



Chapter 2 GUIDING PRINCIPLES, GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTIONS

INTRODUCTION

This growth policy is intended to provide the direction necessary to conserve the natural landscapes and open spaces that are so important to Missoula County, while accommodating growth and promoting the economic wellbeing of its residents. Toward this ideal, the growth policy establishes guiding principles, goals, objectives, and an action plan.

Guiding principles are broad assumptions that establish the overall planning framework. They provide a compass to be used in deliberation and decision-making.

Goals are general statements of values that articulate a vision and set priorities for how Missoula County should grow and develop.

Objectives, which are more specific and measurable statements of desired results, further define and elaborate upon the goals.

Actions are specific steps that the county can take to help achieve the objectives.



The Growth Policy is guided by these GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- **Sustainability:** Local government should strive to make decisions that are environmentally sound, fiscally responsible, and supportive of healthy communities over the long term.
- **Clean and healthful environment:** The right to a clean and healthful environment is fundamentally important. Missoula County's natural and cultural resources make this place unique; they should be conserved, enhanced and enjoyed.
- **Climate change:** Local government decision-making should consider the impacts of and adaptation to climate change in policy and regulatory decisions.
- **Agriculture:** A healthy agriculture sector is essential to the well-being of our community due to benefits such as food security, open space, wildlife habitat, economic activity, health promotion, and quality of life.
- **Economic development:** Economic measures should focus on long term economic development that is fiscally-responsible and does not unduly compromise quality of life or the natural environment.
- **Public health and safety:** Missoula County will strive to protect public health, safety, and welfare in a fiscally-responsible manner.
- **Private property rights:** Respect for private property rights should be supported in policy.
- **Balancing interests and minimizing regulation:** The public interests of promoting economic development, conserving natural resources, maintaining community character, protecting public health and safety, and supporting private property rights should be weighed and balanced in decision-making. The use of regulatory and voluntary measures will be evaluated with an effort to employ the minimum amount of regulation necessary to protect public interests.
- **Partnerships:** Efforts by non- governmental groups, private individuals, tribal government, and state and federal agencies to achieve community goals are as vital to community development as local governmental actions. Partnerships among these groups, individuals and local government are essential.
- **Public involvement:** Communities and individuals should continue to be involved in the planning and decision-making processes that affect them.
- **Diversity of communities and citizenry:** The diversity, integrity and unique values of neighborhoods, communities and rural areas are important and should be protected. Diversity among the county's population is also valued. A wide variety of housing and transportation choices is necessary to serve all communities and all of the population.
- **Infrastructure:** Investing in infrastructure, as part of implementing planning, is one of the most effective ways to build enduring communities.
- **Recreation:** Missoula County residents enjoy recreating in the area's natural landscape. It is important to promote access to land and waters, and to provide facilities that contribute to active and healthy lifestyles, while concurrently protecting natural resources.



GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTIONS

The goals, objectives, and actions provided herein are divided into three categories: **Landscapes, Livelihoods and Communities**. The growth policy is organized around these categories as a reminder of the core focus of this plan. When reading the goals and objectives it is important to keep in mind that some of the objectives can be used to help achieve more than one goal, as illustrated in Figure 2.

The goals and objectives are intended to create a basis for future actions by Missoula County. While there are numerous topics and issues that are important in Missoula County, this growth policy does not attempt to inventory and address them all. Instead, **the growth policy focuses on those goals and objectives that can lead to an action plan for Missoula County and its partners to address key land use, natural resource, and community development issues.**

A plan is only as good as its implementation. With that in mind, this chapter describes how to help achieve the goals and objectives. Community and Planning Services (CAPS) or other agencies may already be addressing some goals and objectives that are established here, but because these goals and objectives continue to be a part of a future action plan they are retained in this growth policy.

The tables below list each goal and

objective, anticipated actions, a timeframe, and the anticipated lead partners. As projects are implemented, the county will develop indicators of success to help measure performance.

