

Prepared for



COMPREHENSIVE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN

2025-2030

Prepared By:



An Employee-Owned Company

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Appendix A: Needs Assessment Surveys and Public Outreach Information

Appendix B: Stillwater County FY 2024 Budget

Stillwater County previously completed a CCIP in May 2021 for the time period of 2021-2026. Other previous planning efforts include a Growth Policy for the City of Columbus (2024); a Growth Policy for Stillwater County (2018); an Overall Economic Development Plan (2015); County Bridge Evaluation and CCIP (2016); County Facilities CCIP (2019); County Road Repairs PER (2020); Beartooth Resource, Conservation, and Development (RC&D) Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) (2019); Stillwater County Development and Zoning Regulations (2024); and several Preliminary Engineering Reports (PERs) related to water/wastewater/stormwater for Absarokee in 2016 and 2017, and Park City in 2023. Because this CCIP will be comprehensive and will address all County infrastructure, facilities, services, and economic development planning, it will serve as the primary planning document for capital infrastructure projects.



The CCIP for Stillwater County covers a 5-year planning period from 2025 to 2030 and is a living document that can be updated yearly during the County's annual budgeting process. Not only is it a budgeting and financial tool, but it also serves as a strategic planning document aimed at economic development opportunities. This will help the County establish long-term goals for maintaining, improving, or funding new capital improvement projects and/or capital equipment over the course of the next five years. As County needs change to reflect community necessities and service requirements, environmental factors, and County priorities, the CCIP will be updated to add new projects, prioritize existing needs, and/or focus on new economic opportunities. The document is intended to provide tangible goals and objectives for the County to improve and replace public facilities and infrastructure before they are faced with severe degradation or catastrophic failure. Having an infrastructure system that includes

updated and effective services, such as water, sewer, transportation, and fiber optics, will allow the County to respond to economic prospects as they are presented.

Throughout the CCIP development process, capital projects of the highest importance were identified through strategic ranking by county leaders. While all projects submitted for inclusion in the CCIP are critical to the stewardship of the County's infrastructure, the top five projects are summarized in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: Top Five Ranked Stillwater County Projects

Project	Project Description
Absarokee Sewer Facility	New Headworks Building
Absarokee Sewer Facility	Johnson Controls Building Automation System (BAS) connection to Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system to connect to plant status, alarms and issues.
Absarokee Sewer Facility	I&I Project Phase A: Church Street Alley and Montana Avenue sewer line rehabilitation
Absarokee Sewer Facility	I&I Project Phase B: Brook Avenue and Willow Street sewer line rehabilitation
Absarokee Sewer Facility	I&I Project Phase C: Garden Lane and North Davidson Avenue sewer line rehabilitation

This Comprehensive Capital Improvements Plan (CCIP) will help Stillwater County identify public facility needs, assess the requirements for existing and future facilities, plan for infrastructure management, establish project priorities, create a long-range program for scheduling and funding projects, and foster economic growth and improvement within the County. The CCIP is designed to prioritize budgetary needs and verify that the County will have the funds available to pay for improvements as planned. It is critical to review and update the CCIP regularly to keep the Plan current and practical while maintaining the proper focus on local government needs.

In 2015, Stillwater County published its Overall Economic Development Plan (EDP) Update as a standalone document; however, as both the CCIP and EDP focus on improving the quality of life and supporting the well-being of the county residents through capital infrastructure investment, it was decided to combine the plans into a single document.

Purpose of a Comprehensive Capital Improvements Plan

The overall purpose of a CCIP is to identify the capital needs and priorities of a community, to provide estimated project costs in order to assist with budgeting for the identified needs, and to outline available funding options that may help defray the costs of capital projects. The document development process allows for the identification, review, planning, and budgeting of capital expenditures. In addition, the planning process allows time to study identified projects, encourages public discussion of these projects, and seeks citizen input concerning potential projects, community impacts, and expenditures.

The public engagement process of a CCIP encourages citizen participation to capture a better understanding of the community's needs through the lens of the local citizens. Public engagement also demonstrates that the County is fulfilling its obligation to the taxpayers in a transparent and financially efficient manner. In addition, the implementation of a CCIP allows the County to maintain the safety and efficiency of existing capital facilities and infrastructure and encourages unity among County officials through a clearly defined scope of work, budget, and time frame. With project needs identified in a planning document, it is easier to anticipate financial needs to maximize available federal, state, and private funding opportunities. Evidence of planning and managing debt for capital improvements illustrates the need for grant and loan funding and has the potential for minimizing interest rates and the cost of borrowing money. The document aims to promote constructive economic improvement for the County, focusing on the needs surrounding infrastructure, education and workforce development, business and industrial support, regional planning, and social equity.

Essential Components

The development of this CCIP involved several essential elements, as outlined below.

1. Needs Assessment

The needs assessment associated with the CCIP includes outreach to County Commissioners, County department heads, and the general public. Public participation is essential for the completion of a successful CCIP and active participation from the community was encouraged throughout the process.

An online survey was available and advertised in the Stillwater County News as well as on the County website to gather information from residents and County staff concerning community priorities, needs, and projects. A press release was submitted to the Stillwater County News describing the CCIP process and encouraging input from county residents, and the CCIP was discussed at several County meetings throughout the planning process. Appendix A includes a copy of the press release and a summary of the surveys that were submitted.

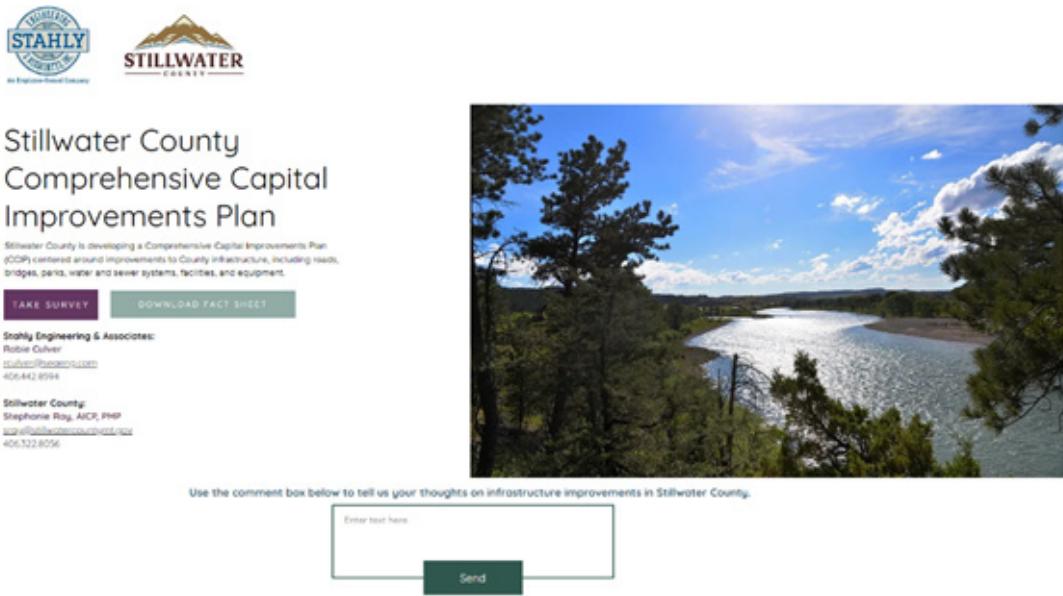
Figure 2.1: Stillwater County CCIP Website

Upon completion of the needs assessment process, the Stillwater County CCIP team was able to prepare a list of possible capital improvement projects compiled from existing plans, County officials, and public input.

2. Project Identification and Prioritization

As the comprehensive list of needs is often greater than the financial availability of the County, potential projects are evaluated and prioritized to address the most critical public health and safety needs to avoid the potential for increased deferred maintenance costs. The CCIP team developed ranking criteria to prioritize potential projects, which provided the County with an objective means of establishing project priorities and determining which projects to evaluate further.

The following ranking criteria were used to evaluate the list of potential projects. Each element was given a Priority Factor of 0-5, with 0 being a low priority and 5 being a preferred priority:



Stillwater County Comprehensive Capital Improvements Plan

Stillwater County is developing a Comprehensive Capital Improvements Plan (CCIP) centered around improvements to County infrastructure, including roads, bridges, parks, water and sewer systems, facilities, and equipment.

TAKE SURVEY **DOWNLOAD FACT SHEET**

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Use the comment box below to tell us your thoughts on infrastructure improvements in Stillwater County.

Enter text here

Send

- Public Health and Safety: Does the project address an urgent health or safety concern, legal mandate, or code compliance?
- Address Condition of Existing Facilities: Does the project correct deficiencies or deterioration of existing facilities? Does it provide necessary upgrades?
- Supports Economic Development: Does the project improve or enhance the lives of individuals residing in the County? Does the project contribute to additional/expanded business within the County?
- Long-Term Cost Savings: Does the project provide long-term cost savings for the County? Does it reduce energy costs or maintenance costs?
- Ongoing/Previously Planned: Is the project currently ongoing? Has the project been previously planned and/or budgeted?

The County was able to score any of the criteria at zero (0) if they did not feel it warranted a score.

The initial list of projects was reduced by eliminating projects with a cost less than \$5,000.00 and projects that would not be completed within the next five years. Projects that were determined to be outside of the County's direct financial responsibility or did not have a reasonable chance of being funded were also eliminated. All recommended projects were given a score based on the above criteria, enabling the CCIP team to define a prioritized list of projects. Final ranking of the projects was completed after the CCIP team considered cost estimates, project schedules, funding availability, and public input. The final project list has been adopted as the Stillwater County 2025-2030 Comprehensive Capital Improvements Plan.

3. Evaluation of Funding Options

While the proposed project list was being generated, potential funding sources for implementing projects were identified. Available funding sources were evaluated to identify possible options for financing the final project list.

During this process, a financial analysis was prepared, examining existing budget requirements and revenue commitments to provide a clear picture of the County's current and future finances and funding capabilities. Researching this financial outlook makes it possible to estimate the funding available for projects in each budget year of the plan. The funding analysis should also include options available to the County for the purpose of funding capital projects, such as general funds, grant funding, loans, bonds, and government agencies. These options are evaluated in further detail in Chapter V of the CCIP.

Due to the scope and size of some projects, more than one funding source may be identified for a single project. This can be advantageous, as funding strategies that are not dependent on one source are less vulnerable to changes in funding availability and are more likely to be successful.

4. Adoption and Implementation of the CCIP

The final step in completing the Stillwater County CCIP was the adoption of the plan. Prior to formal adoption, a draft CCIP was provided to the Stillwater County Commissioners for final review and comment. The availability of the draft CCIP for review by the public was published in the Stillwater County News as well as available via the County's project website. Appendix A contains copies of the published notice.

The CCIP was adopted by resolution at a public meeting held at the Stillwater County Courthouse on _____. The formal adoption of the CCIP enables Stillwater County to begin implementation of the projects identified.

