

Columbus

MONTANA



COLUMBUS AREA GROWTH POLICY

2012

RESOLUTION of THE COLUMBUS-STILLWATER COUNTY CITY-COUNTY
PLANNING BOARD

RECOMMENDING THE PROPOSED COLUMBUS AREA GROWTH POLICY, 2012,
TO THE COLUMBUS TOWN COUNCIL
AND STILLWATER COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, the Columbus-Stillwater County City-County Planning Board has prepared the Columbus Area Growth Policy, 2012, for the jurisdictional area pursuant to 76-1-601, MCA; and,

WHEREAS, a public hearing on the proposed Growth Policy was held after notice was published in the Stillwater County News pursuant to 76-1-602 MCA; and,

WHEREAS, all recommendations and suggestions from the public hearing were given consideration by the Columbus City-County Planning Board.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Columbus-Stillwater County City-County Planning recommends the Columbus Area Growth Policy, 2012, for adoption to the Columbus Town Council and the Stillwater County Board of County Commissioners pursuant to 76-1-603, MCA.

APPROVED this 24th day of July, 2012.

Columbus-Stillwater County City-County Planning Board

Absent
President

Jeanne Krenitz
Member

Ed Uig
Member

William Lawrence
Member

Radmy Lind
Member

Dini Holt
Member

[Signature]
Member

Absent
Member

Neda Stadl
Member

COPY

JOINT RESOLUTION OF INTENTION TO ADOPT
THE COLUMBUS AREA GROWTH POLICY, 2012

WHEREAS, the Joint Stillwater-County Planning Board was created in 1967 pursuant to 11-3806 R.C.M. 1947, and

WHEREAS, the jurisdictional area of the Joint city-County Planning Board was revised to the Area within the incorporated limits of the Town of Columbus and the contiguous unincorporated Area outside the town limits pursuant to 76-1-504; M.C.A. and,

WHEREAS, the joint Town of Columbus-Stillwater County City-County Planning Board has prepared the Columbus Area Growth Policy, 2012, for the jurisdictional area pursuant to 76-1-601; M.C.A. and,

WHEREAS, the Joint Stillwater City-County Planning Board held a public hearing on the 24th day of July, 2012 to receive written and oral recommendations and suggestions on the proposed the Columbus Area Growth Policy, 2005, pursuant to 76-1-602; M.C.A. and,

WHEREAS, the Joint Stillwater City-County Planning Board recommended adoption of the Columbus Area Growth Policy, 2012, by resolution pursuant to 76-1-603; M.C.A.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Columbus Town Council and Stillwater County Board of Commissioners jointly adopt the Columbus Area Growth Policy, 2012.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 20th day of August, 2012.

TOWN OF COLUMBUS

Gary W. Wolferrmann
Gary Wolferrmann, Mayor

Attest: Ronald D. Barndt
Ron Barndt, Town Clerk

BOARD COMMISSIONERS
STILLWATER COUNTY

Approved & Adopted August 28, 2012

Dennis Shupak
Dennis Shupak, Chair

Gerald W. Dell
Gerald W. Dell

Maureen Davey
Maureen Davey

Attest: Pauline M. Mishler
Pauline M. Mishler, Clerk and Recorder



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special appreciation is extended to all citizens participating in the surveys, community forums, and submitting comments; community groups, businesses, public officials and past City-County Planning Board members and staff contributing to this Growth Policy.

Columbus Town Council

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Gary Anderson

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Paul Edwards

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Stillwater County Commissioners

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION.....	1-1
2.0	CITIZEN PARTICIPATION	2-1
3.0	COMMUNITY GOALS and OBJECTIVES	3-1
4.0	HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.....	4-1
5.0	EXISTING CHARACTERISTICS and FEATURES	5-1
5.1	Land Use	5-1
5.2	Population	5-10
5.3	Housing Needs	5-10
5.4	Economic Conditions	5-10
5.5	Local Services	5-11
5.6	Public Facilities	5-16
5.7	Natural Resources	5-34
6.0	PROJECTED TRENDS	6-1
6.1	Land Use	6-1
6.2	Population	6-1
6.3	Economic Conditions	6-3
6.4	Local Services	6-3
6.5	Natural Resources	6-5

7.0	IMPLEMENTATION of GROWTH POLICY	7-1
7.1	Policies, Regulations, and Implementation Measures	7-1
7.2	Public Infrastructure Strategy.....	7-8
7.3	Implementation Strategy.....	7-10
7.4	Statement of Coordination and Cooperation	7-11
7.5	Statement on Subdivision Review Criteria.....	7-12
7.6	Statement on Public Hearings for Subdivisions.....	7-20
APPENDIX A		
APPENDIX B		
INFORMATION SOURCES.....		
MAPS		
	Zoning Districts.....	5-2
	Public Land.....	5-9
	Existing Water System	5-18
	Sewer System.....	5-20
	Storm Drainage	5-22
	Transportation System	5-27
	Street Light Districts.....	5-30
	Flood Hazard Areas.....	5-38
	Future Service Areas	6-4

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION:

A Master Plan was approved for the Columbus Area in 1993 and later updated in 1997. The 1999 Montana Legislature changed state law authorizing growth policies rather than master plans or comprehensive plans. The 2003 Montana Legislature amended the law again to recognize existing master plans as valid growth policies until October 2006.