- **Timeframe:** This indicates when the action is expected to be taken.
- **Immediate:** These actions are to be initiated or completed within 1 to 2 years from the adoption of the plan and generally reflect high priorities
- **Mid-Term:** These actions are to be initiated or completed within 2 to 5 years from the adoption of the plan
- **Long-Term:** These actions are to be

initiated or completed 5 to 10 years or longer after adoption of the plan

- **Ongoing:** These tasks occur continually

Lead Partners: This column lists who is planned to take a leadership role on each action. It does not cite all partners or participants who will be involved with each objective. Depending on the action, the county's role will vary from leading to facilitating to supporting.

Land Use Strategy: Following the action plan is a land use strategy that describes how the county intends to address a variety of land use-related issues through updated land use designation maps.

Figure 2 - Goals and Objectives Framework

This image illustrates the relationship between the goals and objectives in the growth policy and shows that objectives can help achieve multiple goals.





Landscapes

Goal #1 - Conserve vital natural resources including surface and ground water, air quality, agricultural resources, iconic landscapes, fish and wildlife species and their habitats, and native plant communities

Objectives	Actions	Timeframe	Lead Partners *
1.1 Develop and implement regulatory and non-regulatory strategies to conserve vital natural resources and environmental functions.	1.1.1 Identify priority resource areas based on agricultural soils, wildlife habitat, water, scenic viewsheds, and the functions of the natural environment.	Mid-term	CAPS
	1.1.2 Update or develop land use designation maps, area and issue plans, zoning and other projects using priority resource areas. This could include the use of overlays.	Ongoing	CAPS
	1.1.3 Conserve the highest priority lands and waters while allowing other public benefits such as public access utilizing open space bond funding and other public funding sources.	Ongoing	OLC, CAPS, PTOL
	1.1.4 Cooperate with private land trusts and landowners to facilitate voluntary conservation projects with private funding.	Ongoing	OLC, CAPS, PTOL, land trusts
	1.1.5 Update subdivision regulations to provide standards that minimize and mitigate impacts to natural resources.	Immediate	CAPS
	1.1.6 Improve air quality through road dust abatement, wood stove change outs, energy efficiency, etc.	Ongoing	Health dept, PW, CAPS
	1.1.7 Increase the percentage of the population that is served by public or community water and wastewater systems.	Ongoing	Health dept, PW, Seeley Lake Sewer Board, Seeley Lake Water District

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Goal #2 - Promote the responsible use and enjoyment of publicly-owned lands and waters

Objectives	Actions	Timeframe	Lead Partners *
2.1 Maximize opportunities for access to publicly-owned lands and waters when consistent with resource management objectives.	2.1.1 Plan for and develop accesses to rivers, lakes and public lands where needed and appropriate, while concurrently protecting resources for future generations.	Ongoing	PTOL, PW, MT FWP
	2.1.2 Build trails to connect communities with public lands and to create linkages between public lands and waters, while concurrently protecting resources for future generations.	Ongoing	PTOL, PW, MT FWP, other agencies and land trusts

Goal #3 - Protect and enhance the historic and cultural structures and sites that are part of Missoula County's history and heritage

Objectives	Actions	Timeframe	Lead Partners *
3.1 Protect and, where appropriate, restore and make use of key historic and cultural resources and sites.	3.1.1 Work with partners to protect, restore, and re-use historic resources, sites, and structures, where appropriate.	Ongoing	CAPS, PTOL, community councils, community groups, MT Historic Preservation Office
3.2 Respect cultural resources identified by the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and other tribal entities.	3.2.1 Support tribal efforts to protect and conserve cultural resources, when invited.	Ongoing	CAPS, PTOL, CSKT
	3.2.2 Include the Tribes on agency review lists for development, conservation, and parks and trails projects.	Ongoing	CAPS, PTOL
	3.2.3 Notify contractors that should native remains or artifacts be uncovered during land development, work would need to cease and tribal cultural resource experts need to be contacted immediately.	Immediate/ Ongoing	CAPS, PW, EHD, other development review agencies

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Goal #4 - Reduce Missoula County's contribution to climate change while promoting resiliency and adapting to its impact on the natural environment and communities