County Commission Adoption

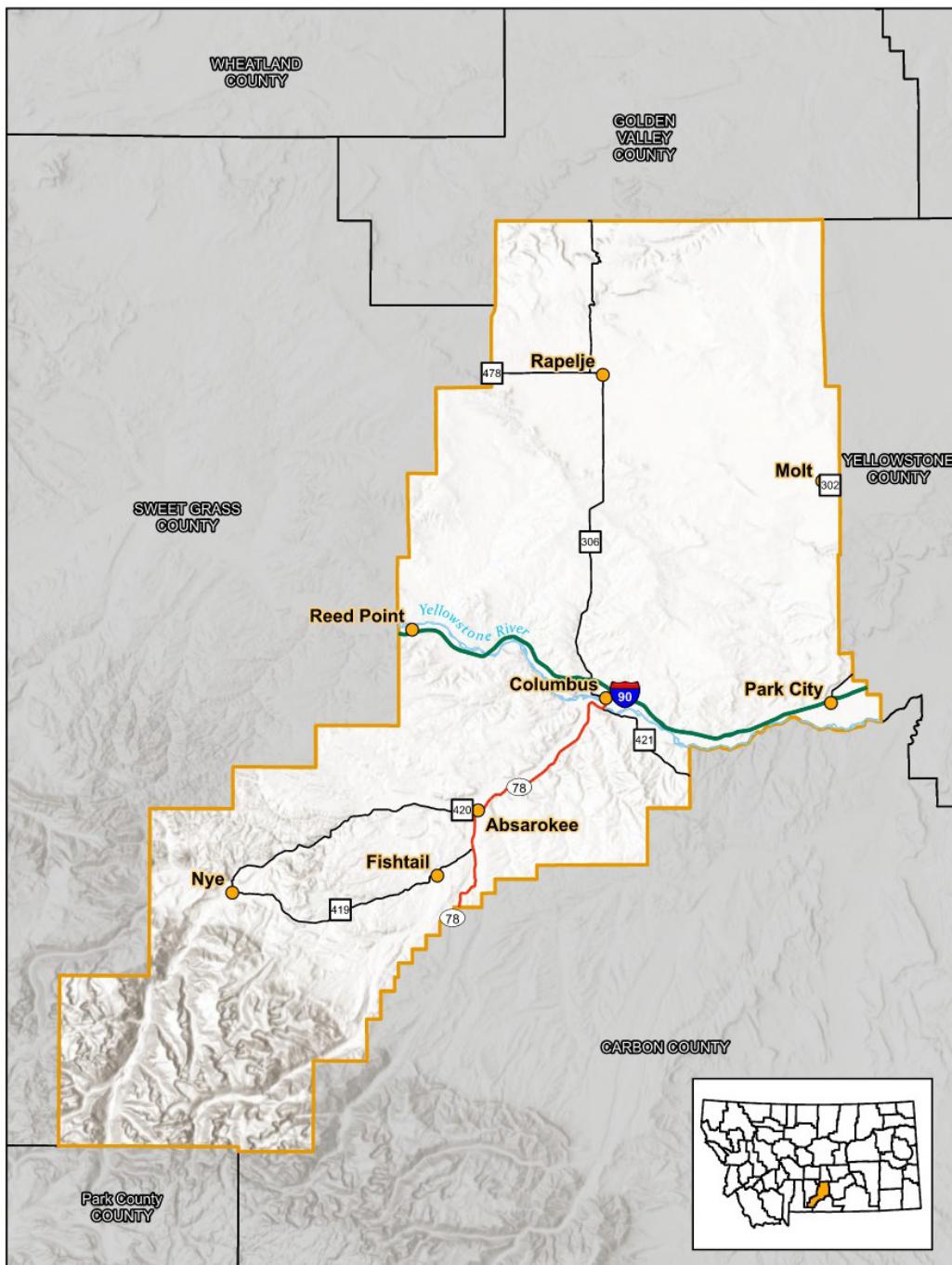
It is Stillwater County's intent that the adopted CCIP help identify future public facility needs, assess the requirements for existing and future facilities, plan for infrastructure management, establish project priorities, and create a long-term program for scheduling and funding construction or repair projects.

It is now key that the Stillwater County Commission utilize information contained within this Plan in annual and long-range planning and budgeting efforts so that the identified capital improvements can be achieved. It is also important to review and update the CCIP regularly to keep the Plan current as well as be responsive to the needs of the County.

Stillwater County was established in March 1913 and was created from portions of land previously located in Yellowstone, Sweet Grass, and Carbon Counties. The intent of the County's founders was to implement a smaller tax levy on its residents. It was also anticipated that a smaller county would run more efficiently with less waste and better representation than the existing large counties (Museum of the Beartooths, 2024).

Located in south central Montana, the county encompasses approximately 1,797 square miles. Currently, the County ranks 25 of 56 counties in population, 38 of 56 counties in total land area, and 26 of 56 counties in water area (Montana State Library, 2024). The only incorporated community in the County is the City of Columbus, which is also the county seat. The census-designated communities located within Stillwater County include Absarokee, Fishtail, Nye, Park City, Rapelje, and Reed Point. Additional smaller communities include Beehive, Dean, and Molt.

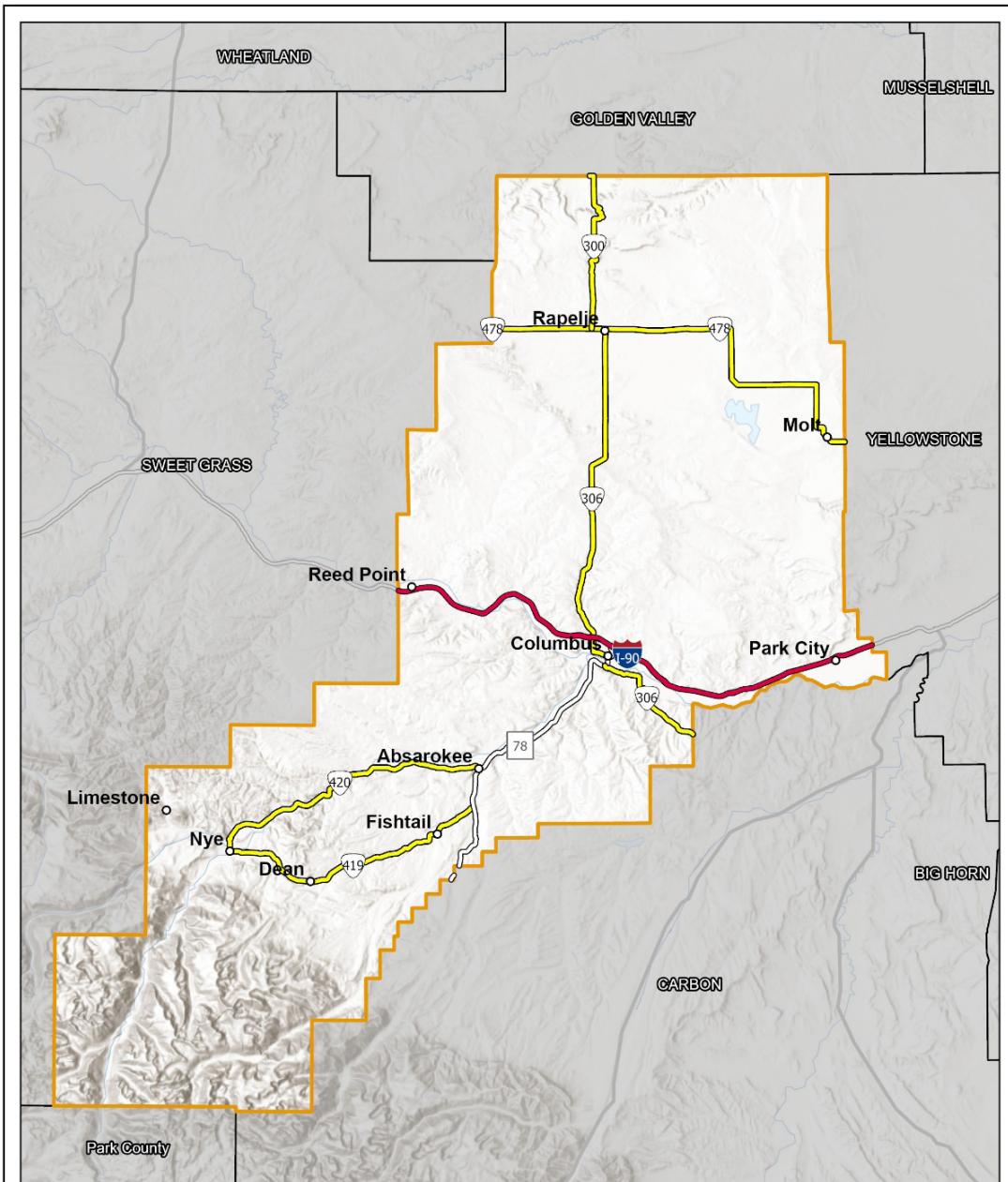
Figure 3.1: Stillwater County Location Map



In general, an awareness of planning area characteristics and population trends provides a valuable guide for planning, budgeting, and financing decisions. Population, along with the socioeconomic characteristics of a community, is a basic indicator of the services and infrastructure necessary to adequately serve the residents of the community. Likewise, population projections can assist county leaders in planning for future infrastructure and service needs, ensuring the region is prepared for either population growth or decline.

Information published by the Montana Department of Commerce reports the 2023 population of Stillwater County was 9,173, while the population of Columbus, the county seat, was 1,906 (Montana Department of Commerce, 2023).

Figure 3.2: Communities in Stillwater County



Stillwater County, MT

Data Source: Montana State Library



Figures 3.3 and 3.4 present the historical populations of Stillwater County and the City of Columbus for the years 2013 through 2023. Between 2019 and 2020, both entities experienced a significant decline in population.

Figure 3.3: Historical Population of Stillwater County (Montana Department of Commerce, 2023)

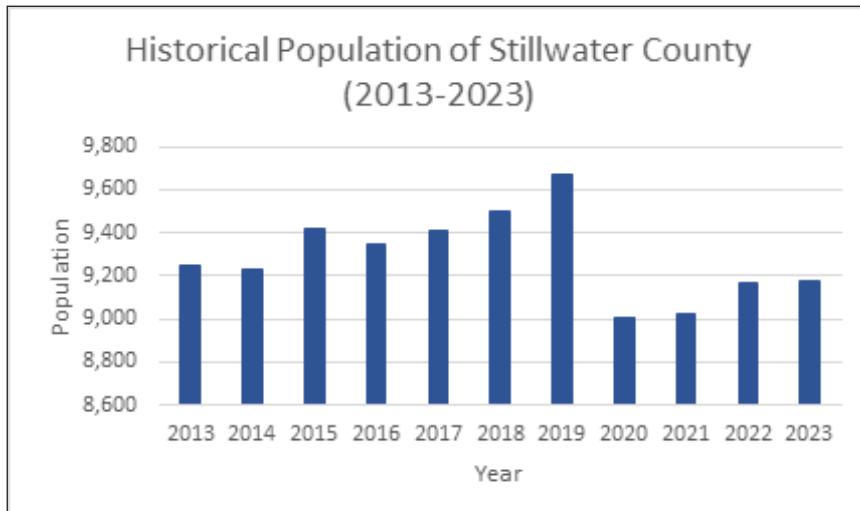
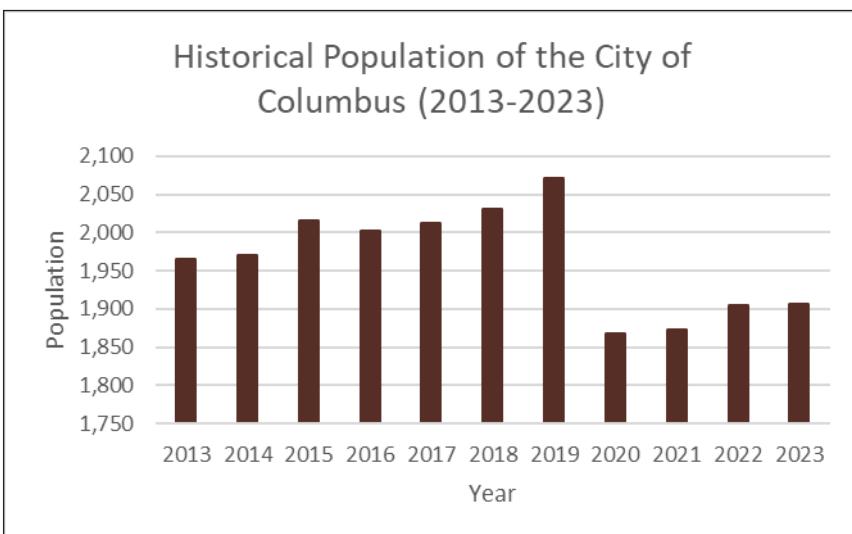


Figure 3.4: Historical Population of the City of Columbus (Montana Department of Commerce, 2023)



Future growth projections for Stillwater County have been provided by the Montana Department of Commerce and are a product of Regional Economic Models, Inc. (REMI). REMI provides a complete demographic forecast through the year 2060 for Montana and each individual county within the state. Population projections are difficult in small rural communities; therefore, this should be considered when using the projections to evaluate needs. Stillwater County's population is projected to steadily decrease through 2045, while Montana's population is projected to continually increase.

