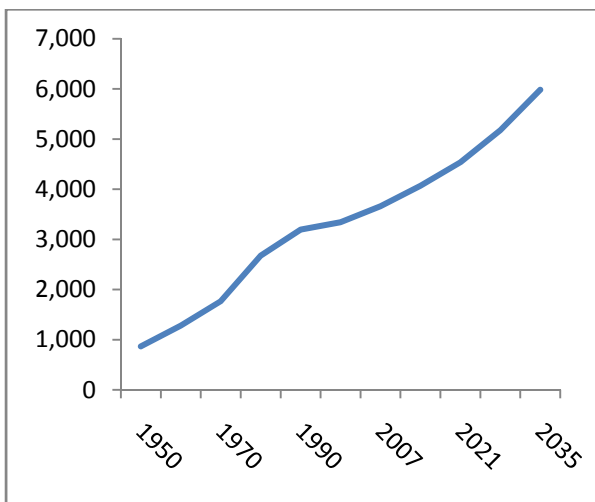


Figure 6. Estimates of the cumulative number of dwelling units in Beaverhead County: 1950 1990

(US Census Bureau data); 2000-2007 (MT Dept. of Revenue); 2014 – 2035 (Growth model predictions).

All data, and thus future projections, are summarized at the quarter section level, where a quarter-section represents a 160-acre subunit of the Public Land Survey System. This unit of analysis provides a reasonably precise view of potential residential development patterns useful to citizens, planners, and decision-makers. Additionally, any land use regulations (i.e., zoning) are summarized at this resolution and guide the distribution of residences. Changing permissible densities and capacities through zoning, or enacting a clustering incentive or creating proposed parks and trails are mechanisms that can be used to develop alternative growth scenarios.

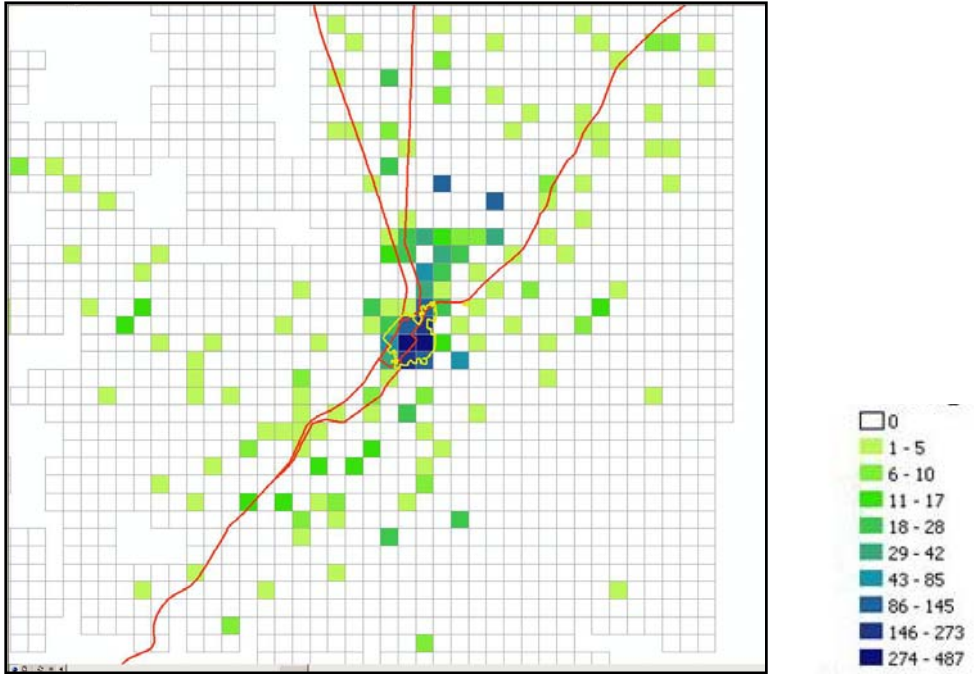


Figure 7. Dillon Area Density 2007 on a Quarter Section Grid, Sonoran Institute Growth Model