Objectives	Actions	Timeframe	Lead Partners *
4.1 Reduce Missoula County's contribution to climate change.	4.1.1 Use green building principles and consider energy efficiency and waste reduction when siting, upgrading, and constructing public facilities.	Ongoing	BCC, Facilities Management, PW
	4.1.2 Adopt a green-building incentive program for qualifying private sector development projects focusing on siting, energy efficiency, waste reduction and other measures.	Mid-term	CAPS, PW
	4.1.3 Encourage alternative energy development and use in county facilities and land use plans and policies.	Ongoing	CAPS
	4.1.4 Work with Mountain Line, MRTMA and/or other transportation providers to expand service to rural areas and/or promote ridesharing.	Long-term	CAPS, Mountain Line, MRTMA
	4.1.5 Ensure land use plans and regulations accommodate home-based businesses where appropriate to reduce vehicle miles traveled	Ongoing	CAPS
	4.1.6 Develop county policy to reduce energy use and waste generation at the county level and encourage recycling efforts. Find and use renewable energy sources where possible.	Mid-term	BCC, Facilities Management
4.2 Develop and implement strategies to adapt to climate change.	4.2.1 Convene a working group to investigate the current level of greenhouse gas emissions generated from county facilities and develop a climate change monitoring, mitigation and adaptation plan for Missoula County or participate in other local working groups.	Immediate	BCC, CAPS
4.3 Encourage legislative action on alternative energy.	4.3.1 Support the continuation of tax breaks for alternative energy.	Immediate	BCC
	4.3.2 Lobby for tax breaks for community solar.	Immediate	BCC

Note: Objectives and actions related to climate change prevention and adaptation located elsewhere in this chapter include: providing efficient and functional communities that encourage compact development patterns; encouraging multi-modal transportation, supporting local agricultural markets and local businesses to minimize vehicle miles traveled; protecting life and property from floods and wildfires, and water quality protection measures.

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Livelihoods

Goal #5 - Promote economic development that creates opportunities throughout Missoula County including people living and working in rural communities and across wage levels

Objectives	Actions	Timeframe	Lead Partners *
5.1 Support local businesses.	5.1.1 Develop a buy-local program for county government and invite other governments, non-profits and businesses to participate.	Mid-term	BCC
	5.1.2 Provide grant writing and other technical support to qualifying companies seeking to add value to local products and create jobs in rural areas.	Ongoing	BREDD, MEP, GCP
	5.1.3 Support business location, retention and expansion efforts as opportunities arise.	Ongoing	BREDD, BCC, MEP
	5.1.4 Work with business community to improve permitting systems and streamline development review.	Ongoing	
5.2 Expand economic opportunities in rural areas of the county.	5.2.1 Work with local economic development agencies to create a targeted plan(s) for rural communities.	Mid-term	MEP, BREDD, BCC, and private partners

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Objectives	Actions	Timeframe	Lead Partners *
5.3 Facilitate well-designed commercial and industrial development that is located appropriately, served by necessary infrastructure, conducive to public health and the environment, and reduces buyer and developer financial and legal risks.	5.3.1 Create an industrial site readiness and certification program based on the results of the Industrial Lands Study.	Mid-term	BCC, MDA
	5.3.2 Modernize the county zoning resolution to reflect current and anticipated industries and businesses and to encourage clean technology firms.	Mid-term	CAPS
	5.3.3 Support efforts of business groups in Missoula County communities to improve the appearance and function of the business districts.	Ongoing	CAPS, BCC, MDT, PW, GCP
5.4 Facilitate the re-use of former industrial sites and previously developed, under-utilized parcels of land to revitalize blighted and infrastructure deficient areas and spur private investment.	5.4.1 Use brownfield programs, tax increment finance, targeted economic development districts and other tools to assist with redevelopment efforts.	Ongoing	GCP, MDA, BCC
5.5 Support workforce training.	5.5.1 Develop a county internship program to provide training to local students.	Immediate	BCC, county depts, UM, Missoula College
	5.5.2 Partner with educational institutions and economic development agencies to create opportunities to retain college and university graduates by matching skills with local industries, especially emerging industries.	Ongoing	UM, Missoula College, BREDD, MEP

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Goal #6 - Embrace emerging economic trends and new technologies that will prepare Missoula County for the economy that will exist in 20 years