Table 3.1: Stillwater County Population Projections (Montana Census and Economic Information Center, 2024)

Stillwater County Population Projections Summary				
Year	2030	2035	2040	2045
Population	9,149	9,055	9,089	9,053

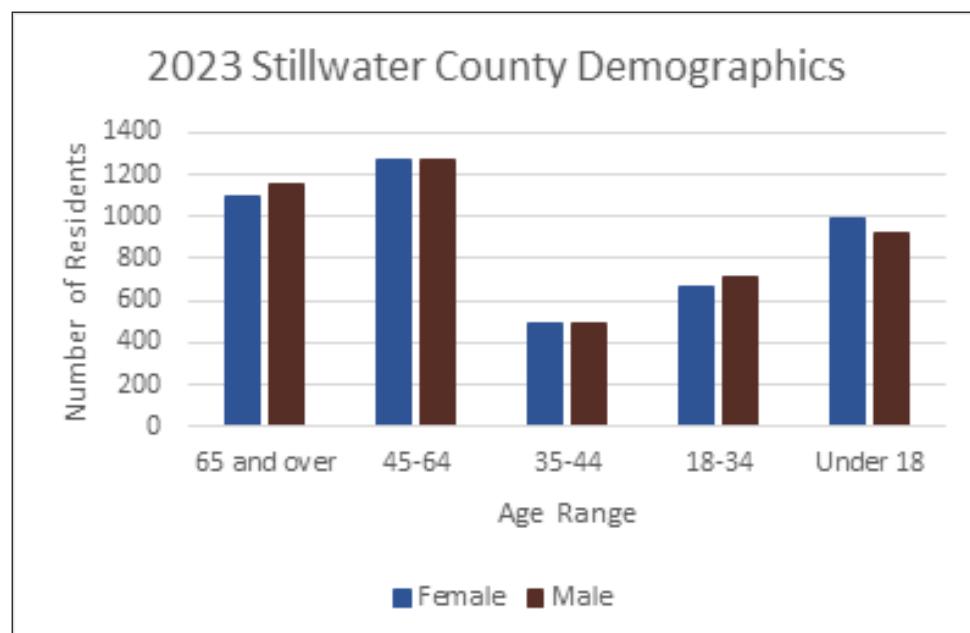
Table 3.2: Montana Population Projections (Montana Census and Economic Information Center, 2024)

Montana Population Projections Summary				
Year	2030	2035	2040	2045
Population	1,199,203	1,217,232	1,226,445	1,232,925

A lack of growth in the population is typical of rural Montana communities where agriculture is the primary source of economic activity, as young people tend to seek employment and economic opportunities in other areas of the state or country. In Stillwater County specifically, the population projection decrease is likely to be intensified by the 2024 employment reduction at the Sibanye-Stillwater Mine near Nye, Montana. In September 2024, due to a significant decrease in the price of palladium, the mine announced it would be laying off approximately 700 employees, or nearly 40% of the workforce, as operations were being cut in response to the decreasing metal prices (Dietrich, 2024). Significant layoffs in a community can have monumental impacts on the economy as consumer spending and economic activity decrease, resulting in a broad impact to the unemployment rate and financial stability of the community. Because the population trend in the State of Montana has shown steady growth since 1990, the projected population decline in Stillwater County reflects the need for continued planning at the County level. Setting tangible goals for the County to improve and replace public facilities will encourage population growth, which leads to a more vibrant economy.

The median age of Stillwater County residents increased 5.3% between 2010 and 2023, from 45 years of age to 47.4 years of age. When looking at the demographic statistics, those 45 years of age and older comprise the majority of the population, while the population of 18–44-year-olds is much less (see Figure 3.5). This trend may have a significant impact on the local workforce as there is a reduced population from which to hire employees as residents near or reach retirement age and leave the workforce. In addition, the aging population in Stillwater County has vastly increased, while the population of residents under the age of 18 has significantly declined, which will impact the type of services that may be in demand by residents (see Figure 3.6).

Figure 3.5: Stillwater County Age/Gender Distribution in 2023 (Headwaters Economics, 2025)



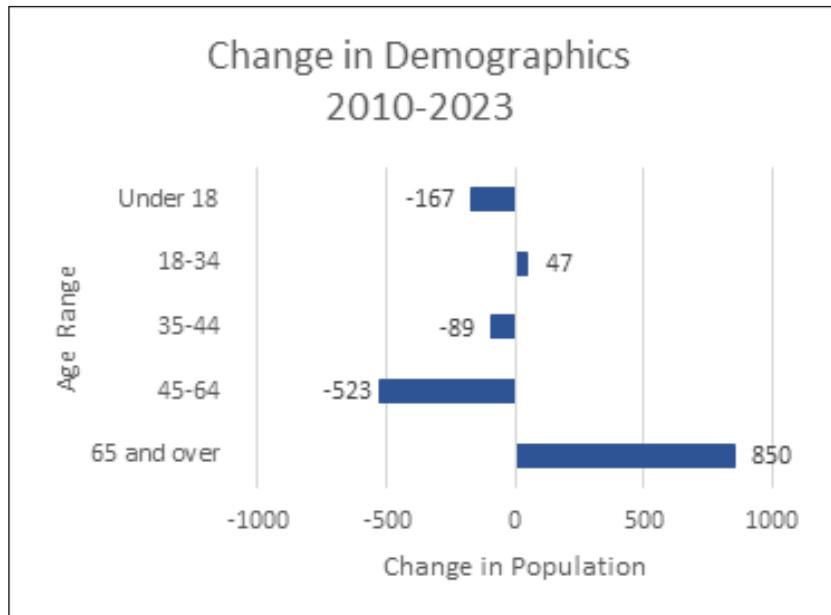
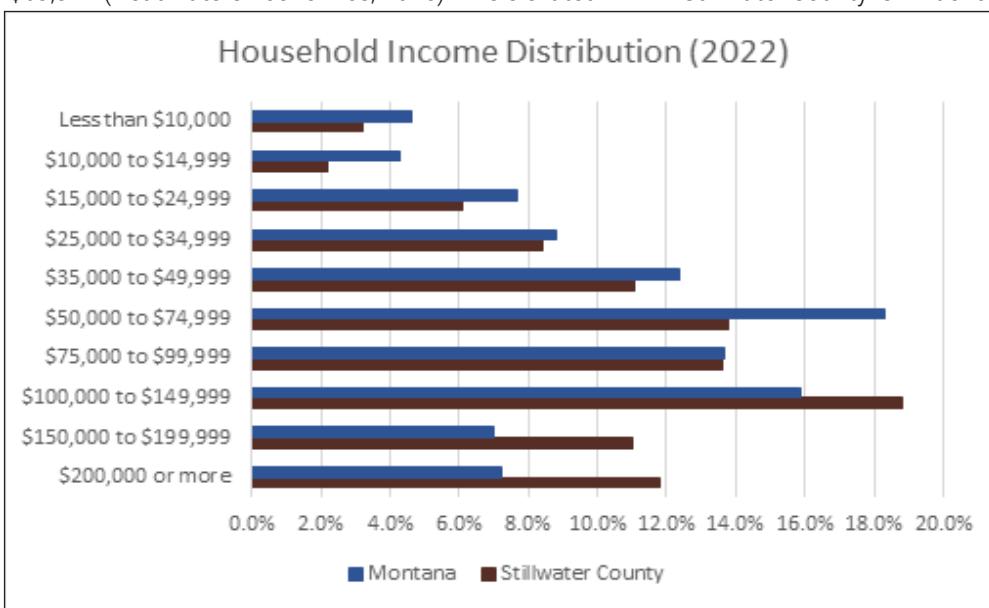


Figure 3.6: Stillwater County Demographic Change 2010-2023 (Headwaters Economics, 2025)

The Median Household Income (MHI) in Stillwater County was estimated at \$81,503 in 2023, as compared to Montana's MHI of \$69,922 (Headwaters Economics, 2025). The elevated MHI in Stillwater County is influenced by the higher-paying mining jobs asso-



ciated with Sibanye Stillwater Mine. The income distribution in Stillwater County compared to Montana is shown in Figure 3.7.

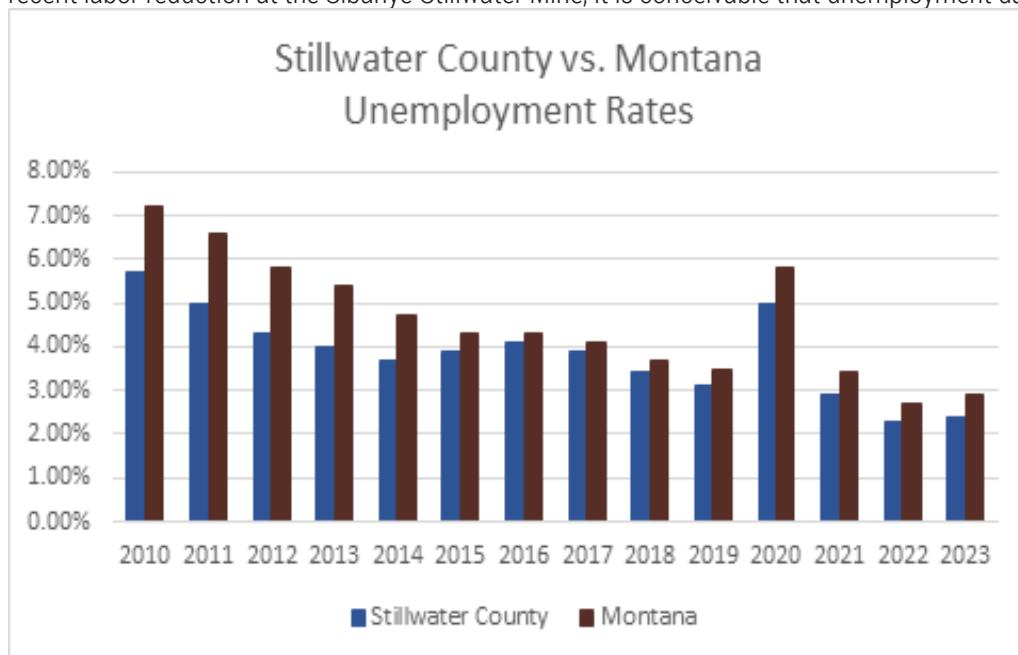
Figure 3.7: Stillwater County Income Distribution (Headwaters Economics, 2025)

In 2022, poverty levels in Stillwater County were lower than the average for the state, although 42.3% of residents in Stillwater County were living on Social Security income as compared to 34.9% of Montana residents.

Table 3.3: Poverty Prevalence (Headwaters Economics, 2025)

Percent of Total	Stillwater County	Montana
People Below Poverty	8.0%	12.4%
Families Below Poverty	5.7%	7.3%

Unemployment in Stillwater County has consistently been lower than that of the State of Montana as a whole; however, with the recent labor reduction at the Sibanye-Stillwater Mine, it is conceivable that unemployment data for 2024 could show the unemploy-



ment rate in the County higher than previous years.

Figure 3.8: Stillwater County Unemployment History (Montana DLI, 2025)

Unlike most rural Montana counties, most of the housing stock in Stillwater County tends to be newer. Nearly half of the housing stock in Stillwater County was built after 1990, with the median year being 1985. The late 1990s and early 2000s were a period of rapid home development throughout the country (Headwaters Economics, 2025). The majority of residents in Stillwater County are age 45 years and older (see Figure 3.6), which means the need for affordable and senior housing will continue to grow.

Only 18.4% of housing units in Stillwater County are vacant. About 12% of vacancies are deemed seasonal, recreational, or occasional. Vacancy status is an indicator of the housing market and provides information on the stability and quality of housing for certain areas, whereas seasonal, recreational, or occasional homes can be an indicator of recreational and scenic amenities and a possible source of economic growth (Headwaters Economics, 2025).

Table 3.4: Housing Affordability (Headwaters Economics, 2025)

Percent of Total	Stillwater County	Montana
Mortgage costs >30% of household income	27.5%	28.9%

Rental costs >30% of household income	29.4%	40.4%
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Housing affordability is measured in terms of the share of household income that is devoted to mortgage or rental costs. Mortgage costs include mortgages, real estate taxes, various insurances, utilities, and fuels. Rental costs include utilities and fuels. Paying more than 30% of household income for mortgage or rental costs generally indicates unaffordable housing and economic hardship (Headwaters Economics, 2025).

Stillwater County contains approximately 1,155,050 acres, or approximately 1,805 square miles, with 74% being privately owned and 26% being owned by a Federal, State, County, or Local Government agency, as seen in Table 3.5.