The City-County Planning Board was established in 1967 by the Columbus Town Council and Stillwater County Commissioners and serves in an advisory capacity to these governing bodies. This Growth Policy has been prepared as part of the City-County Planning Board's responsibilities and on-going planning effort in the Columbus area.

This Columbus Area Growth Policy is intended to replace the 2005 Columbus Area Growth Policy, which replaced 1997 Columbus Area Master Plan to comply with the new statutory requirements in Montana Codes Annotated 76-1-601. Baseline information from the previous documents were utilized and updated where more current information was available during the planning process.

A growth policy is not a regulatory document and does not confer any authority to regulate what is not otherwise specifically authorized by law or regulations adopted pursuant to the law. A governing body may not withhold, deny, or impose conditions on any land use approval or other authority to act based solely on compliance with an adopted growth policy.

After adoption of a growth policy, the governing bodies within the area covered by the growth policy are guided by and give consideration to the general policy and pattern of development set out in the growth policy in the authorization, construction, alteration, or abandonment of public ways, public places, public structures, or public utilities; authorization, acceptance, or construction of water mains, sewers, connections, facilities, or utilities; and adoption of zoning ordinances or resolutions.

Citizen participation is encouraged throughout the growth policy process and implementation of the growth policy. Information about the planning process was provided through a variety of methods including news releases, presentations to civic groups, resident surveys and open public meetings. A public hearing on the proposed plan was held as required, followed by a recommendation by the City-County Planning Board to the governing bodies. The plan will be presented to the Columbus Town Council and Stillwater County Commissioners for formal adoption.

Community goals and objectives were reviewed in the process and revised to include additional guidance from the citizen participation process. Community goals and objectives are listed in Chapter 3. Implementation of this Growth Policy will be oriented to accomplish community development goals and objectives.

The City-County Planning Board recommended including the historical background of the area along with the required elements of a growth policy. The historical background information is in Chapter 4.

Existing characteristics and features of the jurisdictional area are described with maps and text. This inventory includes land use, population, housing needs, economic conditions, local services, public facilities and natural resources in Chapter 5. Maps of the zoning districts, public land, flood hazard area, transportation system, water system, sewer system, storm drainage, sidewalk inventory, and street light districts are included.

Projected trends for the five to ten year life of the growth policy are provided for land use, population, housing needs, economic conditions, local services and natural resources in Chapter 6. Maps of future service areas and proposed capital improvement projects are also included in this chapter.

Implementation of the Growth Policy in Chapter 7 includes a description of policies, regulations, and implementation measures; a strategy for public infrastructure; an implementation strategy; a statement of cooperation and cooperation between the town and county; a statement on subdivision criteria; and a statement on public hearings for subdivisions.

Designated areas where the governing bodies intend to authorize an exemption from any portion of the requirement of an environmental assessment in compliance with Montana Code Annotated 76-3-210 and review of the criteria in Montana Code Annotated 76-3-608 (3)(a) for subdivisions proposed to be annexed to the town of Columbus are identified in Chapter 8. A map of the recommended exempt areas is included.

This growth policy is scheduled to be reviewed every five years and amended at least every ten years to keep it current and flexible enough to meet changing community needs.



CHAPTER 2: CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

2.1 PURPOSE:

The purpose of citizen participation is to inform people of the planning process; solicit public input to identify issues, concerns, goals, objectives, and needs; clarify and rank goals; evaluate alternative solutions; set priorities; and provide additional opportunities for public comment in the decision making process and implementation of projects. A combination of techniques is suggested for citizen participation in the community planning process. Survey techniques include questionnaires, telephone surveys, interviews, and social media and traditional media-based input. Public information techniques include open information meetings and public hearings. Open participatory techniques include community forums and meetings involving civic groups, community organizations and citizens in general. The representative process techniques include input from advisory boards, elected and appointed officials.

2.2 OPPORTUNITIES FOR CITIZEN PARTICIPATION:

- Results of the most recent citizen surveys will be reviewed, summarized and used in the planning process to identify major issues and concerns.
- Information about the planning process will be provided through a variety of methods including news releases, published reports and presentations to community organizations.
- Public information meetings and open community forums will be held in Columbus to gather input, clarify issues, hear concerns, goals or objectives, and rank goals and objectives.
- Sections of the draft growth policy will be presented at City-County Planning Board meetings as they are developed. These meetings are open to the public and citizen participation is encouraged.
- The growth policy will be simplified as much as possible so that it is understandable to most citizens
- Draft copies of the growth policy will be available to all interested groups or individuals upon request for their review and comments. Follow up on all citizen inquiries with personal contact from a City-County Planning Board member or planning staff is suggested.
- A public hearing on the plan will be held as required (76-1-602 MCA). Public comments will be evaluated and changes made as necessary.

- The growth policy will be presented to the Town Council and County Commissioners. Their meetings are open to the public and are another opportunity for public participation.
- Formal adoption of the growth policy is by resolution of the governing body. The governing body may submit the proposed plan to the qualified electors of the jurisdictional area. The qualified electors may also adopt, revise or repeal a growth policy by initiative or referendum.
- Citizens will be informed of plan implementation and related projects through news releases, public notices, meetings and/or hearings as needed.
- Public comments will be reviewed before implementing recommended projects.
- A formal action will be taken by the governing body before any project or recommendation is implemented.