Objectives	Actions	Timeframe	Lead Partners *
6.1 Support initiatives to expand digital communications and develop clean technologies throughout the county.	6.1.1 Research, assess, and enhance broadband availability and affordability throughout Missoula County.	Ongoing	BCC, BREDD, MEP,
	6.1.2 Support legislation to expand digital communications in rural areas.	Ongoing	BCC, BREDD, MC Operations, MEP
	6.1.3 Adopt a county policy to require broadband conduit be included in projects in county right-of-way and private road easements in subdivisions for future expansion where appropriate.	Immediate	BCC, CAPS

Goal #7 - Sustain and promote the land- and resource-based industries of agriculture, timber, restoration, and recreation that are part of the local economy and heritage

Objectives	Actions	Timeframe	Lead Partners *
7.1 Conserve agricultural lands and timberlands. (See also Landscapes.)	7.1.1 Identify actual amount of remaining agricultural land and evaluate its value/ usability for agriculture using parcel size and other factors.	Midterm	CAPS, Extension Office
	7.1.2 Support projects using public and private funding sources to conserve agricultural lands.	Ongoing	CAPS, OLC
	7.1.3 Revise subdivision regulations to address impacts to agriculture and to conserve important agricultural soils.	Immediate	CAPS

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Goal #7 (Continued)

Objectives	Actions	Timeframe	Lead Partners *
7.2 Support local agriculture and businesses involved with wood products and encourage value-added operations.	7.2.1 Create land use designation mapping and zoning that include opportunities for growing and processing of natural resource products in appropriate locations, as well as the flexibility for affiliated businesses.	Mid-term	CAPS
	7.2.2 Assist with efforts to create and expand markets for locally grown and made products.	Ongoing	BREDD, MEP
	7.2.3 Research and develop policies, legal tools and funding sources for new farm start-ups and farmland conservation.	Immediate	CAPS, FVLT, Extension Office, CFAC, MOR, PTOL, City of Missoula, and other partners
7.3 Support efforts of public and private sectors to restore and maintain healthy forests, including harvesting timber, while meeting other resource management goals.	7.3.1 Engage in the Southwest Crown of the Continent Collaborative and other initiatives as opportunities arise.	Ongoing	BCC, CAPS, USFS
	7.3.2 Encourage forest restoration projects that result in economic activity, fuels reduction and improvements to wildlife habitat.	Immediate	OEM, USFS, PTOL
	7.3.3 Support legislation that enables collaborative efforts to restore and maintain healthy forests and reduce wildfire risks.	Ongoing	BCC
7.4 Help to develop the recreation and tourist economies.	7.4.1 Complete recreation mapping efforts and support marketing and educational opportunities.	Mid-term	PTOL, other partners
	7.4.2 Work with partners to develop and market a regional parks and trail system.	Ongoing	PTOL, City Parks and Recreation, BREDD, MEP, CAPS, local communities

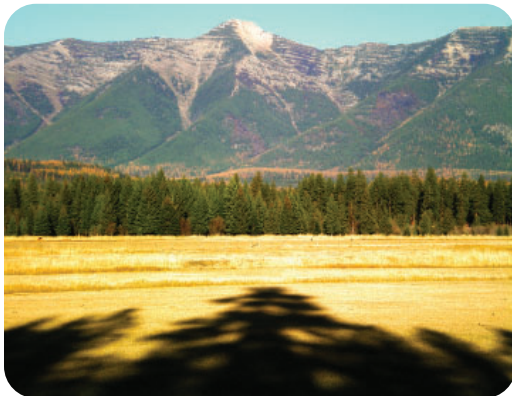
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Communities

Goal #8 - Proactively plan and provide for the logical growth of communities while protecting rural character and sustaining county resources by guiding development to areas most suited for it