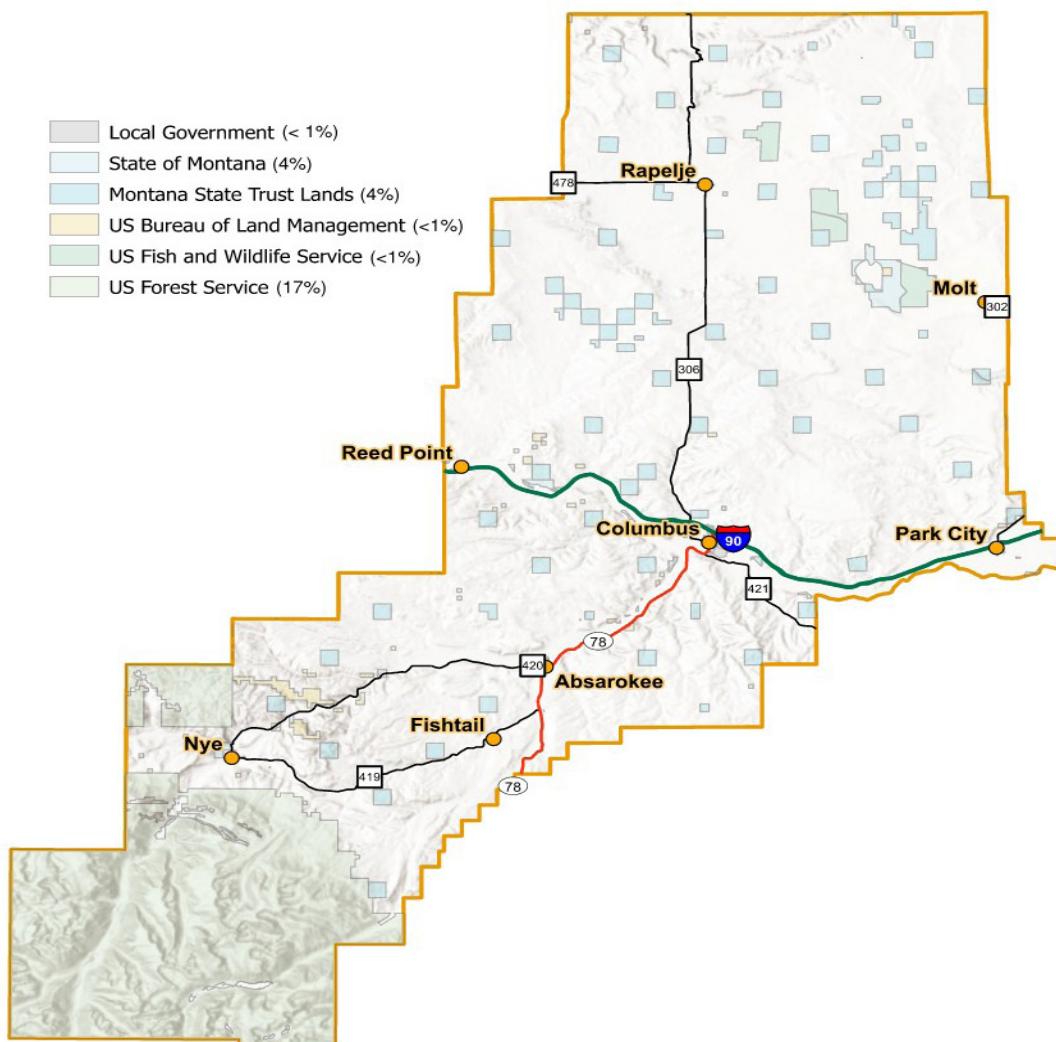
Table 3.5: Stillwater County Land Ownership (Montana Natural Heritage Program, 2025)

Location	Acres	Percentage of Total
Stillwater County	1,155,050	
Private Lands	859,503	74%
Federal Lands	203,976	18%
U.S. Forest Service	193,133	17%
U.S. Bureau of Land Management	5,514	<1%
U.S. Fish and Wildlife	5,329	<1%
State Lands	49,499	4%
State Trust Lands	45,581	4%
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks	3,762	<1%
MT Department of Transportation	118	<1%
State of Montana	38	<1%

Local Government

506

<1%



Conservation Easements

41,566

4%

Figure 3.9: Stillwater County Land Ownership Map by Agency (Montana State Library, 2024)



Figure 3.10: Stillwater County Land Ownership Map: Public vs. Private (Montana State Library, 2024)

Conservation easements make up approximately 4% of the land within Stillwater County. Conservation easements can be held by private or public entities, such as those listed in Table 3.6. Lands placed into conservation easements allow the current landowner to maintain ownership while the land is managed with an importance on conservation of agricultural and wildlife habitat. Conser-

vation easements are a way to protect land from certain types of development and are perpetual with the land.

Table 3.6: Stillwater County Conservation Easements (Montana Natural Heritage Program, 2025)

Easement Holder	2024
	Acres
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	1,080
Montana Land Reliance	40,486

As of 2022, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Census of Agriculture, a total of 568,671 acres, or 49.2% of land in Stillwater County is used for agricultural purposes. This does not include Federal or State lands. Approximately 25% of agricultural land is used for cropland, such as wheat, barley, and hay, and the remaining 75% of agricultural land is pastureland for livestock. Mining has played a large role in the economic history of Stillwater County dating back to the 1860's when the first prospectors arrived and founded the mining camp of Nye City. However, it was later discovered that Nye City was located within the boundary of the Crow Reservation and evacuation of the town was ordered (Chamber of Commerce, 2025).

The mining industry continues to be a primary employer in Stillwater County. Based on data supplied by the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2022 there were four primary industries that employed the majority of residents in Stillwater County: healthcare and social assistance, retail trade, manufacturing, and mining, quarrying, oil and gas extraction. Compared with data supplied for 2015, most industries were relatively steady in terms of the percentage of workforce employed within the industry, with the exception of mining, which increased approximately 13% during that time frame. However, as previously discussed, in 2024 the Sibanye-Stillwater Mine reduced its workforce by approximately 700 employees, placing the total workforce in the mining, quarrying, oil and gas extraction industries nearly equal to that of the manufacturing industry.

An evaluation of the Stillwater County labor force characteristics provides insight into how local leaders approach planning and budgeting activities, financial decisions, and economic opportunities. Data for Stillwater County, provided by the U.S. Census Bureau for 2023 by industry is located in Table 3.7.

Table 3.7: Labor Force Characteristics (U.S. Census Bureau, 2025)

Industry	% of Workforce	Median Earnings
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	7.39%	\$24,659
Mining, quarrying, oil and gas extraction	13.11%*	\$109,653
Construction	8.75%	\$46,563
Manufacturing	6.78%	\$52,105
Wholesale trade	1.45%	\$91,667
Retail trade	8.68%	\$23,571
Transportation and warehousing	5.11%	\$60,962
Utilities	0.29%	\$21,563
Information	0.63%	\$74,375
Finance and insurance	4.34%	\$53,750
Real estate, rental and leasing	1.94%	\$100,417
Professional, scientific and technical services	4.57%	\$61,042
Management of companies and enterprises	0.38%	--

Administrative, support and waste management	3.28%	\$10,197
Industry	% of Workforce	Median Earnings
Educational services	9.07%	\$30,197
Health care and social assistance	10.04%	\$36,875
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	1.09%	\$30,313
Accommodation and food services	7.53%	\$20,515
Other services, except public administration	2.42%	\$53,398
Public administration	3.14%	\$70,486



***Prior to 2024 Sibanye-Stillwater Mine employment reduction**

Stillwater County is part of the economic development district serviced by Beartooth Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D), along with Big Horn, Carbon, Sweet Grass, and Yellowstone Counties. Beartooth RC&D's 2019-2023 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) identified agriculture, tourism, and natural resource-based industries as regional strengths. Regional weaknesses include distance to markets, especially for area manufacturers; available workforce; workforce housing; childcare options for working parents; access to funding and funding incentives as compared to other states; and a need for industry diversification, especially in Stillwater and Sweet Grass Counties (Beartooth Resource Conservation and Development, 2019). Another recognized weakness is the region's sparse population, which leads to higher costs per capita for a range of goods and services and lower tax revenues.

The CEDS process and document are valuable tools to help identify common goals and continue to grow the regional economy to be more competitive in a global marketplace. These goals are focused on the following areas:

- **Policy/Leadership/Capacity**
- **Quality of Life**
- **Workforce Development**
- **Infrastructure Development**
- **Innovation and Entrepreneurship**
- **Business Development**
- **Economic Growth and Resiliency**

The CEDS identified three goals for each area with strategies, or actions, aimed at achieving each goal. Beartooth RC&D is a resource for Stillwater County as the County considers priorities for capital improvements.

County growth will have an impact on public services, such as fire protection, law enforcement response services, and healthcare amenities. However, a declining population also has a significant impact on public services, as there is a smaller tax base from which to fund capital improvement projects. As population projections indicate a trend of gradual population decline, it is crucial that Stillwater County keep up with deferred maintenance and rehabilitation projects, which tend to be more cost-effective than infrastructure replacement projects. Stillwater County is comprised of multiple departments, which are each operated by elected officials or directors/managers and supervised by the elected County Commissioners. A brief description of each department's

services, as well as their assessment of needs during the CCIP process, is detailed in the following pages.

Public Buildings, Facilities and Services Priorities

Stillwater County owns or manages numerous buildings throughout the county, including the County Courthouse, the Road & Bridge Department facilities, Library, West Annex, South Annex, the Civic Center and Fairgrounds, and the Pavilion. While most buildings in Stillwater County are in fair condition, some of the facilities are in need of repair or renovation in order to improve and/or maintain an acceptable level of service. The County Facilities Department is responsible for managing the county road maintenance buildings, the courthouse building, west annex building which houses Meadowlark Assisted Living, South Annex, the County Fairgrounds and Pavilion buildings.

The Stillwater County Civic Center Building is a major recreational, educational, and economic development center for the County. The new Civic Center Building was completed in 2023 and offers both interior and exterior covered event space, a catering kitchen, and vendor/concession amenities.

Figure 4.1: Stillwater County Civic Center



Stahly Engineering provided surveys to the County Commissioners and county departments, conducted interviews with County employees, and collected surveys from the community to better understand existing facility needs and new facilities

that will improve the quality of life in Stillwater County.

County priorities for public facility projects and equipment purchases are identified in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Public Facility Projects and Equipment Purchase Priorities

Project Ranking	Project	Project Description	Estimated Cost to Stillwater County
6	Broadband Improvements	Increase broadband and telecommunications for Stillwater County facilities.	\$1 million
8	Civic Center Concrete Work	New/additional concrete flatwork at the Civic Center, including a pad for a second wash pad, extended sidewalks, pad at the double door entrance underneath the covered arena.	\$50,000 - \$75,000
9	Law & Justice Center	New two-story building	\$10 million
10	County Office Building	New two-story building	\$5.7 million
11	LED Lighting Upgrade	Upgrade county facilities to LED lighting fixtures to reduce operating costs	\$25,000 - \$75,000
15	County Archive Space	Construct a new facility to house County archived files and documents.	\$2 million
16	Stillwater County Park Plan	Create an updated Park Master Plan for all County facilities and parks	\$50,000
18	Vehicle Replacement	Truck replacement for service bed and/or flatbed maintenance vehicles	\$20,000 - \$40,000
19	Civic Center Pole Barn	New pole barn for site storage on the northwest corner of the property	\$225,000
21	Security System	New card/security access system for County facilities	\$1,000 - \$2,000 per door
22	Molt Road Shop Upgrades	Install a new bathroom facility and septic system at the existing shop in Molt.	\$40,000
24	Public Works Building (Columbus)	Insulate and add doors to improve winter storage for snow removal equipment.	\$50,000 - \$75,000
25	Civic Center Expansion	Phase 2 Expansion of Civic Center to include Rodeo Arena	\$1 million
29	Stillwater County Library	New larger library building / community center	\$10 million
30	Stillwater County Attorney Office	Addition to the current building to encompass employee number growth and storage.	\$250,000 - \$500,000
Completed Project	New Countywide Phone System	Purchase new Countywide VoIP phone system to replace outdated and unsupported phone system.	\$75,000

Transportation Priorities

Stillwater County transportation facilities consist of an extensive network of roads and bridges, as well as the Woltermann Memorial Airport located in the City of Columbus.

In addition to Primary and Secondary Routes maintained by the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT), Stillwater County is responsible for maintaining approximately 900 miles of roads throughout the County, which includes both major and minor collector routes, as well as local county roads.

In addition to county roads, Stillwater County is responsible for the maintenance of 23 off-system bridges, over 20 feet in length, that are inspected by MDT on a biennial basis. Of these bridges, none are currently load posted, and only two are over 50 years old. The County also has four bridges that are less than 20 feet in length and are the sole responsibility of the County for inspection and maintenance. Stillwater County completed an updated bridge inventory in 2021 and this data was used to prioritize bridge projects in the 2021 Stillwater County CCIP Update. That document identified four bridges as replacement candidates based on structural condition and route importance to the County. Of these bridges, the bridge on Johnson Lane over the Stillwater River and the bridge on Cemetery Road over Valley Creek have been replaced.

The Woltermann Memorial Airport is classified as a General Aviation Airport and is managed by a joint City-County Airport Board consisting of five board members, one county commissioner and one administrator. The airport was originally constructed in 1953, with major upgrades and improvements in 1961, 1998, 2002, and 2017. Today, the airport is served by a 3,800 foot by 75-foot asphalt runway, 18 hangars, 6 new t-hangars that are City/County owned and leased, 27 based aircraft, and fueling services (FAA, 2025).

There is no passenger rail service in Stillwater County. The Burlington-Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railroad does travel through the County; however, there are no freight stops within the County.

The County priorities for transportation projects are listed in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Stillwater County Transportation Project Priorities

Project Ranking	Project	Project Description	Estimated Cost to Stillwater County
12	Cemetery / Clark Road in Park City	Reconstruct / upgrade road to widen, improve safety, and replace box culvert	\$4.5 - \$5 million
14	Fiddler Creek Road Bridge	Install new bridge on Fiddler Creek Road over Fishtail Creek	\$675,000
17	Reifle Road Improvements	Road widening at the west end of Reifle Road to bring up to County specifications	\$150,000 - \$200,000
20	Asset Management (PAS-ER Evaluation)	Create Asset Management Plan to prioritize and schedule road maintenance, grading and repairs.	\$50,000 - \$75,000
26	NW PC / Cove Ditch Bridge	Replace bridge on 1 st PW over Cove Ditch	\$430,000
Included in Asset Management Plan	Upgrade County Streets	Upgrade / maintain streets in unincorporated towns in Stillwater County	
Included in Asset Management Plan	Routine Road/Bridge Maintenance	Maintain and repair County owned roads, bridges and streets	

Figure 4.2: Valley Creek Bridge, Stillwater County. Constructed in 2024.