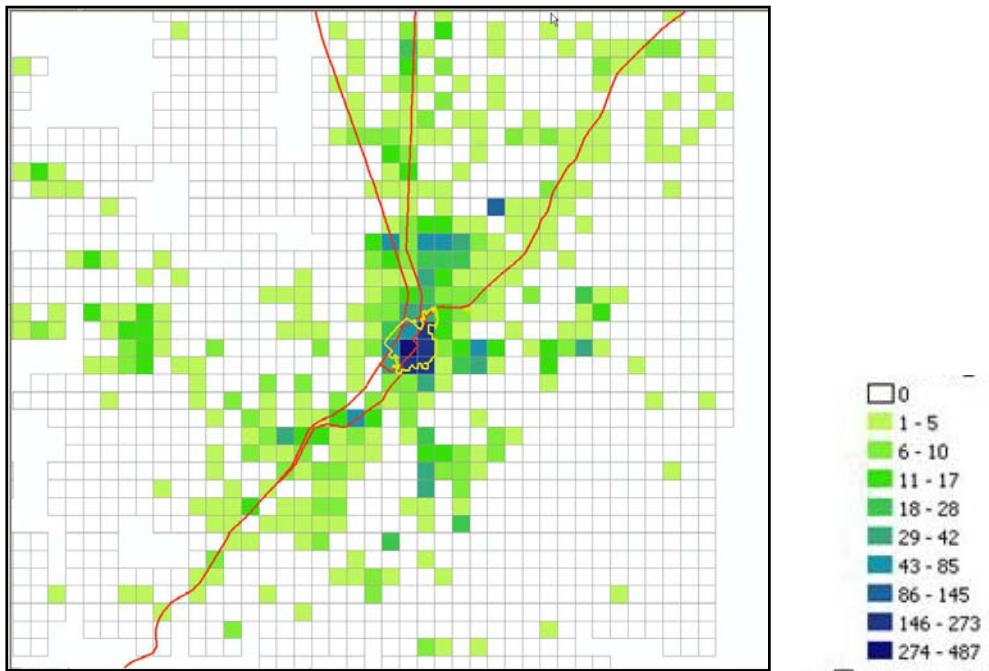


Figure 8. Projected Dillon Area Density 2035 on a Quarter Section Grid, Sonoran Institute Growth Model

Map #1 Location of homes (2007) base layer

Map #2 Location of homes (2035) base layer

Map #3 Location of homes (2007) aerial
photograph

Map #4 Location of homes (2035) aerial
photograph

Existing Conditions and Trends

Infrastructure

The Beaverhead County Growth Policy identifies the development and maintenance of a capital facilities plan as a goal for on-going budgeting and planning purposes⁶. Not only would facilities planning be a fiscally sound approach for taxpayer dollars but would support the consistent delivery a level of service for residents. Beaverhead County has not completed a capital improvement plan (CIP) at this time however, the county GIS system does have good data on roads, bridges and an up to date addressing system. Additional information on transmission lines was included from Vigilante Electric and Northwestern Energy. The CPC also identified and mapped important community services including schools, fairgrounds, hospitals and other amenities.

⁶ Beaverhead County Growth Policy p.9

Dillon has developed a capital improvements plan (CIP) 2007 which is focused primarily within the city boundaries⁷. The maps and data found in the city's CIP combined with existing information on roads and structures in the county were the primary resources used in the Dillon growth area planning process.

There is an opportunity to integrate and extend the Dillon CIP into the Dillon growth area identified by this plan. This coordination would allow for an integrated infrastructure system that would avoid retroactive adjustments that prove considerably more costly for homeowners and taxpayers. For example, new developments that would be integrated into the municipal water supply would require appropriate water systems to be put in place for easy connections when service lines are expanded rather than costly waterlines installed post-construction.

Map #5 Existing and proposed transmission
lines

Map #6 Dillon Capital Improvement Plan

⁷ Dillon Capital Improvement Plan 2007

Water resources

Water resource data was acquired through the Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology (MBMG). The Bureau keeps records of ground water depth through their Groundwater Information Center <http://mbmgwic.mtech.edu/>. The Ground-Water Information Center (GWIC) at the MBMG is the central repository for information on ground-water resources of Montana. The data includes well-completion reports from drillers, measurements of well performance and water quality based on site visits, water-level measurements at various wells for periods of up to 60 years, and water-quality reports for thousands of samples. The databases at GWIC are continually updated with new data from driller's logs, MBMG research projects, and research projects from other agencies.

Well sites in the planning area were mapped and coded according to recorded groundwater depth. Some of the wells are on a regular monitoring protocol while others may have only a single reporting. The area map (map #7) shows the general groundwater depth by grouping individual well records by depth and linking the similar groups. This approach may obscure individual variances but is the same protocol the MBMG uses in generating

groundwater maps. The Dillon area map shows each well depth separately, the variation in neighboring wells may be a result of limited data, misreporting or variations in time the depth was recorded. The data was used in a recent study of ground water surface water interactions directed by the state legislature.

Data on wetland and riparian areas was gathered from two sources, the University of Montana GAP analysis and the Natural Resources Conservation Service soil inventory.

Map #7 Estimated groundwater depth

Map #8 Well locations near Dillon

Map #9 Riparian vegetation

Wildfire

In September 2005, Beaverhead County adopted a Wildfire Protection Plan with the assistance of Basic Biological Services as the consultant⁸. The plan maps delineate the WUI areas around the County. All of the communities and their immediate surrounding areas within the county have been classified as being at High Risk to wildland fire and subsequent urban fire potential. The delineated WUI around Dillon exists at a 5.0-mile perimeter extending from the community center.

Essentially the entire area that will be defined in

⁸ Beaverhead County Wildfire Protection Plan 2005

the planning area will be identified as category 1 High Risk rating based on vegetation, terrain, existing conditions of drought, the frequency and concentration of human activity as well as the nature of wildfire itself.

Map#10 Wildland urban interface

Agriculture

To assess the status and productivity of agricultural lands in the planning area soil maps from the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) were reviewed. The NRCS classifies soils according to type as well as an agricultural suitability index. The data base does have missing records which are recorded in the key. However, most of the planning area did have soil data available.

In addition to the soils map, the CPC found that aerial photography was particularly helpful in identifying irrigated lands, pasture lands and their relationship to development, viewsheds, parks and open space and other amenities.