Objectives	Actions	Timeframe	Lead Partners *
8.1 Protect and enhance the rural character that exists in much of the County, maintaining a clear distinction between urban and rural areas.	8.1.1 Review and update land use designation maps where there is community interest to accommodate growth, while protecting vital natural resources.	Immediate, Mid-term	CAPS
	8.1.2 Review and update or retire area and issue plans.	Immediate, Mid-term	CAPS
8.2 Provide opportunities for varied land uses in and around existing communities.	8.2.1 Update area plans and zoning regulations to accommodate modern development types for urban and rural areas.	Mid-term, Ongoing	CAPS
	8.2.2 Work with land owners and residents to develop area plans and apply zoning standards to guide community growth.	Mid-term	CAPS
8.3 Guide new subdivisions and development to areas that have the least impact on natural resources and are most suited for development.	8.3.1 As part of land use and other plans, identify and communicate where development is encouraged and discouraged.	Ongoing, mid-term	CAPS
	8.3.2 Explore opportunities for zoning with density standards.	Mid-term	CAPS

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Goal #9 - As part of planning, support the provision of infrastructure and services to and within rural communities

Objectives	Actions	Timeframe	Lead Partners *
9.1 Support increased infrastructure capacity, services and amenities in and around existing communities where appropriate.	9.1.1 Continue to identify and set priorities for community development projects, while minimizing impacts to service providers.	Ongoing	PW, MDT
	9.1.2 Provide grant writing, administration, and technical support for projects.	Ongoing	PW, GCP
	9.1.3 Support legislative efforts to provide infrastructure funding for community development.	Ongoing	BCC
	9.1.4 Create and support policies that require developers and new users to pay their proportional share of the costs necessary to serve new development.	Mid-term	CAPS, PW

Goal #10 - Provide opportunities for a wide range of housing choices, especially for those who are homeless or experiencing high costs for housing relative to income

Objectives	Actions	Timeframe	Lead Partners *
10.1 Facilitate the development of a variety of housing types including housing that is affordable to all segments of the population.	10.1.1 Project the amount of housing that will be needed of all types and price levels to accommodate the projected population growth.	Mid-term	GCP, CAPS, PW Building Division, MOR, other partners
	10.1.2 Identify areas for housing development through land use designation mapping and area planning to accommodate the projected housing needs.	Mid-term	GCP, CAPS, PW Building Division, MOR
	10.1.3 Work with local communities to revise or initiate new zoning to accommodate the projected housing needs.	Mid-term	MHA, GCP, CAPS
	10.1.4 Research and create an incentive program for private development of housing for underserved groups.	Mid-term	MHA, GCP, CAPS, BCC, private developers
	10.1.5 Seek and utilize creative financing tools and public funding to provide housing for underserved groups.	Ongoing	MHA, GCP, CAPS, other housing developers

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Goal #11 - Reduce the safety risks and costs associated with wildland fire, flooding, and other hazards

Objectives	Actions	Timeframe	Lead Partners *
11.1 Discourage development in hazardous areas and areas where public and emergency responder safety is compromised.	11.1.1 Identify hazardous areas, including mapping of wildfire and floodplain risks.	Immediate, Ongoing	OEM, CAPS, DNRC, USFS, fire districts, fire service fee areas
	11.1.2 Provide mapping and other information to the public about local hazards in an easily accessible format.	Immediate	CAPS, OEM, other partners
	11.1.3 Explore zoning regulations to guide growth to appropriate locations (outside of hazard areas).	Mid-term	CAPS, OEM
	11.1.4 Complete channel migration zone mapping to identify historical river and stream movement and model future movement.	Mid-term	OEM, Health dept, CAPS
11.2 When development in hazardous areas does occur, take appropriate measures to limit safety risks and ensure emergency personnel have sufficient resources to respond safely and effectively.	11.2.1 Work with public safety and resource agencies to identify and mitigate risks and provide appropriate resources for public and responder safety.	Ongoing	OEM, CAPS, GCP, fire districts, fire service areas
	11.2.2 Adopt development regulations that require the best possible hazardous mitigation techniques, including Firewise construction, multiple accesses, etc.	Ongoing	OEM, CAPS, PW, DNRC, fire districts, fire service areas
	11.2.3 Provide information to landowners regarding development in hazardous areas (evacuation plans, Firewise development practices, etc.). Explore the possibility of providing risk disclosure statements.	Ongoing	OEM, CAPS, fire districts
	11.2.4 Support efforts such as cost sharing to help landowners reduce fuels and take measures to make their properties more resilient to hazards.	Ongoing	OEM, GCP