Emergency Services Priorities

Emergency services available in Stillwater County include law enforcement, fire protection, and disaster and emergency services.

Law enforcement services in Stillwater County are limited to the Stillwater County Sheriff, which is an elected position. The Sheriff's Office currently employs approximately 26 individuals, ranging from sworn officers to professional support staff. The agency supports a service area of approximately 1,805 square miles, including the Towns of Absarokee, Fishtail, Nye, Park City, Rapelje, Reed Point, and Molt. Services provided by the Sheriff's Office include general law enforcement, court security, emergency dispatching, and search and rescue operations. In Stillwater County, the position of Coroner is combined with the Sheriff's position.

According to the Montana Department of Natural Resources & Conservation (DNRC), Stillwater County receives fire protection from five fire districts situated throughout the County, as well as mutual aid areas that are served by multiple districts and agencies (Montana DNRC, 2025). The five designated fire districts are:

- Absarokee / Nye Rural Fire District
- Columbus Rural Fire District
- Park City Rural Fire District
- Molt Volunteer Fire Department
- Broadview Rural Fire District

There is also an additional Volunteer Fire Department located in Rapelje.

Stillwater County has a Fire Warden, who is appointed by the Board of County Commissioners, and serves as the liaison between the Commissioners and the local fire departments, State agencies, and Federal agencies. In addition, there is a Fire Council that is comprised of members of each fire department, the Fire Warden, and one County Commissioner. The Fire Council aims to assist the Fire Warden, coordinate equipment and training needs, help with the development of emergency management plans, and address any fire and/or emergency service-related issues.

In general, EMS and ambulance services are provided to County residents through the Rural Fire Districts and the Volunteer Fire Department as well as the Stillwater Billings Clinic, located in the City of Columbus.

The Stillwater County Office of Disaster and Emergency Services is responsible for providing coordinated agency response during large-scale county emergencies and disasters. In addition, the department is focused on prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery measures. Stillwater County Disaster and Emergency Services, in conjunction with the City of Columbus completed a 2021 Update to the Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan, which is intended to "promote sound public policy designed to protect residents, critical facilities, infrastructure, private property, and the environment from natural and man-made hazards" (TetraTech, Inc., 2021). In addition, the County adopted an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) in 2019 in an effort to identify emergency situations that may arise and the corresponding actions to be taken to mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from such situations. The EOP is currently being updated and anticipated for adoption in 2025.

County priorities for emergency services projects are identified in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Emergency Services Project Priorities

Project Ranking	Project	Project Description	Estimated Cost to Stillwater County
13	Dispatch Phone System	Update phone system for dispatch to new technology for public safety.	\$300,000

Healthcare Facility Priorities

Stillwater County Environmental Health is tasked with protecting public health and focusing on the prevention of public health disruptions via foodborne illnesses. The sanitarian is responsible for annual inspections and permitting public services like food service establishments, public accommodations, campgrounds, swimming pools, schools, community homes, and rural wastewater systems.

Columbus Mental Health is a satellite office of the Mental Health Center located in Billings, Montana. Services include individual therapy by a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor (LCPC) and outpatient treatment by a Licensed Addiction Counselor (LAC) for chemical dependency and addiction.

The County also maintains a Board of Health, served by two appointed members of the public and the County Commissioners. The purpose of the Board of Health to "guard against the introduction of communicable disease, supervise sanitary inspections of public establishments, and control and dispose of sewage that is not otherwise regulated". The Board also has the ability to maintain sewage treatment systems and implement fees intended to regulate control and disposal of sewage from both private and public establishments.

The Stillwater Billings Clinic acquired the Stillwater Hospital Association in 2012, at which time a new state-of-the-art medical facility was constructed in the City of Columbus. The facility houses 10 acute care beds and an Emergency Room for more critical medical needs, while also meeting the day-to-day medical needs of the community through the Community Health Services Department, the Rural Health Clinic, laboratory and radiology services, rehabilitation services, and specialty clinics such as cardiology, orthopedics and urology. The Clinic also offers transitional care for patients recovering from illnesses or injuries. Citizens of Stillwater County and surrounding towns often utilize public health facilities in Billings.

There are currently no healthcare facilities projects identified in Stillwater County. Stillwater Count is not responsible for capital projects for the Stillwater Billings Clinic.

Figure 4.3: Stillwater Billings Clinic (Stillwater Billings Clinic, 2025)



Utility Priorities

Water, wastewater and stormwater are generally the responsibility of the communities that they serve; however, much of Stillwater County is unincorporated, therefore the responsibility of these utilities falls within the jurisdiction of the County. These facilities include the Absarokee sewer system, stormwater adjacent to and/or under county roadways, and several solid waste sites located throughout the county.

Solid Waste

The Stillwater County Solid Waste District was established in 1975 and is managed by a Solid Waste Board appointed by the County Commissioners. The City of Columbus contracts solid waste services within city limits, while all other county residents are charged a Solid Waste Assessment to use the solid waste system provided by the District. There are currently seven solid waste site locations: Absarokee, Molt, Nye, Park City, Rapelje, Reed Point, and the Stillwater County Transfer Station. All waste collected is transported to the Transfer Station for compaction and then transferred to the regional landfill located in Billings.

Wastewater

As previously stated, the Absarokee public sewer system is managed by Stillwater County and funded by a Rural Special Improvement District (RSID). The current RSID was formed in 2020, replacing two previous RSIDs, for the purpose of financing a portion of the costs for upgrades to the wastewater collection and treatment system. Upgrades consisted of the rehabilitation of existing lagoons, a new lift station with backup power, upgrades to the ultraviolet (UV) treatment, installation of three Submerged Aerated Gravel Reactors (SAGR) beds, Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition System (SCADA), and other related improvements. The sanitation collection system is comprised of asbestos cement, clay tile and PVC pipe, with some of the mains being in use since the 1950's, resulting in significant inflow and infiltration issues due to the age of the pipes. Currently, there is a moratorium on all new sewer connections in Absarokee due to the ongoing issues with inflow and infiltration (I&I), which drastically increases the volume of wastewater requiring treatment as well as diluting the utility's wastewater concentrations, which greatly affects the effectiveness and efficiency of the system. A recent Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) identified a preferred alternative for addressing the I&I issues, which includes rehabilitation and replacement of the District's wastewater collection system using a combination of trenchless and open-cut methods.

The Reed Point Water and Sewer District was established in 1992 for the purpose of constructing a sewer system in the community. The existing system consists of 8-inch PVC collection mains, a lift station, and a two-cell facultative treatment pond that discharges to a pivot irrigation system on adjacent property.

The Park City Water and Sewer District manages the community wastewater treatment system that was originally constructed in 1968. The collection system is constructed of clay, asbestos cement, and PVC pipe, and the treatment system is a three-cell, five-acre lagoon. The wastewater treatment system has gone through several upgrades since its original construction in 1968.

The City of Columbus operates and maintains its own sewer system for residents located within the City limits, and is the financial responsibility of the City.

Water

Within Stillwater County, the communities of Absarokee, Rapelje and Columbus have public water systems that provide potable water to the residents. The City of Columbus public water system is owned and operated by the City. Additional communities and residences are served by individual water systems, such as wells, springs, and cisterns.

The Absarokee water system is operated by an independent Water District, formed in 1996. The District supplies water to the users through four active wells. During the summer months, the system is capable of supplying 840,000 gallons of water per day. The system also contains two 200,000-gallon storage tanks, and water is distributed via PVC pipes. In 2018, all steel water lines were replaced and upsized to provide better service to the community.

Rapelje is also served by a Water District, which was formed in 2010. Water is supplied by a natural spring and distributed through two submersible pumps and three pressure tanks for the 40-50 users of the system.

Storm Water

While the majority of stormwater responsibility for Stillwater County lies with roadside ditches and culverts conveying water beneath county roads, there are also stormwater issues within the unincorporated towns located in the county, which fall under the jurisdiction of the county. At this time, stormwater needs identified by the county are improvements to stormwater management in Park City and Reed Point.

County priorities for utility projects are identified in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Utility Project Priorities

Project Ranking	Project	Project Description	Estimated Cost to Stillwater County
1	Absarokee Sewer New Facility	New Headworks building	\$1.5 million
2	Absarokee Sewer Facility Upgrade	Building Automation System (BAS) connection to SCADA system	\$18,000
3	Absarokee Sewer Facility	I&I Project Phase A: Church Street Alley and Montana Avenue sewer line rehabilitation	\$1.1 million
4	Absarokee Sewer Facility	I&I Project Phase B: Brook Avenue and Willow Street sewer line rehabilitation	\$1.1 million
5	Absarokee Sewer Facility	I&I Project Phase C: Garden Lane and North Davidson Avenue sewer line rehabilitation	\$1.1 million
23	Transfer Station Upgrades	Double the size of the existing transfer station	\$550,000
27	Purchase semi-trucks for Solid Waste	Purchase two new semi-trucks to haul boxes to the landfill	\$280,000 each
28	Purchase new skid steer for Solid Waste	Purchase new skid steer to replace aging equipment	\$65,000
31	Reed Point Storm Water Improvements	Storm water upgrades to alleviate flood and standing water issues.	\$450,000
Completed Project	Absarokee Sewer Pump	Purchase back up pump for the lift station for high flow needs.	\$15,000
Completed Project	Park City Storm Water Improvements	Storm water upgrades around the school to alleviate flood and standing water issues.	\$400,000

General County Priorities

Stillwater County takes pride in its communities and benefits from projects that may lead to future economic development, industry growth, and resulting income and taxes that help fund local infrastructure. As previously mentioned, the County is dependent on education, health care, and social assistance, as well as public administration and retail trade, as primary sources of personal income. Maintaining communities free of blight and dilapidated buildings, which are often attractants for crime, provides areas attractive to new business, tourism, and economic opportunities.

General county project priorities are identified in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: General County Project Priorities

Project Ranking	Project	Project Description	Estimated Cost to Stillwater County
Unranked	Business Park / Tech Park	Stillwater County to support a new Business Park or Tech Park by extending city services, providing land, etc.	Unknown

Funding Sources

One essential objective of any CCIP is to create a plan for improvements that will keep user rates and tax rates stable while leveraging loan and grant programs for capital projects and expenditures. Large capital projects, by nature, are expected to require some debt; however, keeping that debt to a minimum is the goal of any local government.

Capital improvement plan projects can be funded from a variety of sources. The following information provides a brief description of common funding sources used by Counties throughout Montana and a more detailed discussion of how Stillwater County may plan for funding opportunities for capital improvement projects. Beyond the means discussed below, additional options to generate funds for improvement projects include increased user rates, mill levies, Rural Improvement Districts and Special Improvement Districts.

General Funds

The most commonly used method of financing capital improvement projects is the use of general funds, which are gathered from property taxes, local option tax, and state entitlement share. The general fund is typically inadequate to fund larger project needs; however, it is a practical source for funding small capital improvement projects. Few County departments generate fees, but again, they are typically not adequate to fund larger project needs. A copy of the FY2025 budget is in Appendix B. The budget includes a history of taxable valuation for the County from years 2015-2025. Over that time frame, the taxable valuation for Stillwater County has increased by approximately 40%. From that historical analysis alone, revenue will likely continue to increase; however, valuations can also decrease dramatically based on the current economy.

Stillwater County's historical tax collections from regulatory/statutory mill levies for the past five years are listed in Table 5.1. In recent years, the Commissioners have decreased the mills because the taxable value of the County has increased. When taxable value decreases, often times the County will increase the mills.

Table 5.1: Stillwater County Historical Tax Collections from Mill Levies

Fiscal Year	Taxable Value	Mill Levy	Tax Collection
2024-2025	\$66,904,356	106.01	\$7,092,531
2023-2024	\$68,683,297	116.00	\$7,967,262
2022-2023	\$65,752,221	120.34	\$7,912,622
2021-2022	\$62,144,744	116.75	\$7,255,399
2020-2021	\$55,612,184	113.93	\$6,335,896

Effect of Taxable Value and Debt Limits on Potential for Increased Revenue

Montana laws govern County indebtedness and bonding capacity.

1. A county may not issue bonds or incur other indebtedness for any purpose in an amount, including existing indebtedness, that in the aggregate exceeds 2.5% of the total assessed value of taxable property within the county as ascertained by the last assessment for state and county taxes.
2. With some exceptions, a county may not incur indebtedness or liability for any single purpose to an amount exceeding \$1,000,000 without the approval of a majority of the electors of the county voting at an election as provided by law.