2.3 SUMMARY OF 2002 GROWTH POLICY SURVEY:

A Growth Policy Survey was prepared by the County Planning Office and mailed to postal customers countywide including the Columbus area. Responses were received from 118 people in the area. The 2002 survey results from the Columbus area are presented in Appendix B.

The average age of the respondents was over 46 years of age. The average years of residence in the county were 20.7 years. About 60% of respondents were male and 40% female. Almost 80% of those responding to this question worked in the county and 20% worked outside the county in a variety of occupations.

The survey contained a variety of questions on natural and community features including open space, agriculture, wildlife, wilderness, mountains, rivers, affordable housing, knowing your neighbors, rural lifestyle, sense of community. The average value for all features ranged from 4.2 to 5.4, on a 6 point scale with 6 being the highest rating. Open space, wildlife, mountains, and rivers had an average rating above 5 and agriculture, wilderness, affordable housing, knowing your neighbors, rural lifestyle and sense of community had an average rating between 4.2 and 5 indicating a relatively high value is placed on all of these features. Appendix B contains more detailed survey results.

Additional questions were asked about respondents' willingness to accept land use regulations to protect water quality, water quantity, promote economic development, maintain agricultural production, protect wildlife habitat, and preserve open space, subdivision design, subdivision location and no regulations at all. Only 4% of the respondents chose the no regulation option. Regulations to promote economic development also received less than a majority at 45%. The other items ranged from 64% for agriculture to 80% for water quality regulations. Water quantity, agriculture, wildlife habitat, open space, subdivision design and subdivision location all

received over 60% support. The survey results indicate respondents support regulation on all items listed except economic development.

Twenty one questions on land use and other issues were included in the survey. The majority agreed with all issues except providing tax breaks to attract business to the area and subdividing wherever people want. Survey results indicate subdividing rural land without infringing on private property rights; job creation and public services need to be improved. The strongest areas of agreement were that new development should not increase existing property taxes, subdivision activity should be regulated, development should not be allowed in areas without adequate water supply, need for a growth policy and land use planning should guide the location of new residential development.

Questions on planning tools and actions asked respondents how acceptable eight different actions are on a scale of 1 to 6, with 1 being very acceptable to 6 being very unacceptable. The majority indicated acceptance of requiring developers to pay for roads and other infrastructure directly related to the development, requiring developers to demonstrate there are adequate facilities to serve the development, setting criteria that must be met in order to develop, specific sensitive lands (floodplains, steep slopes, wildlife habitat, hazard areas), requiring developers to set aside land for schools and parks or pay fees. Moderate support was indicated for development located in or near towns and putting standards on development. No restrictions on land use were considered slightly unacceptable.

Questions on community services were also included in the survey for law enforcement, fire protection, ambulance, roads, bridges, senior services, schools, solid waste and weed control. The average ratings ranges from 1.98 for senior services to 3.79 for roads on a 6 point scale with 1 being the highest rating. The survey results indicate there is average satisfaction with public services with some need for improvement in most services.

Other survey questions included respondents overall satisfaction rating for quality of life, willingness to pay for services and costs of development. The average satisfaction rating for quality of life was 6.9 on a 10 point scale. Only 48% of the respondents indicated a willingness to pay more for improved services. Over 94% thought new development should pay for itself and not increase taxes.

Growth policy forums were also held in each community around the county between April 30, 2002 and May 23, 2002. Comments, concerns and goals were listed during these meetings. Results from the growth policy forums were compiled to display concerns and goals for each community. Four issues identified for the Columbus area were 1. Pursue a rational method for growth to occur, 2. Amend subdivision regulations and incorporate with growth policy, 3. Promote businesses that are low impact to the environment, 4. Provide public services and infrastructure to accommodate growth.

2.4 SUMMARY OF 2008 GROWTH PLANNING SURVEY:

The Stillwater County Planning Office, at the direction of the County Planning Board and the Board of County Commissioners, conducted a Growth Planning Survey from June through September 2008 to measure citizen's opinions and thoughts on issues ranging from growth and planning to services and important attributes of Stillwater County. This survey was similar to the one conducted in 2002. The results of the 2008 survey provide data that will be valuable for making planning decisions in the future. 110 people from the Columbus area responded to the survey. The results from the 2008 survey for the Columbus area are included in Appendix A. The following summary discusses the county-wide results of the survey.

Nearly 300 individuals participated in this survey, giving an overall margin of error of about plus or minus five percent, a statistically valid sample. The typical respondent has lived in the County for 20 years or more (19 years median, 26.12 years average) and is about 60 years old (60 years median, 58.76 years average). Males made up 56.15% of respondents. The most common occupations were "retired" (38.87%), "farmer/rancher" (22.26%), and "self-employed business person or business owner" (16.60%). The percent of respondents who worked in Stillwater County was 77.91. A summary of the findings are as follows, arranged by section of the survey:

FEATURES OF STILLWATER COUNTY

The "Features of Stillwater County" section asked people to rate several features on a scale of 1 to 6, with one being "not at all important" and six being "extremely important." "Rivers and Waterways" was named the most important feature, with support crossing geographic and demographic boundaries. "Stable Economy" garnered significant support from Columbus (5.31), while "Wildlife" was named as extremely important in Nye (5.83).