Map #11 Farmland importance

Map #12 GAP analysis of landcover

Map #3 Location of homes (2007) aerial

Open space and parks

While the county growth policy does not have a section on parkland there are objectives identified under the economic development section that relate to parks, open space and recreation⁹. Activities that further advance and enhance fish and wildlife recreation, tourism, public access and park development are identified as important aspects contributing to economic health and development of the county.

The City of Dillon Growth Policy notes a desire for policies incorporating walking and bike paths, buffer zones (open space), and sidewalks for new development. The document also promotes development that is pedestrian oriented¹⁰.

The CPC identified existing parks and open space and used the photo survey images to identify the areas most valued by citizens. Picture after picture of the city parks, tennis courts, baseball and football fields, playgrounds and the pedestrian trail were submitted. Blacktail Meadows Fish Pond, Cornell Park, Veterans Park, and the Native Plant Park were consistently documented¹¹.

⁹ Beaverhead County Growth Policy p.6

¹⁰ City of Dillon Growth Policy

¹¹ Community Vision for the Dillon Planning Area 2008

The survey conducted on Labor Day weekend and subsequent follow-up (347 respondents) noted 57% valued community parks, while 60% responding noted a desire for a more developed and extensive trail system. A separate question asking 'what kind of development does Dillon need?' showed 55% responding with an answer of walking trails.

Map #13 Parks in the Dillon area

SENATE BILL 201 CHECK LIST

- 1) The planning area does not include designated threatened or endangered wildlife and critical wildlife habitat and corridors identified by MT FW&P or US Fish and Wildlife Service. Wetlands and riparian corridors were assessed through the water resource analysis and land use data from the Montana GAP analysis.
- 2) Surface and ground water resources and irrigated agriculture were documented in the agricultural lands and water resource analysis. Agricultural lands were identified by aerial photography and the NRCS farmland importance data base. Water resource information was acquired through the MBMG. Additional inquiries with Montana Department of Environmental Quality, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks and Natural Resource Information System yielded absent or limited data for the purposes of this process.
- 3) Public facilities and infrastructure, including schools, were assessed for providing future services to the residents and future growth primarily through the Dillon CIP and the GIS maps of roads, schools, fire departments, municipal water systems and sewer services.
- 4) The CPC analyzed and discussed how future growth would be provided adequate local services, including but not limited to emergency, fire, and police protection. This analysis is based on the 2007 Fiscal Impact Analysis, growth projections, the Dillon CIP map and maps of infrastructure produced through the planning process. The data available may not have been a full inventory however, all existing and substantiated data from the county was utilized.
- 5) Public Health and safety concerns were assessed for wildfire, flooding, erosion, water pollution, hazardous wildlife interactions, and traffic hazards. The county wildfire protection plan 2005 was the basis for identifying wildfire risks. The county has Beaverhead River and Blacktail Deer Creek FEMA delineated 100 year floodplain maps in the Dillon planning area. The county and University of Montana Western have conducted nitrate groundwater studies in the North Dillon area. In addition, the CPC did use riparian and wetland mapping as well as the ground water data from MBMG as resources. While there was no available data on hazardous wildlife interactions or traffic hazards, the CPC extensive community outreach and discussions did touch these concerns.
- 6) Land use, habitat types, streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands, and ground water were included in the land use map and water resources maps. Data was acquired from NRCS, MBMG, Montana GAP project and aerial photography.
- 7) Agricultural lands and agricultural production were assessed using NRCS soil maps and aerial photography.

Planning Goals

Land Use



Similar language exists in both the city and county's growth policies related to land use issues. The city and county have identified the need to retain "quality of life" assets the Dillon area possesses¹².

In order to maintain and enhance the quality of life attributes of the area the following approaches have been identified by the city and county¹³:

Prepare maps showing where future commercial and higher density residential development should be located.

Evaluate and incorporate infrastructure and public service level requirements for future development proposals.

The CPC surveys show citizens are also concerned about, and value these same "quality of life" attributes. Recreational opportunities,

rural landscapes and small town characteristics (i.e. local businesses and quality schools) were identified as valuable assets.

Land Use Goals:

1. The review and approval process for future development in the growth area will strive to balance the collective community interests with the property rights of the individual landowner.
2. Development in the growth area should occur in areas that are safe from natural hazards and can accommodate the type of development proposed.
3. Development should be encouraged in areas that will not adversely impact the infrastructure and services of the city or county.
4. Future development in the growth area will be required to mitigate potential impacts on adjacent agricultural activities.
5. Encourage and promote development that retains and enhances the numerous small town quality of life assets of the area, conserving to the greatest extent possible open space, viewsheds, trails, and rural agricultural settings.

¹² City of Dillon Growth Policy

¹³ Beaverhead County Growth Policy 2005

Recommended implementation strategies

– Land Use

Strategy 1: Areas of natural hazards should be identified to guide future development. A land use map that identifies and locates various physical and man-made hazards in the growth area should be developed and adopted to guide future development proposals.

Strategy 2: Expansion of public services and related impacts on existing infrastructure will be mitigated and paid for by the developer. Public services should not be extended or expanded at public cost to accommodate new development.

Strategy 3: Explore the possibility of funding an impact fee study.