The Board of County Commissioners may not borrow money for any single purpose in an amount exceeding the limits set on indebtedness unless first submitting the question of a loan to a vote of the electors of the county and obtaining the approval of a majority of the electors of the county. A county may borrow the following amounts without a vote of the electorate:

- up to \$1 million if the county's taxable value is less than \$50 million;
- up to \$1.5 million if the county's taxable value is between \$50 million and \$100 million; and
- up to \$2 million if the county's taxable valuation is greater than \$100 million.

If a majority of the votes cast are in favor of the loan, then the board of county commissioners may enter into the loan, issuing bonds or otherwise as is in the best interests of the county.

Refer to Montana Code Annotated Title 7. Local Government, Chapter 7. Debt Management: https://www.leg.mt.gov/bills/mca/title_0070/chapter_0070/parts_index.html.

Other Revenue

In addition to revenues generated from tax collections, Stillwater County also receives income from special revenue funds which are used to account for the proceeds of specific revenue sources that are restricted by law or administrative action to expenditure for specific purposes other than debt service or capital projects. These special revenue funds include:



Fund	Revenue
Licenses and Permits	Permit, application and license fees
Intergovernmental Revenue	State entitlement share, contributions
Charges for Services	Service fees
Fines and Forfeitures	Court fines
Miscellaneous Revenues	Sale of salvage, contributions/donations
Investment and Royalty Earnings	Gain/loss in fair value of investments

Stillwater County conducts a yearly budgeting process in which they review prior years' expenditures and plan for the coming year's revenue and expenses. In participating in this process, each major department head is asked to provide a budget that is then incorporated into the overall county budget. The County utilizes a General Capital Fund that is funded every year based on projected revenue and prioritized project needs.

In addition to the General Capital Fund, the County also has a number of additional Capital Funds:

- [Capital Improvement Junk Vehicle](#)
- [Weed Capital](#)
- [Library Capital Improvement](#)
- [Library Depreciation Reserve Fund](#)
- [Public Safety Capital](#)
- [Road & Bridge Capital Improvements](#)
- [Road Depreciation Reserve](#)
- [Bridge Depreciation Reserve](#)

Grant Funds

Grants are one of the primary means to fund large capital improvement projects, and there are numerous state and federal grant programs available to assist with the critical capital improvement needs of communities. Typically, grant funds are allocated for projects that protect and preserve the health and welfare of the residents; however, grants may also be obtained to stimulate economic development and protect renewable resources.

Grant applications are generally ranked and processed on a competitive basis, based on the severity of the project need and the financial need of the community.

Communities that have demonstrated adequate planning efforts, such as this CCIPI, will be more successful in securing grant funding. The most frequently used sources of grant funds in Montana include:

[Community Development Block Grant Program \(CDBG\)](#)

CDBG is a federally funded grant program that provides funding assistance for projects that are designed to predominantly benefit low



and moderate-income families. Funding categories for CDBG include planning grants, public facilities, housing, urban renewal, neighborhood stabilization programs, and economic development.

- Planning grants are available in amounts up to \$50,000, with a required match of \$1 for every \$3 of CDBG planning grant funds.
- Public facility grants are available up to \$750,000 and require a 25% match.
- Housing and Urban renewal grants are available up to \$750,000 with no match required.

Rural Development (RD) Water and Environmental Program

This program provides funding for clean and reliable drinking water systems, sanitary sewage disposal, sanitary solid waste disposal, and storm water drainage to households and businesses in eligible rural areas. RD grants may award up to 75% of the eligible project costs for public works infrastructure and public facilities in rural communities. Grant awards are based on available funding and applicant eligibility.

Rural Development (RD) Community Facilities

This program provides affordable funding to develop essential community facilities in rural areas. Essential community facilities are those that provide an essential service to the local community, such as health care facilities, public safety services, public facilities, and community support services. Projects are ranked based on population and Median Household Income, and matching funds are determined by these same metrics.

Montana Coal Endowment Program (MCEP)

MCEP is a state-funded program designed to help address the affordability of local infrastructure projects by providing grants to offset some of the cost of constructing public facilities. MCEP awards matching grants to local governments for the construction of infrastructure projects, such as drinking water systems, wastewater treatment facilities, sanitary or storm sewer systems, solid waste disposal and separation systems, and bridge projects. Planning grants are also available for the preparation of a construction grant application.

- Planning grants are available in amounts up to \$40,000 and require a match from the applicant in the amount of 20% of the total project cost. Planning grants may be used for a Preliminary Engineering Report or a Capital Improvements Plan.
- Bridge project grants are limited to a maximum of \$500,000 and require a 50% match from the applicant. In the instance of one bridge with an estimated project cost greater than \$1 million, the applicant may request up to \$750,000.
- All other infrastructure grants are limited to a maximum of \$750,000 and require a 50% match from the applicant.
- Emergency grants are available up to \$30,000 per project with no match required. Emergency grants are available for projects that are necessary to remedy conditions that, if allowed to continue, would endanger public health or safety and expose the applicant to substantial financial risk. The situation must be due to an unforeseen circumstance and not the result of normal use or negligence by the owner.

Renewable Resource Grant and Loan Program (RRGL)

RRGL provides grants for projects protecting, preserving, or enhancing natural and renewable resources, and is administered by the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC). Projects eligible for RRGL grants include drinking water, wastewater, and solid waste development and improvement, in addition to irrigation rehabilitation, dam repair, soil and water conservation, and forest enhancement.

- Planning grants are available in amounts up to \$40,000 and do not require a match. Planning grants may be used for a Preliminary Engineering Report for water/wastewater infrastructure, new irrigation infrastructure, or to update an existing PER or Technical Narrative for applications to the Renewable Resource Grant program for renewable resource projects.
- Construction grants are limited to \$125,000 per project with no match required.
- Emergency grants are available up to \$30,000 per project with no match required.

Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development Tourism Grants

This program provides funds for projects that strengthen Montana's economy through the development and enhancement of the tourism and recreation industry. Grants are funded from the Montana Lodging Facility Use Tax. Eligible entities for this grant are non-profit 501 (c) organizations, City or County governments, or tribal governments. Project categories for the grant include digital product development (i.e. Online assets for branding), heritage preservation, infrastructure upgrades or enhancements,

wayfinding and signage, and niche product development. Match for this grant is \$1 from the applicant for every \$2 of grant funding. Applications are accepted annually.

Montana Historic Preservation Grants (MHPG)

The MHPG Program is designed to support public or private entities with the preservation of historic sites, historical societies, or history museums through grant funding. Currently, grants are available up to \$500,000 with a 20% required match. Grant cycles are open every two years opposite the legislative years and are awarded during the legislative session in odd years. The 2025 legislature is considering changes to the program.

Economic Development Administration (EDA) Public Works Program

Grants from this program help communities revitalize, expand, and upgrade their infrastructure in an effort to attract new businesses, encourage business expansion, and generate or retain long-term jobs. The amount of the grant is dependent on the number of jobs created as a result of the project. EDA grants utilize federal funding with a 50% match requirement; however, EDA may fund up to 80% of a project based on the economic distress of the region as determined by criteria defined by EDA.

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

The RTP fund is funded by the Federal Highway Trust Fund to support Montana trail projects. The maximum award is \$100,000 and requires a 20% match of total project costs. The program can help construct new trails, maintain and restore existing trails, develop and rehabilitate trailhead facilities, and purchase trail construction and maintenance equipment.

Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Recreation Grants

Projects funded by LWCF grants include ball fields, public parks, outdoor municipal pools, playgrounds, picnic facilities, and walking trails or other projects that develop outdoor recreation. A 50% match is required. These grants require adherence to federal grant requirements.

Loans

Many of the programs listed for grant funding also have loan funding available. Some of the more common loan sources include:

Rural Development (RD)

RD provides loans for projects with an emphasis on assisting small, rural communities with low interest rates based on median household income and user rates. There is no maximum amount of loan funding, but it is limited by the applicant's ability to repay the loan. The typical loan repayment length is 40 years, or the maximum life of the facility being funded.

Montana State Revolving Fund (SRF)

SRF provides low-interest loans for two types of projects: drinking water projects and water pollution control projects (wastewater and non-point source). There is no maximum amount of loan funding, but it is limited by the applicant's ability to repay the loan. The typical repayment cycle is 20 years, or the design life of the facility, whichever is the least. The current interest rate for SRF loans is 2.5%, and there is no local match required.

Renewable Resource Grant and Loan Program (RRGL)

RRGL, working with DNRC, provides loans to protect, preserve, or properly utilize natural and renewable resources. The projects eligible for loan funding are similar to the projects eligible for grant funding through RRGL. There is no maximum amount of loan funding, but it is limited by the applicant's debt capacity and ability to repay the loan. There is no local match required.

Intermediate-Term Capital Program (INTERCAP)

INTERCAP loans may be used for a number of projects, including infrastructure projects, new or used vehicles and equipment purchases, preliminary engineering costs, and grant writing. Projects may receive 100% financing, with no local match required; however, for loans over \$200,000, the full board of directors of the Board of Investments must review the loan application. INTERCAP loans typically have a 10-year repayment cycle.

Although most loan programs have a low-interest rate, some may require a matching share or have very strict administration or project requirements.

Bonding

Nearly all loan programs require authorization from the community to pay back the loans, and issuing bonds is the most common method of authorization. Bonds are generally issued as either a revenue or general obligation (GO) bond.

Revenue Bonds

Revenue bonds are a means to generate capital by incurring debt to be paid predominantly from revenue resulting from utility funds. User rates are tied to the amount of bonding necessary. There is generally a high demand for municipal bonds due to the low risk of the investment, and the bonds offer a tax-deductible investment opportunity for investors.

General Obligation (GO) Bonds

General obligation bonds are secured by raising property taxes with an amortization of the financing over several years, which allows taxpayers to pay a smaller amount of the project's cost at a time. GO bonds may limit the county's flexibility on how yearly revenues can be utilized.

Rural Improvement Districts (RIDs)

Rural Improvements Districts are a special form of general obligation utilized by counties most often for street and road improvements, sidewalk installation, lighting, and other specific needs of a particular area within the county. Property owners within the RID are obligated to repay the project costs or a portion thereof. Taxpayers outside the district are not obligated to pay.

Tax Increment Financing Districts (TIFDs)

A TIFD is a public financing method that can be used to fund redevelopment, infrastructure, and other community improvement projects. In Montana, TIFDs were authorized in 1974 and are assessed through property taxes. Financing options include private activity revenue bonds, pay-as-you-go, loans, special assessments, and tax increment bonds (State of Montana, 2022). The funds generated can be used to finance projects such as street and parking improvements, trash containers, benches, and other streetscape beautification projects within the designated area.

Government Agencies

There are a number of government agencies that have their own resources available to help counties with capital projects. Most are very specific to the type of project eligible for funding and are typically based on need, proper planning, and documentation that the project is intended to serve the citizens as a whole. Examples of such agencies include:

Montana Transportation Alternatives Program (TA)

TA provides funding for programs and projects defined as transportation alternatives. Eligible projects focused on enhanced mobility and include pedestrian and bicycle facilities, community improvement activities, recreational trail program projects, safe routes to school projects, and infrastructure projects for improving access to public transportation. Entities qualified to receive funds from the TA program include local governments, tribal governments, transit agencies, public land agencies, school districts, and regional government entities. Guidance for applying for TA funding can be found on the Montana Department of Transportation web site (<https://www.mdt.mt.gov/mt/ta-application.aspx>). Projects located within reservation land will not require a match from the local entity, while projects outside of reservation lands will be required to provide a local match of 13.42%. The match requirement can only be provided as cash.

US Department of Transportation (USDOT & FHWA)

The USDOT's Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) grant program provides grants for surface transportation infrastructure projects with significant local or regional impact, including road, rail, transit, and port projects that achieve national objectives. The grant allows entities to pursue multi-modal and multi-jurisdictional projects that may be difficult to fund through other grant programs. As Montana has a rural location designation, projects may be 100% funded through a BUILD grant.

Build America Bureau

The Rural Transit Assistance Pilot Program (RTAP) provides a source of funding to assist in the design and implementation of training and technical assistance projects and other support services tailored to meet the needs of transit operators in nonurbanized areas. RTAP grant funds are available to assist with pre-development-phase activities for infrastructure projects, such as feasibility studies, preliminary engineering and design work, environmental review, and cost estimating. There is no cost match requirement for this grant.

US Department of Transportation (USDOT)

The Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program supports projects that improve and expand the surface transportation infrastructure in rural areas to increase connectivity, improve the safety and reliability of the movement of people and freight, and generate regional economic growth and improve quality of life. Rural grants require a 20% match and a \$25 million minimum award.

US Department of Agriculture (USDA)

The USDA funds a Community Facilities Grant to assist in the development of essential community facilities in rural areas and towns of up to 20,000 in population. Grant funds may be used to construct, enlarge, or improve community facilities for health care, public safety, and community and public services. Grant funds may be available for up to 75% of the project cost, and grants are awarded based on the median household income and the community population.