Other interesting findings were "Agriculture" gathering much support among those who have lived in the County for 20 years or longer (5.44 against 5.10 for those who have lived in the County for less than 20 years). This dichotomy is also shown in the response toward "Area History" getting a 4.77 from those who have lived in the County longer than 20 years against 4.47 from those who have lived here less than 20 years. Respondents less than 60 years old valued "Affordable Housing" (4.70), "Knowing your Neighbors" (4.63), and "Sense of Community" (5.23) more than those older than 60 years (4.34, 4.32, and 4.84 respectively). Women were more likely than men to rate something as "extremely important."

VIEWPOINTS

The "Viewpoints" section asked respondents to rate Stillwater County as a place to live on scale of 1 to 10, with one being a poor quality of life and 10 being a good quality of life. The average response was 8.10. This was a significant increase over the 2002 survey's finding of 6.67, and was shared by all geographic regions and demographics, never being below 7.00 (Dean) or above 8.67 (Absarokee).

The second part of the "Viewpoints" section asked respondents to check "under what conditions you would be willing to accept more regulation of land use." Only two conditions failed to receive more than 50 percent ("If regulations promoted economic development" at 42.70% and

“I would not be willing to accept such regulation under any circumstances” at 8.24%). This mirrored the results of the 2002 survey in which the same two conditions were the only ones to receive less than 50 percent. The dichotomy between Columbus and the rest of the County with regard to the economy was again evident, as Columbus was the only community to give more than 50% support to accepting more regulations promoting economic development. Regulations supporting subdivision design and location were fairly well supported (69.29% and 70.41% overall willing to accept further regulations), but also saw geographic differences of opinion with Park City giving the least amount of support (21.43% and 42.86%), and Absarokee giving the most support to (94.29% and 85.71%).

People who have lived in the County 20 or more years were significantly more willing to accept regulations to maintain “current levels of agricultural production” (59.06% to 52.67% than those living in the County for less than 20 years), and significantly less likely to support regulations preserving wildlife habitat and open space (48.82% to 58.77% and 59.06% to 70.23% respectively). Respondents 60 years old and older were more likely than those younger than 60 years old to accept more regulations protecting water quantity (68.99% to 58.89%), promoting economic development (47.29% to 36.61%), and maintaining current levels of agricultural production (65.89% to 45.54%).

LAND USE AND OTHER ISSUES

The survey section entitled “Land Use and Other Issues” asked people to indicate how strongly they agree or disagree with given statements on a scale of 1 to 6, one being “strongly agree” and six being “strongly disagree.” The statements garnering the most agreement were “Farms and ranches are a good way to preserve open space” (1.95), “Stillwater County needs to plan for growth and change” (1.97), and “Subdivision development should not be allowed in the floodplain” (1.95). Respondents generally disagreed with the statement “People should be able to subdivide when and where they want” (4.78).

Respondents who have lived in the County 20 years or longer were more likely than those living in the County less than 20 years to agree with the statements “Farms and ranches are a good way to preserve open space” (1.72 to 2.11), “Loss of agricultural production is a problem” (2.01 to 2.28), “Government regulation should be kept to a minimum” (2.56 to 2.91), and “Infringement on private property rights is a problem” (2.52 to 2.98) and to disagree with the statements “Maintaining recreational access to public lands is important” (2.61 to 2.27) and “Conservation easements are a viable tool for protecting the environment and preserving agriculture” (2.89 to 2.53).

Those respondents 60 years old and older were more likely than those younger than 60 to agree with the statements “The County’s planning effort should guide the location of new residential development” (2.05 to 2.53), “The County’s planning effort should determine the amount of development” (2.51 to 3.04), “Subdivision of rural areas, including agricultural lands, is a problem” (2.09 to 2.88), “Subdivision activity should be regulated” (1.95 to 2.42), “Development should not be allowed in areas without adequate water supply” (2.07 to 2.57), and “Subdivision development should not be allowed in the floodplain” (1.73 to 2.16) and to disagree with the statement “People should be able to subdivide when and where they want” (5.04 to 4.54).

Women were more likely than men to agree with the statements “Loss of agricultural production is a problem” (1.89 to 2.35), “Stillwater County needs more jobs” (2.46 to 3.14), “Infrastructure (roads, schools, water, sewer, etc.) needs to be improved” (2.35 to 2.80), and “Stillwater County should provide tax breaks to attract businesses to the area” (3.14 to 3.54) and to disagree with the statement “People should be able to subdivide when and where they want” (4.98 to 4.62).

PLANNING TOOLS AND ACTIONS

In the “Planning Tools and Actions” section, respondents were asked to indicate how acceptable several proposals were to them on a scale of 1 to 6, one being “very unacceptable” and six being “very acceptable.” The proposals receiving the most support were “Require developers to demonstrate that there are adequate facilities (road, sewer, water) to serve development” (5.05) and “Regulations for specific sensitive lands (floodplains, hilltops, wildlife habitat, natural hazard areas, etc.)” (4.70). The proposals with the least amount of support were “Creating a County bond issue to raise money to help purchase the development rights for land from landowners who want to restrict development on their land” (2.99) and “Putting standards on development but no restrictions on land use” (3.09). However, purchase of development rights scored significantly higher in Nye (4.25), than elsewhere in the County.