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Goal #12 - Promote healthy active communities

Objectives	Actions	Timeframe	Lead Partners *
12.1 Expand and maintain the network of trails, pathways and sidewalks.	12.1.1 Support development, maintenance, and expansion of trails, including those in the County Parks and Trails Master Plan and the Active Transportation Plan.	Ongoing	PTOL, City, MPO
	12.1.2 Pursue funding for trail development and maintenance, including legislation.	Ongoing	PTOL, City, MPO, MDT, private organizations
12.2 Enhance parks and recreational opportunities throughout Missoula County.	12.2.1 Implement the Parks and Trails Master Plan	Ongoing	PTOL, City Parks and Recreation
12.3 Encourage development of community facilities that promote health and wellness for all age groups.	12.3.1 Coordinate with the health community to provide and enhance community facilities for health and wellness.	Ongoing	Health dept, PTOL

Goal #13 - Promote equal access to employment, safe housing, transportation, community services and amenities for all segments of the population

Objectives	Actions	Timeframe	Lead Partners *
13.1 Maximize access for all segments of the population to economic opportunities, social services, health care and other services.	13.1.1 Assess where services are not reaching those in need or are not effective and identify needed actions to ensure access.	Ongoing	GCP, PHC, federal, state and tribal agencies, non-profit organizations

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Goal #14 - Improve communication between Missoula County officials and residents and enhance opportunities for public engagement in local government

Objectives	Actions	Timeframe	Lead Partners *
14.1 Increase contact and communication between Missoula County government and residents.	14.1.1 Ensure staff or county officials attend community meetings when appropriate.	Ongoing	BCC, Communications dept, county depts
	14.1.2 Implement other communication mechanisms to maximize public outreach and transparency.	Ongoing	BCC, Communications dept, county depts
	14.1.3 Use community councils and other advisory boards to help improve communication in both directions and provide opportunities for public engagement.	Ongoing	BCC, county depts
	14.1.4 Provide staff support to community efforts when fiscally possible.	Ongoing	BCC, CAPS, PW, Health dept, Weed District
	14.1.5 Implement policies regarding public meeting notice and update as needed.	Ongoing	BCC, Communications dept
	14.1.6 Prepare and disseminate information on the relationship between taxes paid and cost of providing services.	Ongoing	Finance and Communications depts
14.2 Enhance opportunities for public engagement.	14.2.1 Support and encourage opportunities for rural representation on County boards.	Ongoing	BCC
	14.2.2 Evaluate whether the joint City-County Planning Board provides sufficient representation to rural areas.	Immediate	BCC, CAPS
	14.2.3 Structure community development projects to incorporate a variety of opportunities for public involvement.	Ongoing	CAPS, Communications dept, county depts, BCC
	14.2.4 Increase Planning Board members involvement in rural projects and provide opportunities for Planning Board to learn about rural planning and community issues.	Immediate	BCC, CAPS, county depts., PB

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Goal #15 - Provide effective customer service and flexible, predictable and timely development review processes

Objectives	Actions	Timeframe	Lead Partners *
15.1 Provide simple, clear and flexible land use and development regulations, procedures and forms.	15.1.1 Use plain language, graphics and build in flexibility as regulations are revised.	Ongoing	CAPS, PW, Health dept., county depts
	15.1.2 Provide resourceful and responsive assistance in a fair and objective manner to Missoula County residents, businesses, property owners, and visitors.	Ongoing	CAPS, PW, Health dept., county depts
	15.1.3 Set up a regular meeting of agency personnel to review development applications. Explore options to incentivize early comment from agencies and resolution of conflicting comments.	Immediate	CAPS, PW, EHD, other development review agencies
	15.1.4 Establish targets to process development applications more quickly than required under state law.	Immediate	CAPS, PW, EHD, other development review agencies
15.2 Provide enforcement of development regulations that is reasonable and adequate.	15.2.1 Enforce development rules using common sense.	Ongoing	CAPS, Health dept, PW, County Attorney