Strategy 4: Expand on the City of Dillon’s Capital Improvement Plan by creating an infrastructure plan for the growth area.

Strategy 5: Review existing regulations to ensure that all land use policies support public health and safety, as well as, the vision of the community. Regulations should not be more restrictive than needed to achieve that stated purpose. Review and modification of existing regulations should include but are not limited to:

5a. Improving Beaverhead County Subdivision Regulations to protect agricultural operations through required mitigation measures.

5b. Creating a set of development standards to help guide future development and maintain “quality of life” features in new proposals (i.e. open space, trails).

Strategy 6: Encourage cluster type development to reduce negative impacts.



“Please keep the rural nature of community even if we have increased growth – we don’t want to become Bozeman or the Bitterroot” survey respondent



Housing

The City of Dillon housing goal is to promote the availability of basic, decent, adequate and affordable housing, emphasizing access to services for all persons¹⁴.

Beaverhead County has identified the following goals: create a climate for the provision of a full range of affordable housing and decent housing opportunities for low and moderate income and elderly residents¹⁵.

The 1-Mile Growth Ring Task Force also identified the need for detailed planning for the Dillon area to address the lack of affordable homes in the area. Recognizing that home affordability is a concern for much of SW Montana, the task force recommended that affordable housing be integrated as much as possible into the planning process¹⁶.



Information gathered from surveys conducted by the CPC show overwhelming citizen support

¹⁴ City of Dillon Growth Policy

¹⁵ Beaverhead County Growth Policy Housing 2005 objective 1-4

¹⁶ Report to City and County Planning Boards by the 1-Mile Growth Ring Task Force 2007

for these goals. In addition, citizens also noted a desire to maintain the integrity of neighborhoods and incorporate open space and pedestrian trails in new housing developments.

Housing Goals:

1. Promote and encourage a full range of affordable housing opportunities through developments that maintain neighborhood integrity, pedestrian access, and open spaces.
2. Encourage affordable housing as a high priority for the community in new housing projects.
3. Work with developers to promote multi-family and higher density housing in appropriate areas.
4. In order to accommodate a variety of life styles and incomes, housing developments with a variety of housing types and options will be encouraged.
5. Developments that incorporate open spaces, park space and pedestrian paths will be encouraged.
6. Develop policies and guidelines that will maintain the integrity of existing neighborhoods adjacent to new developments.



Many photographers focused on businesses, community services and neighborhoods. These images included; beautification, historical structures, churches, parts of town that are unique and different, craftsmanship, diverse architecture, small stores, sidewalks, train, parking, and other downtown landmarks.

“Future developments (unfortunate as they are) need more clustered housing with more open spaces such as parks and trails” survey respondent

Recommended implementation strategies

- Housing:

Strategy 1: Encourage and facilitate the creation of a Housing Task Force to coordinate, promote, and help develop appropriate affordable housing and rehabilitation projects.

Strategy 2: Continue to support activities and funding for affordable housing projects that target low and moderate income households as well as elderly housing.

Strategy 3: Develop and implement policies and incentives that encourage infill housing, planned unit developments that offer a variety of housing types, high density developments and design standards that integrate a variety of housing types.

Parks and Open Space

It is very clear from the surveys conducted by the CPC that the residents value their parks, enjoy open space and desire a more extensive trail system for walking and biking. These are quality of life opportunities that citizens value and have expressed a deep commitment to. A majority of survey respondents, 57%, valued community parks, while 60% noted a desire for an expanded trail system.



The photo survey highlighted community attributes including; city parks, tennis courts, baseball and football fields, playgrounds and the pedestrian trail. Community parks were often represented, Blacktail Meadows Fish Pond, Cornell Park, Veterans Park, and the Native Plant Park were consistently documented.

It is evident that existing parks, open spaces and recreation areas in the county have a strong, positive impact upon residents' quality of life.

Maintaining these areas for the continued enjoyment of citizens should continue to be a priority. Access to recreation areas is also important. In order to maximize access, the county should consider the locations of parks and trail systems when planning or considering land developments.

Riparian corridors and other open space areas represent unique recreational opportunities. Some of these areas could be used to connect current and future parks with pedestrian and bicycle trails, for the quiet enjoyment of residents. The county should consider the preservation of open spaces, wildlife areas and recreational areas to ensure their continued existence is preserved for the next generations.

The development of new recreational facilities is needed to accommodate a growing population. The county should explore options to ensure the financial feasibility of new recreational facilities. The county should explore the possibility of providing regulatory and financial incentives to property owners and developers, in exchange for the protection of existing recreational and wildlife areas as well as the development of new recreational areas.

While the county growth policy does not have a specific section on parkland, access to recreational activities are cited as an important

component of economic development opportunities¹⁷. The city growth policy promotes new development that incorporates walking and bike paths, buffer zones to open space, and sidewalks fostering a pedestrian oriented community¹⁸.



Parks and Open Space Goals:

1. New development in the growth area should to the extent possible, provide for pedestrian trails that are interconnected.
2. Access to and maintenance of existing pedestrian trails and community parks should be a priority and expanded.
3. Open space areas, where appropriate, should be encouraged in-lieu of parkland to preserve view sheds, visual qualities, and buffer existing neighborhoods from new development.

