

Missoula County Media Release

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Missoula County Invites Additional Input on Updated Draft of Land Use Map

Missoula County will need to become more proactive in planning, building and managing infrastructure along the outer edges of Missoula if it wants growth in the next 20 years to align with the community's values. This is according to designations reflected in the county's updated Missoula Area Land Use Map, a draft of which is now available online at www.missoulaareamapping.com.

After spending a year gathering feedback from local neighborhoods and stakeholders through the Missoula Area Mapping Project, the Missoula County Community and Planning Services department is kicking off another round of community engagement to solicit additional comment on the map. In addition to hosting three open houses, the department also invites constituents to submit comments through Nov. 16 via the [interactive online map](#).

"With this current draft, we're recommending the county make some major shifts in how we approach land use, which includes expanding and investing in more infrastructure, including public water and sewer systems," said Andrew Hagemeyer, CAPS planner. "The public engagement process confirmed we'll have to be proactive in our decisions about where and how growth occurs if we want to maintain the quality of life that's important to us, and we're doing another round to make sure we're on the right track."

Constituents can provide input during one of the following open houses. Members of the public are free to stop in anytime during the events.

- **Tuesday, Oct. 23:** Noon-1:30 p.m., County Courthouse Annex, Room 151 (200 W. Broadway)
- **Tuesday, Oct. 23:** 6-7:30 p.m., Orchard Homes Country Life Club (2637 S. 3rd St. W.)
- **Tuesday, Oct. 30:** 6-7:30 p.m., Hellgate Lions Park Barn (1305 Haaglund Drive, West Riverside)

Central to the strategic development of the community, the land use map is an element of the Missoula County Growth Policy, which guides growth, infrastructure and delivery of services. The current map was adopted in the 1970s, when Missoula County's population was 58,000 people. Since the map's adoption, the county's population doubled to more than 117,000 and is expected to grow to over 140,000 people by 2040. Most of that growth will happen in the Missoula Valley.

During the initial engagement process, constituents and stakeholders homed in on several key values for land use that county planners incorporated into the draft map:

Housing: Provide additional housing throughout the planning area; specifically, housing that is affordable at a range of different income levels. In a land use map, this translates to allowing for a range of housing types.

Existing infrastructure: Focus development toward areas with existing infrastructure or those areas with potential to expand or improve infrastructure necessary to accommodate increased density and a mix of uses.

Agriculture: Establish an agricultural-specific land use designation and address protection of small agricultural operations.

Open space: Protect open space for wildlife habitat, recreation and agriculture. Cluster development to protect these important resources.

Multi-modal transportation: Tie land use to multi-modal transportation options, including road enhancements, bus service, and pedestrian and bike facilities.

Water quality: Protect surface water and groundwater.

Community identity: Maintain the unique character of neighborhoods.

The current draft reflects these values, and the comments and ideas collected on it will be the foundation of a revised land use map that is intended to be adopted as part of the Missoula County Growth Policy following public hearings by the Planning Board and Board of County Commissioners.

For more information, call Hagemeyer at 406-258-3707, email ahagemeyer@missoulacounty.us or visit www.missoulaareamapping.com.

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