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Goal #16 - Promote cooperation between Missoula County and the city, state, federal and tribal governments

Objectives	Actions	Timeframe	Lead Partners*
16.1 Maintain compatible policies, coordinated services and regular communication with the City of Missoula.	16.1.1 Maintain and update as needed the city-county inter-local agreement that guides coordinated planning efforts.	Ongoing	BCC, CAPS, Development Services, Mayor
	16.1.2 Maintain an agreement for review of plans and projects in the Missoula urban fringe.	Ongoing	CAPS, Development Services, Mayor
16.2 Maintain open, regular communication and coordinated efforts for better service delivery to the public.	16.2.1 Continue to conduct regular meetings with agencies and organizations to exchange information and address common issues.	Ongoing	BCC, CAPS, other governments, private sector organizations
16.3 Maintain the Memorandum of Understanding with land management agencies in Missoula County.	16.3.1 Continue biannual meetings with land management agencies, and interagency review of development projects.	Ongoing	BCC, CAPS, DNRC, USFS, BLM, MDT, FWP
16.4 Maintain the land use Memorandum of Agreement with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes.	16.4.1 Follow the provisions of the Memorandum of Agreement with Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes regarding review of development projects.	Ongoing	BCC, CAPS, CSKT
	16.4.2 Continue annual or as needed meetings between the Board of County Commissioners and the Tribal Council of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes.	Ongoing	BCC, CAPS, CSKT

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Land Use Strategy

A land use designation map is used to help achieve Goals 1, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11, as described herein. This growth policy includes the existing Missoula County Land Use Designation Map (Map #18 is located in the back cover of printed copies of the plan), which notes land use designations from comprehensive planning and local area plans adopted by the county. Map #6 in Chapter 4 shows the boundaries of the plans that serve as the source of the land use designations.

Missoula County has used land use designation mapping since 1975. Land use designations and mapping are intended to reflect the desired future land use and development pattern for local communities and the county as a whole. This information can be used to help guide development of public infrastructure, plan for delivery of local services, and signal to the private sector where certain kinds of development are preferred. The Land

Use Designation Map provides an overarching guide for any regulations that address land use and/or development patterns such as zoning and subdivision regulations.

Zoning is highlighted in the implementation plan as a possible tool to direct growth, protect key resources, and address other community design issues. Zoning must be adopted in accordance with the growth policy. When zoning is proposed to address density and land use in particular, the Land Use Designation Map is the primary, though not the only, guide from the growth policy.

Land use designations on the current map date from 1975 through the most recently adopted changes in 2011. Due to the number of goals that can be addressed through land use designation mapping, the county has identified mapping updates as a high priority for growth policy implementation. It is considered an especially high priority for those areas

experiencing growth and development pressures, where the existing designations are outdated, and/or where there is significant community interest.

Comments received throughout the growth policy update process indicate there is interest in some areas in reviewing and updating existing land use designation maps. In addition, the stated preference is for considerable public involvement at the local level in updates to the Land Use Designation Map. Consequently, the county has focused long range planning resources on local community-based efforts.

The steps outlined below are planned for updating the map as part of the growth policy implementation process. They include the time frame indicators of immediate (1 to 2 years), mid-term (2 to 5 years), and long-term (5 to 10 years) that are used in the Action Plan.

1. Establish a land use designation framework for the county that reduces the overall number of land use designations.
(Immediate)
2. Establish guidelines for community-based land use mapping, such as data sets to be used, community involvement expectations, time line, roles/responsibilities





for participating communities and Community and Planning Services, etc. **(Immediate)**

3. Establish criteria to evaluate the priority of areas to be updated. Criteria should address, at a minimum: time since the last update of land use designations in the area; type and urgency of growth pressures; and community interest and readiness. **(Immediate)**
4. Identify order of priority for updating land use designations in specific communities and areas of Missoula County. **(immediate, to be revisited as needed)**
5. Update land use designations at the community level, using community involvement, based on order of priority, and report progress annually to the Board of County Commissioners and Planning Board. **(immediate for first community or area, mid-term and long-term for future areas or communities)**