People who have lived in the County 20 years or longer were less likely to support “Restricting development in some areas” (4.37 to 4.76), “Regulations for specific sensitive lands (floodplains, hilltops, wildlife habitat, natural hazard areas, etc.)” (4.55 to 4.87), and “Creating a County bond issue to raise money to help purchase the development rights for land from landowners who want to restrict development on their land” (2.81 to 3.28) than those who have lived in the County less than 20 years. Also, those respondents 60 years old or older were significantly less likely to support “Putting standards on development but no restrictions on land use” (2.69 to 3.37) than those respondents less than 60 years old.

SERVICES IN STILLWATER COUNTY

In the section of the survey entitled “Services in Stillwater County” respondents were asked to indicate their satisfaction with services which are provided in the County on a scale of 1 to 6, one being “Completely Satisfied, Couldn’t be improved” and six being “Not at all Satisfied, In need of improvement,” and to indicate whether or not they were willing to pay more taxes for improved service by checking “Yes” or “No.” The service garnering the best satisfaction was the “Senior Citizen Center” (2.52), while the service garnering the worst satisfaction was “Weed Control” (3.87). It is also notable that respondents 60 and older gave the “Senior Citizen Center” 2.45 and the position of County Weed Supervisor was vacant for the first six months of 2008. A low salience rate was also shown regarding the “Airport” and “Chamber of Commerce,” with only 59.63% and 65.56% respectively, of respondents rating those services.

Respondents who have lived in the County 20 years or more were more satisfied than those living here less than 20 years with “Fire Protection” (2.46 to 2.91), “Ambulance/EMS” (2.52 to 2.99), “Community Hospital” (2.78 to 3.17), “Planning” (3.55 to 3.90), and “Library” (2.34 to 2.77). Respondents 60 years old and older were more satisfied than those younger than 60 with

“Public Education” (2.95 to 3.50), “Solid Waste” (2.61 to 3.07), “Planning” (3.48 to 3.91), and “Library” (2.38 to 2.71).

On the second question in the section, “Are you willing to pay more taxes for improved services”, the highest percentages of people willing to pay more taxes were in “Law Enforcement” (59.65%), “Fire Protection” (53.07%)”, and “Ambulance/EMS” (50.44%). The lowest amounts of support were for paying increased taxes for “Chamber of Commerce” (9.65%), “Airport” (10.09%), and “Senior Citizen Center” (17.98%).

MAKING THE FUTURE BETTER

The section of the survey entitled “Making the Future Better” gave respondents the opportunity to write in “two things you would like to see change in Stillwater County,” “What would you like to see for the future of Stillwater County,” “What is the most important to the long-term health and vitality of Stillwater County,” and “Other comments.” The most common responses were, of course, regarding planning and growth, with responders commenting about their attitudes toward open space, private property, zoning, and the subdivision process. Some of the most common views expressed were for a protection of agricultural and rural traditions, implementing more regulations on subdividers, the need for the protection of water resources, the desire for better maintained roads, the need for more and better funded law enforcement, and the desire for a stable economy and strong local businesses. Other responses asked for better access to public lands, better and more efficient local government, the incorporation of communities such as Park City and Absarokee, the need for strong weed regulations, and the maintenance of strong community character. The responses from Columbus were again more likely to place value on economic issues, such as jobs, and were more likely to mention issues such as beautification of downtown, better interstate access, and the establishment of more sidewalks and walking trails.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU

The “General Information about You” section was an optional section which allowed the survey to break down the responses by demographic group. Respondents who have lived in the County for 20 years or longer and respondents who are 60 years old and older were disproportionately male, with male respondents accounting for 60.32% and 62.88% respectively in these demographic groups. Respondents who have lived in the County less than 20 years and are less than 60 years old were only 53.60% and 52.29% male respectively. The most common occupations among those who have lived in the County for 20 years or longer were “retired” (38.17%), “farmer/rancher” (29.01%), and “self-employed business person or business owner (other than farming and ranching)” (21.37%). The most common occupations of those who have lived in the County less than 20 years were “retired” (38.17%), “farmer/rancher” (16.03%), and “other” (17.56%). The most common occupations of respondents 60 years old and older were “retired” (66.41%), “farmer/rancher” (21.37), and “self-employed business person or business owner (other than farming and ranching)” (14.50%). The most prevalent occupations of respondents younger than 60 were “farmer/rancher” (22.12%), “self-employed business person or business owner (other than farming and ranching)” (20.35%), and “other” (19.47%). The most common occupations among male respondents were “retired” (40.69%), “farmer/rancher”

(26.90%), and “self-employed business person or business owner (other than farming and ranching)” (18.62%). Among female respondents the most prevalent occupations were “retired” (39.47%), “farmer/rancher” (16.67%), and “self-employed business person or business owner (other than farming and ranching)” (14.04%).

CHAPTER 3: COMMUNITY GOALS & OBJECTIVES

OVERALL GOAL:

To improve the public health, safety and general welfare of the community by planning for future development so that adequate public facilities and services are provided; the needs of agriculture, business, and industry are recognized; residential subdivisions are developed in an orderly manner to coordinate roads, storm drainage, water and sewer systems, solid waste facilities, utilities, emergency services, and parkland; and to promote the efficient and economical use of public funds.