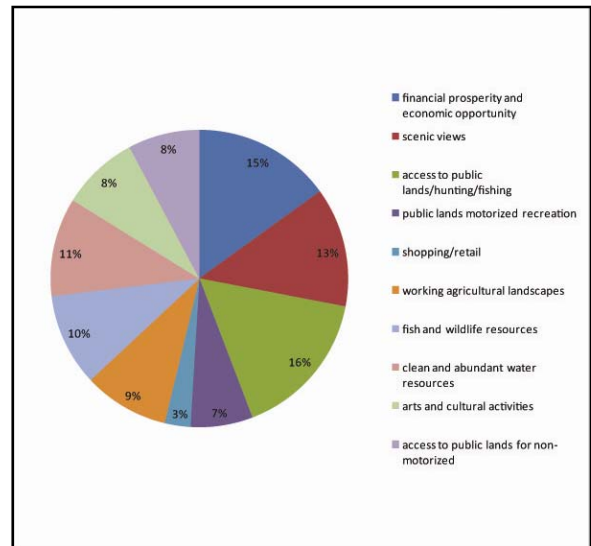
¹⁷ Beaverhead County Growth Policy 2005 p. 6

¹⁸ City of Dillon Growth Policy

4. Developments that incorporate open space and preserve existing visual qualities will be encouraged.

5. A mix of approaches should be enacted to expand access to recreational opportunities including developed facilities, wildland and natural settings, sporting and athletic activities and trail systems.

6. New developments should be designed to protect the character of adjacent existing neighborhoods.



Beaverhead County residents identified natural amenities and the resources and activities they support, 74% of the time as their most valued community asset¹⁹.

¹⁹ Community Vision for the Dillon Planning Area 2008

Recommended implementation strategies

– Parks and Open Space:

Strategy 1: Develop a comprehensive plan for parks and trails in the planning area. Include recreational amenities (i.e. ice rink) as well as, wildlife corridors and sensitive habitats.

Strategy 2: Create a county trails committee to research, explore and recommend preferred routes and expansion of parks and trails.

Strategy 3: Develop rural design standards that can be used to encourage thoughtful developments that respect the rural environment, viewsheds and adjacent neighborhoods.

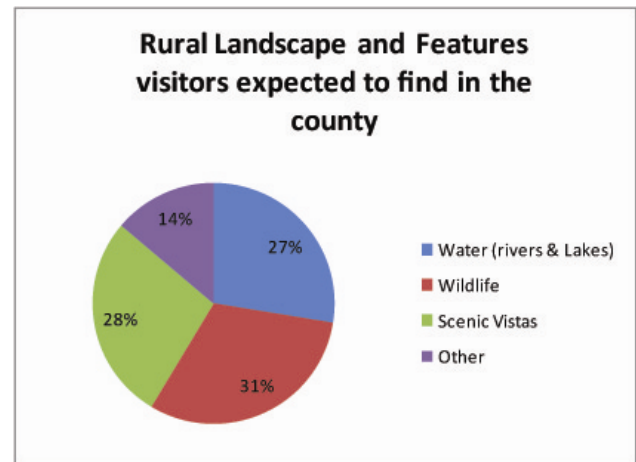
Strategy 4: Allow developments to meet parkland requirements through off-site improvements to existing or proposed parks and trails.

Strategy 5: Investigate the use of existing or abandoned rights-of-ways or public easements for pedestrian trails.

Strategy 6: Develop a funding mechanism to support the development and maintenance of parks and trails.

Strategy 7: Integrate pedestrian walkways/bike lanes into future planned roadways.

Strategy 8: Update and revise existing subdivision regulations and other policies to include pedestrian trail and bike lane guidelines and specifications where appropriate.



Visitors to Beaverhead County surveyed were attracted to the scenic qualities and natural features of the area²⁰.

²⁰ Community Vision for the Dillon Planning Area 2008

Transportation and Other Capital Improvements

The City of Dillon adopted a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) in 2007. Although the Dillon Growth Policy requires the identification of funding sources and an implementation time line, funding limitations have hindered implementation of the CIP.

The Dillon Growth Policy has language that supports pedestrian oriented commercial/residential districts, the development of neighborhood planning initiatives that address infrastructure, as well as pre-planning in the growth area for infrastructure²¹. Suggested strategies also include evaluating development based on the ability of the infrastructure to service it.

The Beaverhead County Growth Policy has very similar language, noting that future transportation routes should be compatible with the community objectives, preserve the quality of life residents enjoy, and connect with current and future road systems²².

Transportation systems are critical elements to the ability of the county and city to deliver community services such as, law enforcement,

fire protection, solid waste disposal, etc. therefore, a well planned, integrated transportation system is a top priority for the Dillon planning area.

Survey results noted a need for infrastructure to provide for non-motorized modes of travel and to accommodate handicap accessibility.

Despite the fundamental need for a functional transportation system, residents did not identify the road system as a top priority.

When asked what they valued about living here, roads came in dead last behind educational services, health care, and law enforcement, perhaps because this community service is often taken for granted.