Water Resources Development Act (WRDA)

WRDA is a federal grant program funded through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Eligible projects include wastewater treatment, water supply and storage, treatment and distribution facilities, stream bank stabilization, and stormwater runoff abatement. WRDA grants require a 25% match from local entities, and there is no maximum grant award amount.

Big Sky Economic Development Trust Fund (BSTF)

The BSTF is a Montana-funded program designed to aid in the development of good-paying jobs for Montana residents and promote long-term, stable economic growth in Montana. The BSTF program provides financial assistance in two categories: Economic development job creation projects and planning projects.

Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM)

The PDM program, funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), provides funds for hazard mitigation planning and the implementation of mitigation projects prior to a disaster event. Funding these projects reduces overall risks to the population and structures while reducing the reliance on funding from actual disaster declarations. Types of projects include structural retrofitting of existing buildings, soil stabilization, minor localized flood reduction projects, and infrastructure retrofit. The match requirements for this grant are typically 25%; however, small, impoverished communities may be eligible for a 10% match requirement.

Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP)

This program is intended to improve transportation facilities that provide access to, are adjacent to, or are located within Federal lands. The grants are intended to supplement state and local resources for public roads, transit systems, and other transportation facilities, with an emphasis on high-use recreation sites and economic generators. As 18% of Stillwater County is in Federal lands, it is an excellent candidate for FLAP funding. The required match for the program is typically 13.42%; however, the 2023 call for projects required no match from the local government.



FEMA

National Park Service – Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program (NPS-RTCA)

The National Park Service implemented this program to support locally-led conservation and outdoor recreation projects that either develop or restore parks, conservation areas, rivers, and wildlife habitats. In addition, the program assists with creating outdoor recreation opportunities and programs that engage the community in outdoor activities. This program does not provide monetary grants; however, it does provide professional services to help the community achieve its project vision.

Capital Improvements Plan Summary

The capital improvement projects defined in this document were selected in accordance with the process outlined in Section I and represent the most pressing projects to be executed in order to maintain and improve community services and facilities in Stillwater County. Table 6.1 presents the Comprehensive Capital Improvements Plan for Stillwater County for the years 2025-2030. The projects are listed in priority order, and each project line item includes the following: estimated project cost, possible annual recurring costs, the target date for completion, as well as possible funding sources. It also details the estimated cost of the overall project that Stillwater County will be responsible for, with a proposed budgetary fund that amount will be drawn from.

It is now the responsibility of the Stillwater County Commission to utilize this document in their annual budgeting and planning period to carry out the projects as planned. It is also important that the commission continues to update this plan as projects are completed in order to keep the County's goals on track.

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APPENDICES



Appendix A: Needs Assessment Surveys and Public Outreach



An Employee-Owned Company



STILLWATER COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Project Request Form (projects exceeding \$5,000). This survey is also available electronically on the Stillwater County CCIP website at: <https://seaeng.wixsite.com/stillwatercounty>.

Department/Organization: _____

Contact: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Type of Project:

<input type="checkbox"/> Equipment Purchase	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation Infrastructure – Roads, Bridges, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/> Facilities – Maintenance or Upgrade	<input type="checkbox"/> Economic Development Project
<input type="checkbox"/> Facilities – New Construction	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
<input type="checkbox"/> Property – Parks, Trails, Etc.	

Description and justification of project (include a description of the existing system to be replaced, if any):

Estimated cost of project (if available) _____

By what date would you like to complete this project? _____

In your opinion, how do you see this project being funded? (For example, Operating Budget, reserve funds, grant funds, etc.) Describe any recent attempts to fund the project.

Will this project require additional yearly maintenance, fixed costs, personnel, or require additional supplies on a yearly basis? If so, please explain and provide an opinion of increased yearly costs.

If this is an Economic Development Project, how do you see it contributing to the economy of Stillwater County?

What are the consequences associated with not completing this project?

Press Release/Legal Advertisement

To: Stillwater County News

Subject: Stillwater County Public Meeting to Assess Community Needs

Stillwater County will hold a public hearing in Columbus for the purpose of gathering information to update the County's 2019 Capital Improvement plan. The County wants to identify community challenges and issues and generate ideas that will make our communities a better place to live. focusing on Capital improvements focus on county and public facilities and infrastructure that support improving county services and encouraging economic development. The meeting will provide an opportunity to learn about why Capital Improvement Plans are necessary, what types of grant funding sources are available for community projects and how County's budget for capital improvements. Funding sources that will be discussed include those that assist low- and moderate-income families (i.e. Montana Coal Endowment Program, Community Development Block Grant Program, Montana Coal Board, HOME program, MDT's Alternative Transportation grant program, Renewable Resource Grant and Loan program, and other opportunities that the County has utilized to secure funds for capital projects).

We invite you to join us on Thursday, December 5, from 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. at the Stillwater County Annex Boardroom. An online web page and survey can also be used to be for comment at <https://seaeng.wixsite.com/stillwatercounty>.

For further information, please contact Stillwater County Community & Economic Development Director, Stephanie Ray at 406-322-8056 or Robie Culver, CCIP Consultant, Stahly Engineering & Associates at (406) 442-8594.

Publish:

Stillwater County News weeks of November 18 and 25, 2024

Come share your concerns and ideas,
and learn more!

PUBLIC HEARING

FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN



Purpose:

To gather input on public facilities and infrastructure for updating the County's 2019 Capital Improvements Plan, with the goals of improving County services and promoting economic development



Date & Time:

5 December 2024

5:30 PM - 7:30 PM

Location:

Stillwater County
Annex ~ Boardroom
431 Quarry Road, Columbus



For More Information

<https://seaeng.wixsite.com/stillwatercounty>

Type of Project	Description and justification of project (include a description of the existing system to be replaced, if any):	Estimated cost of project (if available)	By what date would you like to complete this project?	In your opinion, how do you see this project being funded? (For example, Operating Budget, reserve funds, grant funds, etc.) Describe any recent attempts to fund the project.	Will this project require additional yearly maintenance, fixed costs, personnel, or require additional supplies on a yearly basis? If so, please explain and provide an opinion of increased yearly costs.	What are the consequences associated with not completing this project?
Equipment Purchase	New countywide phone system VOIP	\$75,000	12/31/2025	Operating budget	Yes - TBD	The county's phone system uses software that is old and no longer supported. There is only one technician in the region that services this system and the County has experienced significant downtime with no phone service (several days in a row). There was a desire several years ago to look at upgrading the phone system due to these issues, however, the project was not prioritized. The Commission has requested looking into the replacement of the phone system, along with possibly bundling services with a service provider for additional cost savings.
Facilities - New Construction	Doubling the size of the Transfer Station, this project was looked at about 3 years ago.	Unknown	12/1/2028	Capital Outlay and loan	This project would require adding another person to work the Transfer Station	Would like to make the Transfer Station a safer place to unload trash at.
Facilities - New Construction	Would like to double the size of the Transfer Station. We looked at this a couple years ago by former supervisor. Would like to do it in the next 3-5 years. The Transfer Station is very busy and would like to double the size to accommodate the traffic.	Approximately \$550,000	8/30/2027	Capital Outlay, possible loan	It would require one additional site attendant to work the site	N/A
Equipment Purchase	We will be purchasing 2 new semi trucks to haul boxes to the Landfill.	\$280,000 x2	8/30/2027	Operating Budget	No	Our trucks are getting a lot of mileage on them. If we do not replace them, costs of maintenance and repairs will go up.
Equipment Purchase	We will need to purchase a new skidsteer to replace older one	\$65,000	8/30/2028	Operating Budget	Nothing outside of the normal	N/A
Facilities - Maintenance or Upgrade	Insulate and add doors to an existing structure where snow removal equipment is stored for use during winter months.		9/30/2025		no	Winter snowplow equipment not operating properly or at all.
Facilities - Maintenance or Upgrade	carpet replacement in office	unsure but probably over 5,000.00	3/3/2025	operating budget	no	trip hazard for staff and public
Facilities - Maintenance or Upgrade	main office painted	5,000.00	3/3/2025	operating budget	No	there are no consequences but i know the walls have not been painted or cared for in over 18 years
Blinds for District Court courtroom	blinds in courtroom are starting to fall apart	5,000.00 or more??	3/3/2025	operating budget or reserve funds	may require cleaning staff to clean or dust which previously has not been done	blinds continue to fall apart
Facilities - Maintenance or Upgrade	paint third floor rotunda and landing	5000.00 or more	3/3/2025	operating budget or reserve funds	no	looks bad to the public

Type of Project	Description and justification of project (include a description of the existing system to be replaced, if any):	Estimated cost of project (if available)	By what date would you like to complete this project?	In your opinion, how do you see this project being funded? (For example, Operating Budget, reserve funds, grant funds, etc.) Describe any recent attempts to fund the project.	Will this project require additional yearly maintenance, fixed costs, personnel, or require additional supplies on a yearly basis? If so, please explain and provide an opinion of increased yearly costs.	What are the consequences associated with not completing this project?
Equipment Purchase, Facilities - Maintenance or Upgrade	We need new lighting as we lost a bank of lights due to construction. it is really dark in office now	5,000.00	12/31/2024	operating budget	no	hard to read things because it is dark in office, especially now that it gets darker earlier
Facilities - Maintenance or Upgrade	Continued investment in the Courthouse - Phase II projects	TBD		Capital funds	The upgrades may increase utility costs, cleaning costs	Continued deterioration of potential re-purposed square footage for county services
CCIP	Capital Improvement Plan Update	\$50,000	12/31/2025	Capital funds	No	Lack of strategic planning for future capital projects can lead to random unplanned expenditures.
Program planning - Courthouse	Programming effort for new space opportunities for existing courthouse square footage to maximize highest and best use.	\$10,000	4/30/2025	Capital funds	Possibly if additional square footage is occupied	Loss of potential efficiency measures and increased probably of storage areas for high cost square footage
Facilities - Maintenance or Upgrade, Facilities - New Construction	Our community has outgrown the current library building. We are in great need of a recreation center, family entertainment, free meeting rooms, an auditorium, and children/teen after school activities. The library already is fulfilling many of these needs, but is handicapped with budget cuts, short staffing, and lack of space in their current building. It is already an established organization, with capable staff and a viable framework for developing a larger scale library/community center.	10 Million	1/1/2028	Operating Budget, Friends of Stillwater County Library, Stillwater County Library Foundation		Creating separate buildings and organizations that fulfill similar needs as the library splits tax funds and would put a strain on our community. The library will have to look for other venues to hold its own events. The community lacks programs for children and teens.

Type of Project	Description and justification of project (include a description of the existing system to be replaced, if any):	Estimated cost of project (if available)	By what date would you like to complete this project?	In your opinion, how do you see this project being funded? (For example, Operating Budget, reserve funds, grant funds, etc.) Describe any recent attempts to fund the project.	Will this project require additional yearly maintenance, fixed costs, personnel, or require additional supplies on a yearly basis? If so, please explain and provide an opinion of increased yearly costs.	What are the consequences associated with not completing this project?
Transportation Infrastructure - Roads	<p>Let's finish the road to Fishtail School as it affects the children and families attending the school. Asphalt is missing for a small section of road that leads from the Main St to Fishtail School (asphalt is in place on Main Street in Fishtail, road asphalt is not finished from Main Street to Fishtail School, asphalt begins again after the school through Easton Ave). It appears that person of was just never finished and forgotten in road plans. Finishing this road would make a positive impact to the community and especially the families with children who attend Fishtail School. It is not good community perception to ignore finishing a road to a school.</p>	\$20,000	8/1/2025	<p>School District budgets for roads or improvements; grants for improving access for rural schools; Operating Budget for Stillwater Roads.</p>	<p>No extra budget needed and will likely save money for county as the dirt portion requires frequent maintenance of potholes (over 40 potholes repaired in the small section in 2024). Asphalt roads are already maintained before and after this small portion of road that is missing asphalt so would not add cost.</p>	<p>Increase (unnecessary) risk to children and families driving to Fishtail School, increased costs to County to continue to repair potholes multiple times each year</p>
Equipment Purchase, Facilities - Maintenance or Upgrade	<p>There are security and equipment upgrades for elections that may need to be implemented. This will depend on what will be required after the legislature session. Our current security may be sufficient but that is subject to change with the possibility of new requirements.</p>	TBD		<p>There may be grant funds available but that has yet to be determined as the legislature has not met yet and the requirements are not yet known. If not, this will be a capital improvements budgeted item.</p>	TBD	TBD
Equipment Purchase	<p>The current phone system in dispatch is outdated. We currently use Motorola Callworks and it was outdated 5 years ago.</p>	Unknown - estimate \$300,000+	12/30/2025	Grant funding or capital funds	<p>This equipment comes with a maintenance program</p>	<p>Continued phone issues in dispatch</p>