OVERALL OBJECTIVES:

- Encourage and use citizen participation in the planning process.
- Implement the Columbus Area Growth Policy through achievable policies, regulations, implementation measures, and strategies.
- Implement the capital improvements program, subdivision regulations, zoning ordinance and floodplain regulations to encourage rational growth.
- Collect and analyze population and economic statistics to monitor trends and growth rates as data becomes available.
- Review the Columbus Area Growth Policy within five years and update at least every ten years to maintain current data through use of information from the decennial US Census.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES TO ADDRESS PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE ISSUES:

TRANSPORTATION GOAL:

Maintain an efficient transportation network in the Columbus area which includes highways, county roads, streets, alleys, sidewalks, airport, and railroad crossings.

TRANSPORTATION OBJECTIVES:

- Maintain the transportation element in the capital improvements program (CIP), which includes streets, roads, alleys, sidewalks, and the airport, to keep it consistent with current conditions.

- Maintain an annual maintenance program for street repair. Include within the budget, provisions for street improvements and maintenance.
- Actively seek and apply for grant funding to assist in funding the capital improvements within the CIP.
- Include an element within the CIP to address repair and replacement of deteriorating sidewalks and the development of new sidewalks to provide a connected network within the Columbus area.
- Replace sidewalks that are in poor condition.
- Continue to implement the Airport Layout and Airspace Plans, including airport influence area regulations.
- Request priority consideration from Montana Department of Transportation for improvements to the Rapelje Road, including an interchange as the town expands west and north.
- Explore options for establishing an additional railroad crossing.
- Explore ways to mitigate impacts from increased an increase in trains, including grade separations.
- Update CIP as necessary.

WATER, SEWER and STORM DRAINAGE GOAL:

To provide sewer, water, and storm drainage services to the residents of the Columbus in a safe, effective and efficient manner.

WATER, SEWER and STORM DRAINAGE OBJECTIVES:

- Update the sewer, water, storm drainage, buildings, and equipment elements in the capital improvements program (CIP).
- Include within the budget a routine program for yearly testing, maintenance, repair and replacement of sewer system, the water system, and the storm drainage system components.
- Actively seek and apply for grant funding to assist in funding the capital improvements within the CIP.
- Update and implement plans for storm drainage improvements.

- Evaluate water and sewer hook-up charges and fees to insure they reflect current costs. Adjust water and sewer hook-up charges and fees for inflation if necessary. This will be done on an annual basis. The Public Works Department will recommend to the Town Council what the fee should be.
- Establish a systematic program for the phased reconstruction of streets, sidewalks, curb and gutters in Columbus.

PARKS & RECREATION GOAL:

To provide adequate sites for parks to serve each neighborhood and the entire community with a variety of recreational opportunities.

PARKS & RECREATION OBJECTIVES:

- Separate the budget for parks and the cemetery and consider the development of a cemetery district.
- Prepare and implement a plan for the development and maintenance of parks within the Town of Columbus which includes a site plan for each park.
- Update the parks & recreation element in the capital improvements program (CIP).
- Keep Itch-Kep-Pe Park clean and maintained. This would be accomplished through the use of local civic groups or other alternatives to assist the Public Works Department.
- Continue to pursue funds and opportunities to maintain and update Granite Peak Park, including the redevelopment of a walking trail in the park. This would require coordination between the Town, the Granite Peak Park Steering Committee, the Columbus School District, user groups, and other civic groups.
- Utilize the park dedication requirement of the subdivision review process to maintain, acquire, and improve, parks, to the extent allowed by statute (76-3-621, MCA).
- Utilize the Columbus Area Trails Plan to guide the development of a trail system in the Columbus area.
- Explore options for specialized parks management, including creating a parks department or a park district.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES TO ADDRESS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ISSUES:

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL:

Continue efforts on the retention and expansion of existing businesses, tourism promotion and diversification of the local economy.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES:

- Participate in the update of the Beartooth RC & D Economic Development District and Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.
- Give highest priority to retention and expansion of existing businesses and continue ongoing efforts on tourism promotion.
- Keep a current inventory of properties owned by the Town with potential for commercial or industrial uses. These properties should be actively marketed for sale or lease.
- Continue to promote the development of strong local businesses.
- Encourage use of high-speed digital technology in the Columbus area.
- Identify available alternatives for revitalizing the Columbus central business district, including reconstruction of parking, sidewalks and pedestrian crossings. Then develop a program to implement preferred alternatives.
- Consider industrial expansion east of Columbus.
- Cooperate with the Stillwater County Economic Development Department on projects and programs that affect the Columbus area.
- Cooperate with Stillwater County Chamber of Commerce to promote tourism in the Columbus area.
- Support the development of natural resources in a responsible manner.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES TO ADDRESS GROWTH MANAGEMENT ISSUES:

GROWTH MANAGEMENT GOAL:

Emphasize long range planning and implementation measures to address growth management issues.

GROWTH OBJECTIVES:

- Implement approved mine impact plans, amend or adjust the impact plan as necessary to address any fiscal disparities to affected units of local government and stay involved with mine related issues.
- Keep communications open and active with the mining company to monitor levels of mine related employment, in-migrating employees and students annually.
- Keep user fees and impact payments at levels sufficient to cover costs.
- Ensure street connectivity when reviewing proposed subdivisions.