The CPC utilized the Dillon CIP data and county maps to assess the network of roads, utilities, transmission lines, sewer and water and other infrastructure in the planning process. The Fiscal Impact Analysis was also used for cost of services projections for roads, bridges, fire protection and sheriff services²³. The Dillon CIP served as an excellent resource for community infrastructure, roads, waterlines, sewer lines and other base infrastructure in the city limits.

²¹ City of Dillon Growth Policy

²² Beaverhead County Growth Policy 2005 p.22

²³ Fiscal Impact Analysis of Future Growth Scenarios, Beaverhead County Montana 2006

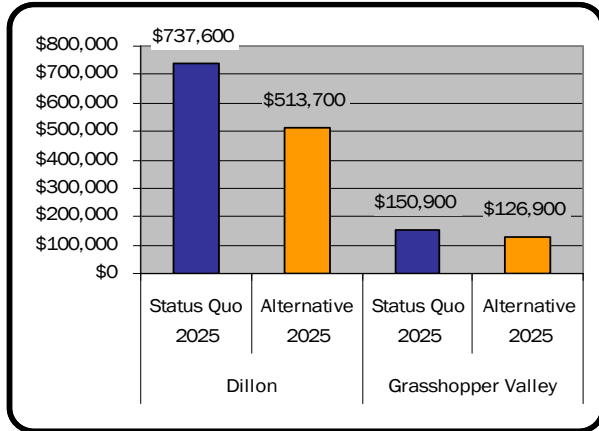


Figure 9. Comparison of capital improvement costs for the Dillon and Grasshopper Fire Districts by current growth pattern (status quo= blue) and more compact growth pattern (alternative= yellow)

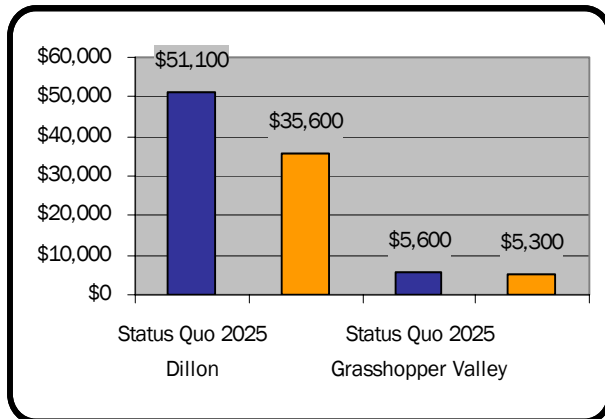


Figure 10. Comparison of operations and maintenance costs for the Dillon and Grasshopper Fire Districts by current growth pattern (status quo= blue) and more compact growth pattern (alternative= yellow)

Transportation and Capital Improvements

Goals:

1. Future growth and development patterns should, to the extent, possible, be compatible with the City of Dillon’s Capital Improvement Plan.
2. The City of Dillon and Beaverhead County should coordinate and plan for the future extension of infrastructure in the growth area.
3. New development and roadways should integrate trails, sidewalks and/or walkways to accommodate a variety of non-motorized modes of travel.
4. Future collector roadways should be buffered from existing and planned developments.
5. Transportation and other capital improvements need to preserve the visual and cultural qualities of the growth area.
6. Buffering of roadways should be used to preserve the integrity of existing neighborhoods, visual resources, cultural values and result in a roadway that does not dominate the landscape.



**Recommended implementation strategies
– Transportation and Capital Improvements**

Strategy 1: Development proposals submitted in the growth area will be required to identify how they intend to accommodate non-motorized travel in the proposed development.

Strategy 2: The city and county will prepare a recommended infrastructure plan showing roads, sewer/water, trails, etc. locations for the growth area to assist developers with proposed developments. This plan would be based on a

transportation study or inventory of the area.

Strategy 3: Development proposals submitted in the growth area will be required to identify how they intend to mitigate and buffer the impacts on existing neighborhoods if a collector or roadway extension is proposed.

Strategy 4: Development codes and regulations should be revised to encourage flexibility of design to protect visual and cultural qualities while maintaining public safety.

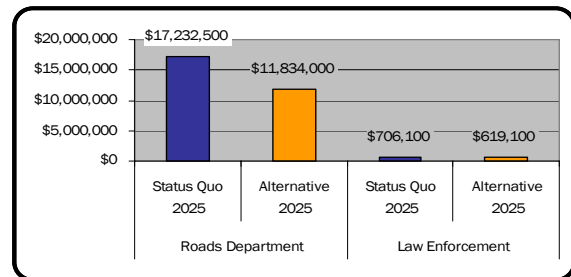


Figure 11. Road and law enforcement one-time capital improvement cost by current growth pattern (status quo= blue) and more compact growth pattern (alternative = yellow)

APPENDICES

A. SB 201 from the 2007 Legislative Session Codified in MCA

76-1-410. Planning fees -- limit. (1) Governing bodies that have committed in a resolution to adopting or that have adopted a growth policy that includes the provisions of [76-1-601](#)(4)(c) may assess planning fees to pay for services that fulfill the purposes of Title 76, chapter 1. The planning fees are in addition to any other fees authorized by law and may be collected as part of either subdivision applications or zoning permits.

(2) Planning fees may not exceed \$50 for each residential lot or unit or \$250 for each commercial, industrial, or other type of lot or unit.