Type of Project	Description and justification of project (include a description of the existing system to be replaced, if any):	Estimated cost of project (if available)	By what date would you like to complete this project?	In your opinion, how do you see this project being funded? (For example, Operating Budget, reserve funds, grant funds, etc.) Describe any recent attempts to fund the project.	Will this project require additional yearly maintenance, fixed costs, personnel, or require additional supplies on a yearly basis? If so, please explain and provide an opinion of increased yearly costs.	What are the consequences associated with not completing this project?
Facilities - Maintenance or Upgrade, Facilities - New Construction, Parking Lot Improvement - Ices because dip still exists in the lot	An addition to the current building to encompass employee number growth and storage. Upgrade would then be to install small area sprinkling system once footprint of addition is known.		6/30/2026	Perhaps the impact fees from the wind farm	It will require normal building maintenance	Building is at capacity and no room for expansion of an additional lawyer(s) and storage
Property - Parks, Trails, Etc.	Parks Trees assessment for all County facilities and Parks	100,000.00	2/16/2026	Grant funds if possible	on going maintenance	Hazardous tree/ playground equipment liability
Facilities - New Construction	The county library is too small, thus making it crowded and it needs to upgrade its services. A new building would be beneficial with the idea of planning for the needs of 2050.	Very expensive.	6/15/2030	All of the above.	Yes, there will be yearly expenses; perhaps 25% above current expenses.	Fewer educational opportunities for county youth.
Routine road/bridge maintenance/repair	More important to County taxpayers than a "temporarily funded-or not" transit system program.	None, you would actually SAVE taxpayer money.	1/1/2025	Existing taxpayer account funds	Will depend on normal wear imposed by seasonal changes, but infinitely more predictable than the costs borne by a "pie in the sky" County taxi service.	None, other than better use of taxpayer money for the benefit of most Stillwater County citizens

Type of Project	Description and justification of project (include a description of the existing system to be replaced, if any):	Estimated cost of project (if available)	By what date would you like to complete this project?	In your opinion, how do you see this project being funded? (For example, Operating Budget, reserve funds, grant funds, etc.) Describe any recent attempts to fund the project.	Will this project require additional yearly maintenance, fixed costs, personnel, or require additional supplies on a yearly basis? If so, please explain and provide an opinion of increased yearly costs.	What are the consequences associated with not completing this project?
Facilities - New Construction	<p>The library needs a new building with more square footage and improved functionality. The present design and square footage of the library does not provide adequate space to hold educational and recreational programs. Because we currently only have 2 full-time and 1 part-time staff for the 50.5 hours we operate the library, hosting programs at alternate locations is not feasible for most programs. This fact limits the services and programs we can offer the public. For the 23-24 fiscal year, 22,980 people walked through our doors. We hosted 712 programs for ages pre-k to adult, which 9,970 people attended. We also had 2,951 people use our public computers and 12,683 connected to our Wi-Fi. We matter to the people of the county. Our goal is to grow our services and programs each year to meet more needs in the entire county, and an inadequate building impedes the progress.</p> <p>Our book/material collection has also outgrown the building. We must continuously weed items, to include some that are popular, to add new items. Currently we are</p>	TBD with the acceptance of a building design.	9/30/2027	<p>Funding will include monies from the county, grants, plus from the Library Capital Improvement, library depreciation reserve, and a portion of the library trust. Our foundation will also assist in raising funds. We have been saving money as we've been able for several years.</p>	<p>Yes, there will be additional costs for yearly maintenance, fixed costs, and increased personnel. An estimate to be determined once a design for the building is accepted.</p>	<p>Essentially, the consequence of not building a new library is a reduction in meeting needs of county residents. Also, there will be an increase in maintenance as this building continues to deteriorate. A great example of this is the roof replacement due to extensive leaks that is slated for spring of 2025. As of now, there are areas in the building that are not accessible or safe for those with mobility issues.</p> <p>One specific example in regard to programs and services revolves around teens. Conversations abound in the community about the lack of activities for teens in Stillwater County. While we have been holding teen-specific programs for years, our current building prohibits many of the more popular activities, such as virtual reality and gaming; comic cons, more physical activities. We have the desire to build relationships with teens and to provide a space that is safe, inviting, entertaining, and educational, but the building limits our reach.</p>
Facilities - Maintenance or Upgrade	<p>LED lighting upgrade. Most county facilities are still using florescent T8 lamps in the light fixtures. Courthouse, Road Dept, Library, County Attorney, SAR, South Annex, West Annex partial, Meadowlark, Solid Waste, and others. Project could be internal (product only) or contracted. Given current (depending on site) rebates available and energy savings, we could see 100% ROI in as little as 1 1/2 years.</p>		12/31/2025	<p>General fund, maintenance budget, Northwestern Energy rebates, energy savings,</p>	No additional	<p>Florescent lamp production has been stopped, lamps for sale are current stockpiles. Price is climbing and availability is declining. All sales can be restricted by 2027</p>

Type of Project	Description and justification of project (include a description of the existing system to be replaced, if any):	Estimated cost of project (if available)	By what date would you like to complete this project?	In your opinion, how do you see this project being funded? (For example, Operating Budget, reserve funds, grant funds, etc.) Describe any recent attempts to fund the project.	Will this project require additional yearly maintenance, fixed costs, personnel, or require additional supplies on a yearly basis? If so, please explain and provide an opinion of increased yearly costs.	What are the consequences associated with not completing this project?
Facilities - Maintenance or Upgrade	Carpet replacement in Treasurer's Office (1st Floor), Old Clerks & Recorder's Office (2nd Floor), and Clerk of District Court's Office (3rd Floor) in the courthouse. Bonding surface is delaminating, creating ripples and trip hazards in office space. Installation by contractor, weekend/evening work.	15K	6/30/2025	General Fund, Capital Outlay	none	
Property - Parks, Trails, Etc.	Restore landscape around Courthouse, post construction and Demo of Norton House. To include, sprinklers, dry scape, trees, etc.	20K	5/31/2025	Courthouse ADA project, General fund Facilities	Minor amounts of additional fertilizer, landscape work, and sprinkler maintenance	
Bridge	Remove existing culvert at fishtail creek on fiddler creek road and return back to a bridge. Existing culvert has been washed out and replaced. Returning to bridge would help with water flow in the spring runoff.		10/30/2026		no	Culvert washing out & road closure.
Road Widening	estimated 1 mile west end of Reifle Rd. widened eight feet bringing it up to county spec. Reifle Rd narrows down from 28' to 20' causing safety issues with large trucks traveling past each other.		12/30/2027	grants	no	Safety of traveling public.
Facilities - Maintenance or Upgrade	NEW CARPET, HOLES IN THE EXISTING, NEW LIGHTS, OLD NOT WORKING FLORESENTS, POSSIBLY A NEW PAINT JOB, I HAVE BEEN IN OFFICE OVER 10 YEARS AND NOTHING HAS EVER BEEN DONE TO IMPROVE THIS SITUATION.	10,000.00	6/30/2025	GENERAL FUND MAINT BUDGET	NO	UGLY WORN OUT CARPET, NONWORKING LIGHTS AND UGLY PAINT IN THE MOST HIGH TRAFFIC OFFICE IN THE COUNTY. POOR IMPRESSION ON THE PUBLIC.
Facilities - New Construction	Headworks building. Exhaust ventilation, roof hatch for removal of auger, slab floor, bulkhead old well, heating and insulation. Possible auger replacement? Park City?					

Type of Project	Description and justification of project (include a description of the existing system to be replaced, if any):	Estimated cost of project (if available)	By what date would you like to complete this project?	In your opinion, how do you see this project being funded? (For example, Operating Budget, reserve funds, grant funds, etc.) Describe any recent attempts to fund the project.	Will this project require additional yearly maintenance, fixed costs, personnel, or require additional supplies on a yearly basis? If so, please explain and provide an opinion of increased yearly costs.	What are the consequences associated with not completing this project?
Equipment Purchase	Back up pump for lift station. Only ordered when current back up pump is used. Because of excessive lead time to obtain the pumps, having one reserve on site is recommended	15K	12/31/2025		no	during low flow times, the system can operate off of one pump, during high flow, secondary pump is needed to keep up with pump demands. Pump system rental could be required if pump fails with no replacement on site.
Facilities - Maintenance or Upgrade	Johnson Controls BAS system connection to SKADA. Currently, outside of the facility, we have no connection to any alarms, issues, trending, or plant status. We have to be onsite to address or gather any information.	18K	7/1/2025	Operating Budget	n/a	Risk associated with unknown issues or alarms.
Facilities - Maintenance or Upgrade	Building Automation System to be tied to HVAC systems at Civic. Using existing controller (installed in new ADA addition), connect HVAC systems at the Civic Center. This provides the ability to schedule the space comfort to align closely with use so we are not heating and cooling a space when not in use. Provides greater control of system, trending and diagnostics, alarms regarding any issues, and might possibly be eligible for an energy rebate (need to research)	12K	12/31/2025	General Fund, Utility savings, rebate		
Facilities - Maintenance or Upgrade	New/additional concrete flatwork at Civic. Pour pad for second wash pad, and extend sidewalks. Pad at double door entrance underneath the covered arena.	depending on scope 8K-15K				
Facilities - New Construction	Pole Barn for Site Storage. Northwest corner of the property. Approx 5000 sq' 1 roll up, one man door.	@ \$45 per sq', 225K				
Facilities - Maintenance or Upgrade	Demo and repour slab/patio behind West Annex. Re work sump. This location is primarily responsible for water infiltration into the basement of the West Annex.	5-7K	6/30/2025			Water damage in basement of West Annex

Type of Project	Description and justification of project (include a description of the existing system to be replaced, if any):	Estimated cost of project (if available)	By what date would you like to complete this project?	In your opinion, how do you see this project being funded? (For example, Operating Budget, reserve funds, grant funds, etc.) Describe any recent attempts to fund the project.	Will this project require additional yearly maintenance, fixed costs, personnel, or require additional supplies on a yearly basis? If so, please explain and provide an opinion of increased yearly costs.	What are the consequences associated with not completing this project?
Facilities - New Construction	We desperately need a new library building in order to meet the needs of county residents. We need room for more books and especially for programs to better serve the county. Our award-winning library (ELSA) helps residents save hundreds of thousands of dollars a year through their library card (over \$500,000 last year alone) and provides help with computers, job searches, entertainment and training. The library is vital to the economic well-being of the county.	\$3-4 million	1/1/2030	A significant portion of the funds will be raised privately and through grants, but the county must put up a large part (1/3rd to 1/2).	Currently, the library should have 5 staff although it's down to 3. Staffing may not need to be increased with the new building but maintenance and fixed costs may increase although if the building is built with energy efficiency in mind, the fixed costs may not increase that much.	Stagnation

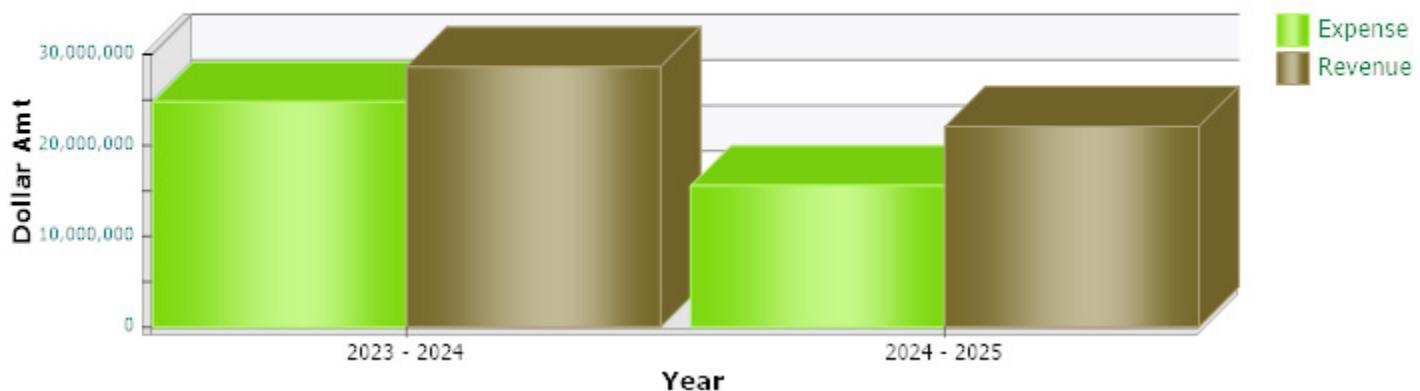


Appendix B: Stillwater County FY2024 Budget



An Employee-Owned Company

**STILLWATER COUNTY Expenditure/Revenue Comparison For
Year 2023 - 2025
Funds 1000-2999**



**STILLWATER COUNTY Expenditure Budget by Fund For Year
2024 - 2025
Funds 1000-3999**