GOALS and OBJECTIVES FOR LAND USE and SUBDIVISIONS ISSUES:

LAND USE and SUBDIVISIONS GOAL:

Provide for the orderly, efficient, and economical development of land and subdivisions in the Columbus Area to coordinate roads, storm drainage, water and sewer systems, solid waste facilities, utilities, emergency services, and parklands.

LAND USE and SUBDIVISIONS OBJECTIVES:

- Review Columbus zoning ordinance on a periodic basis and keep the ordinance and zoning map current with legislative changes and community needs to serve the intended purposes.
- Encourage high density residential development near town.
- Revise the Stillwater County & the Town of Columbus Subdivision Regulations on a periodic basis to keep them current with state laws and community needs.
- Town and County governments should adopt a policy which includes a method for determining payment for extension of capital facilities by subdividers as authorized in 76-3-510 MCA.
- Guide the Town on the use of and calculation of impact fees to minimize the cost of growth to existing residents.
- Develop policies and guidelines to process annexation requests.
- Encourage annexation of wholly surrounded properties when water and sewer service can be extended to serve this area.
- Target service extension into areas north, east and west of Columbus that is recommended for future development and annexation to the Town.

- Extend the zoning jurisdiction of the Town, especially to the east and west, to encourage complimentary land uses as the Town expands.
- Ensure and promote connectivity of collector streets and trail when reviewing proposed subdivisions.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES TO ADDRESS HOUSING ISSUES:

HOUSING GOAL:

Provide a variety of quality housing which meets the demand for housing and is compatible with existing neighborhoods.

HOUSING OBJECTIVES:

- Encourage developers to provide a variety of housing.
- Encourage the developers of mobile home parks to provide landscaping, buffering and improve the appearance of the parks.
- Ensure the Town of Columbus Zoning Ordinance includes residential single family, multiple family and manufactured home districts.
- Inform and educate public of programs to retrofit old houses for energy efficiency.

GOALS and OBJECTIVES FOR OTHER LOCAL GOVERNMENT ISSUES:

LOCAL GOVERNMENT GOAL:

Provide quality public facilities and services to the citizens of Columbus in the most efficient and economical manner possible.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT OBJECTIVES:

- Update the capital improvement plan and implement the capital improvement program.
- Encourage the creation of a tree committee, as enabled under the Town's tree ordinance, to promote the planting and maintenance of trees within the Town.
- Create something like adopt a highway to keep Columbus area roads and streets clean.

- Evaluate the adequacy of existing Public Works Department facilities to serve the Town's future needs.
- Encourage cooperation between the Town and County to identify unmet community needs.

EDUCATION - SCHOOL GOAL:

To provide well rounded educational opportunities to meet the diverse educational needs of all students to become competent and productive in this changing world.

EDUCATION - SCHOOLS OBJECTIVES:

- **School Environment:** Provide a safe, well maintained, respectful educational environment that promotes positive teaching and learning experiences.
- **Education Program:** Provide a challenging, comprehensive learning experience for all students.
- **Community-School Partnership:** Provide positive community relationships including ongoing dialogue with parents, students, staff, and community members.
- **Fiscal Planning:** Develop a school district budget so the allocation of resources has the greatest positive impact on the performance of students and staff.
- **Accountability:** Recognize the need to use the resources provided by the community in a responsible manner to get the best education for students.
- **Staff Support and Relationship:** Enhance the learning opportunities for students by providing professional development for all employees and encouraging innovative instructional practices.
- **Cooperate with the school to help facilitate school capital projects.**
- **Students:** Promote and improve academic opportunities and excellence among our students.

MEDICAL GOAL:

Provide health education, prevention and a full continuum of quality health care services.

MEDICAL OBJECTIVES:

- Ensure long term building, operation and maintenance needs of the hospital are met for present and future community needs.
- Utilize community resources to create optimal value through partnerships with health care providers through innovative risk sharing agreements.
- Seek to provide optimal value in quality and cost effective health care services through compliance, risk management, quality improvement and monitoring programs.
- Encourage partnerships among medical staff, employees, patients, residents, broader community and other providers.

CHAPTER 4: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 Early History:

The Columbus area has a colorful history, including several notable events prior to the turn of the century, as listed below. Much of the early history of this area is presented in "They Gazed on the Beartooths" by Jim Annin. Key events include the Lewis and Clark Expedition in 1806, the presence of the Crow Indian Reservation from 1851-1892, Cattle Grazing in the area beginning around 1870, the Yellowstone Trail being active 1875-1927, the Northern Pacific Railroad Depot established in 1882, the Columbus Post Office 1893, the Homesteading era 1892-1913 and the Sandstone Quarry north of Town that was active 1896-1906.