76-1-601. Growth policy -- contents. (1) A growth policy may cover all or part of the jurisdictional area.

(2) The extent to which a growth policy addresses the elements listed in subsection (3) is at the full discretion of the governing body.

(3) A growth policy must include:

(a) community goals and objectives;

(b) maps and text describing an inventory of the existing characteristics and features of the jurisdictional area, including:

(i) land uses;

(ii) population;

(iii) housing needs;

(iv) economic conditions;

(v) local services;

(vi) public facilities;

(vii) natural resources; and

(viii) other characteristics and features proposed by the planning board and adopted by the governing bodies;

(c) projected trends for the life of the growth policy for each of the following elements:

(i) land use;

- (ii) population;
- (iii) housing needs;
- (iv) economic conditions;
- (v) local services;
- (vi) natural resources; and
- (vii) other elements proposed by the planning board and adopted by the governing bodies;
- (d) a description of policies, regulations, and other measures to be implemented in order to achieve the goals and objectives established pursuant to subsection (3)(a);
 - (e) a strategy for development, maintenance, and replacement of public infrastructure, including drinking water systems, wastewater treatment facilities, sewer systems, solid waste facilities, fire protection facilities, roads, and bridges;
 - (f) an implementation strategy that includes:
 - (i) a timetable for implementing the growth policy;
 - (ii) a list of conditions that will lead to a revision of the growth policy; and
 - (iii) a timetable for reviewing the growth policy at least once every 5 years and revising the policy if necessary;
 - (g) a statement of how the governing bodies will coordinate and cooperate with other jurisdictions that explains:
 - (i) if a governing body is a city or town, how the governing body will coordinate and cooperate with the county in which the city or town is located on matters related to the growth policy;
 - (ii) if a governing body is a county, how the governing body will coordinate and cooperate with cities and towns located within the county's boundaries on matters related to the growth policy;
 - (h) a statement explaining how the governing bodies will:
 - (i) define the criteria in [76-3-608\(3\)\(a\)](#); and
 - (ii) evaluate and make decisions regarding proposed subdivisions with respect to the criteria in [76-3-608\(3\)\(a\)](#);
 - (i) a statement explaining how public hearings regarding proposed subdivisions will be conducted; and
 - (j) an evaluation of the potential for fire and wildland fire in the jurisdictional area, including whether or not there is a need to:
 - (i) delineate the wildland-urban interface; and
 - (ii) adopt regulations requiring:
 - (A) defensible space around structures;
 - (B) adequate ingress and egress to and from structures and developments to facilitate fire suppression activities; and
 - (C) adequate water supply for fire protection.
- (4) A growth policy may:

- (a) include one or more neighborhood plans. A neighborhood plan must be consistent with the growth policy.
- (b) establish minimum criteria defining the jurisdictional area for a neighborhood plan;
- (c) establish an infrastructure plan that, at a minimum, includes:
 - (i) projections, in maps and text, of the jurisdiction's growth in population and number of residential, commercial, and industrial units over the next 20 years;
 - (ii) for a city, a determination regarding if and how much of the city's growth is likely to take place outside of the city's existing jurisdictional area over the next 20 years and a plan of how the city will coordinate infrastructure planning with the county or counties where growth is likely to take place;
 - (iii) for a county, a plan of how the county will coordinate infrastructure planning with each of the cities that project growth outside of city boundaries and into the county's jurisdictional area over the next 20 years;
 - (iv) for cities, a land use map showing where projected growth will be guided and at what densities within city boundaries;
 - (v) for cities and counties, a land use map that designates infrastructure planning areas adjacent to cities showing where projected growth will be guided and at what densities;
 - (vi) using maps and text, a description of existing and future public facilities necessary to efficiently serve projected development and densities within infrastructure planning areas, including, whenever feasible, extending interconnected municipal street networks, sidewalks, trail systems, public transit facilities, and other municipal public facilities throughout the infrastructure planning area. For the purposes of this subsection (4)(c)(vi), public facilities include but are not limited to drinking water treatment and distribution facilities, sewer systems, wastewater treatment facilities, solid waste disposal facilities, parks and open space, schools, public access areas, roads, highways, bridges, and facilities for fire protection, law enforcement, and emergency services;
 - (vii) a description of proposed land use management techniques and incentives that will be adopted to promote development within cities and in an infrastructure planning area, including land use management techniques and incentives that address issues of housing affordability;
 - (viii) a description of how and where projected development inside municipal boundaries for cities and inside designated joint infrastructure planning areas for cities and counties could adversely impact:
 - (A) threatened or endangered wildlife and critical wildlife habitat and corridors;
 - (B) water available to agricultural water users and facilities;
 - (C) the ability of public facilities, including schools, to safely and efficiently service current residents and future growth;
 - (D) a local government's ability to provide adequate local services, including but not limited to emergency, fire, and police protection;
 - (E) the safety of people and property due to threats to public health and safety, including but not limited to wildfire, flooding, erosion, water pollution, hazardous wildlife interactions, and traffic hazards;
 - (F) natural resources, including but not limited to forest lands, mineral resources, streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands, and ground water; and

(G) agricultural lands and agricultural production; and

(ix) a description of measures, including land use management techniques and incentives, that will be adopted to avoid, significantly reduce, or mitigate the adverse impacts identified under subsection (4)(c)(viii).

(5) The planning board may propose and the governing bodies may adopt additional elements of a growth policy in order to fulfill the purpose of this chapter.

76-3-616. Exemption for certain subdivisions. (1) A subdivision that meets the criteria in subsection (2) is exempt from the following requirements:

(a) preparation of an environmental assessment as required by [76-3-603](#);

(b) a public hearing on the subdivision application pursuant to [76-3-605](#); and

(c) review of the subdivision for the criteria listed in [76-3-608](#)(3)(a).

(2) To qualify for the exemptions in subsection (1), a subdivision must meet the following criteria:

(a) the proposed subdivision is entirely within an area inside or adjacent to an incorporated city or town where the governing body has adopted a growth policy that includes the provisions of [76-1-601](#)(4)(c);

(b) the proposed subdivision is entirely within an area subject to zoning adopted pursuant to [76-2-203](#) or [76-2-304](#) that avoids, significantly reduces, or mitigates adverse impacts identified in a growth policy that includes the provisions of [76-1-601](#)(4)(c); and

(c) the subdivision proposal includes a description of future public facilities and services, using maps and text, that are necessary to efficiently serve the projected development.

B. DEFINITIONS

Affordable Housing or Living Wage Housing:

the generally accepted definition of affordability is for a household to pay no more than 30 percent of its annual income on housing. Families who pay more than 30 percent of their income for housing are considered cost burdened and may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation and medical care.

Zoning:

a process of establishing regulations governing use, placement, spacing and size of land and buildings.

Agricultural Land Use:

any process that has as its main objective of farming or farming related land use practices.

Policy:

an adopted plan for achieving a set of goals

Plan:

a set of goals, strategies and objectives for achieving a desired outcome of vision

Comprehensive Plan:

is a plan which sets forth goals; analyzes existing conditions and trends; describes and illustrates a vision for the physical, social and economic characteristics of the community in the years ahead and outlines policies and guidelines intended to implement that vision.

Vision:

statement(s) offering an image of the future, often accompanied by sketches that help depict its physical implications.

Land use:

the full range influences or affects on land through the development and conservation of the land.

Capital Improvements:

are construction projects including public buildings, roads, street improvements, lighting, parks, and their improvement or rehabilitation paid for under the community's capital budget.

Aesthetics:

is an important ingredient in the quality of life in a community such as the natural resources such as open vistas, woods, scenic viewsheds, and attractive man-made settings, whose appearance is pleasing to the eye and mind.

Line of Sight:

the aesthetic which are particular to the eye

Predictability:

the assurance that the future can be foretold and counted on as a condition of the future

Equal Protection Doctrine:

As referenced in the 14th Amendment United States Constitution "no state shall... deny to any person within its [jurisdiction](#) the equal protection of the laws". In this planning document, this clause can be seen as an attempt to secure the promise and commitment to the proposition that "[all men are created equal](#)" in their efforts to seek a common vision for living, working and playing in their community.

Undevelopable Land:

Land which is unsuitable for any human enterprise other than maintaining the natural environmental character for low or no-impact human activities.

Cluster Housing Vs Affordable Housing Cluster:

Cluster housing is housing of a higher residential density than already exists in a community. Affordable Housing Cluster is housing of a higher residential density than already exists in a community and is designed to high standards, is affordable to the resident and is affordable for the developer to create.

Living Document:

is a document which is modified on a regular basis to address and reflect the changing nature of the issues addressed in the document.

Open Space:

means undeveloped land areas that may have important ecological functions, natural resources or cultural resources that are worthy of conservation and protection. Such areas may contain, but are not limited to forests, farmland, ranchland, old fields, floodplains, wetlands, rivers and streams and shore lands. Open Space can also encompass scenic vistas, recreational areas and historic sites.

C. REPORTS AND DATA

GIS Data

Data Layer	Source	Weblink
2007 Structures	Montana Department of Revenue	http://gis.mt.gov/
2035 Structures	Sonoran Institute Growth Model	NA
Prime Farmlands	NRCS Soils Data	http://nris.mt.gov/nrcs/soils/
Wells	Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology	http://nris.mt.gov/nsdi/nris/gwicwells.html
Dillon WUI	Beaverhead County Wildfire Protection Plan	NA
Beaverhead Roads	Scott Marsh - Beaverhead County GIS	www.beaverheadcounty.org
MSTI Transmission	MT DEQ	NA
Dillon Growth Areas	Community Planning Committee	NA
Dillon Parks	Montana Cadastral Derived	http://gis.mt.gov/
Riparian Areas	Montana GAP Project	http://nris.mt.gov/nsdi/nris/gap90.html
Current Transmission Data	GIS Data Depot	http://data.geocomm.com/catalog/US/61047/group111.html

Reports

Fiscal Impact Analysis of Future Growth Scenarios, Beaverhead County, Montana 2007.

Beaverhead County Growth Policy 2005.

Community Vision for the Dillon Planning Area 2008.

Dillon Capital Improvement Plan 2007.

City of Dillon Growth Policy.

Beaverhead County Wildfire Protection Plan 2005.