4.2 Town Development:

Sheep Dip was the original town site in this area. The Town name was changed to Stillwater in 1883 and later changed again to Columbus in 1893. The Town of Columbus was incorporated in 1907 and was in Yellowstone County at that time. Major additions to the town included Lavelle's Addition platted in 1889, Stillwater Townsite platted in 1891, Countryman's First Addition platted in 1893, Hunter's Addition (1893), Countryman Second Addition (1899), Stillwater Second Addition (1899), Annex Addition (1902), Myer's & Nice Addition (1906), Norton Addition (1907), East Side Addition (1907), Columbus Fair and Park Assn. Addition (1907), Park Addition (1909), Myers Addition (1910), Knause & Becker Addition (1911), Norton's Courthouse Addition (1913), Goode's Addition (1913), Mountainview Addition (1914), Norton's Second Addition (1916), McDonald's 3rd Eastside Addition (1916), Odd Fellow's Addition (1918), School Addition (1918), Amended Annex Addition (1940), Hamlet Addition (1951), Stuart Addition (1947), Mountain View Annex Addition (1952), Second School Addition (1953), Carr Addition (1953), Huff Addition (1956), Industrial Sites (1959), Second Carr Addition (1970), Progressive Addition (1972), Beartooth Heights (1977), Apple Village (1978), Beartooth Heights 2nd Filing (1979), Town Pump Annexation (1985), Lower Itch-Kep-Pe Park Annexation (1989), Beartooth Heights 3rd Filing (1995), Two Rivers Addition (1996), Stillwater Heights (2001), Sandstone Estates (2003), Fairway North (2004), and SCH Subdivision (2011).

4.3 Columbus Area Development:

Stillwater County was formed in 1913 from parts of Yellowstone, Carbon and Sweet Grass Counties. The County Courthouse was built in 1920. In addition to numerous individual surveys, subdivisions located outside the Town of Columbus but within the jurisdictional area include Jurovich-See Subdivision (1980), Keyser Creek Estates (1995) and Sandstone Estates (2001).

Irrigation Ditches:

The development of the irrigation ditches in the Columbus area coincided with the homesteading of this area. These ditches were important to the development of ranching and agricultural operations in this area. Two significant irrigation ditches and companies include Columbus

Irrigation Project developed from 1906-1938 and Columbus Water Users Association in 1938.

Water System:

A private water system served Columbus in the early 1900's until a wooden pipeline failed. The Town constructed its first water system in 1914 and has developed, expanded and upgraded the water system throughout the Town's history. Major water system developments include Columbus Water System constructed in 1914; Water Works Department established in 1915, the installation of cast iron pipes and hydrants, water line extensions from 1916 to present, water meters installed in 1921, water works pumps converted to electrical in 1918, chlorination installed in 1928, land purchased from Stillwater County for water storage tanks in 1932, well for municipal water supply in 1932, roof built on water storage tank in 1932, water works improvements (spiral weld pipe) in 1934, new water storage reservoir in 1926, valves installed in water system in 1937, fire hydrants installed in 1940, new water supply wells in 1945, cast iron water mains purchased from 1952-1956, new hook-ups to furnish pipe and tapping fee in 1959, asbestos cement pipe used in the 1960's, new water well on island in 1964, water quality testing used from 1964 to present, major water supply and storage improvements in 1973 and 1974, water meters installed in 1921 and from 1974-present, water availability charges in 1947, 1959, 1977, 1983, and 1985, capital improvements program established for water in 1979, rip-rap at island pump house in 1976, the Beartooth Heights water well drilled in 1985, the main line to storage tank replaced in 2004, and Heritage Park Well drilled in 2009.

Sewer System:

The initial sewer system for the Town was developed in 1916 and has been expanded along with the Town's expansion. The old Imhof tank is still visible near the entrance to Itch-Kep-Pe Park. The present sewer lagoons were built in the early 1960's. Significant sewer system developments include the sewer system constructed in 1916, sewer collection system expansion from 1916-present, sewage tank installed in 1953, sewage lagoons and outfall sewer lines constructed from 1961-1962, east side outfall line constructed in 1971, third and fourth cells for sewer lagoons built in 1975, capital improvement program established for sewer in 1979, sewer lagoon piping modifications in 1987, sewer availability charges in 1968, 1977, 1983, and 1985; and sewage treatment facility reconstruction 1999.

Solid Waste:

Garbage collection and disposal was an issue for the Town as early as 1916. A "dump ground" was established near the Yellowstone River Bridge around 1920. The dump location was changed to a site between the Airport and Sewer lagoons in the late 1950's and eventually closed out in 1984. The County Refuse Disposal District was created in 1974. Garbage Collection and Disposal began in 1916 and the dump ground retaining wall was built along the river in 1928. After problems with the dump were noted in 1955, the dump grounds were moved to pit south of Airport in 1958. Other significant developments in the Town's solid waste system include obtaining license to operate refuse disposal area in 1966, town being required to cover landfill every day beginning in 1968, landfill fenced and junk vehicle issue beginning in 1968, burning stopping at landfill in 1969, Town landfill being classified as Class III in 1975, garbage agreement signed between Town and County approved in 1975, capital improvement program established for solid waste in 1979, Town landfill closed in 1984, BFI being contracted to collect solid waste from 1994-2008, and MacKenzie Disposal being contracted to collect solid waste

from 2008-present.

Town Streets:

The Town began working on its streets as soon as it was incorporated. Street work has progressed throughout the Town's history and continues today. Other notable street issues included drainage, railroad crossings and parking in the business area. Town began grading streets in 1907, Town began graveling streets in 1912, Town began paving streets in 1917, Pike Avenue drainage issues noted in 1923 to present, concerns over RR crossings expressed in 1911, 1916, 1926, 1934, and 1977, business area parking issues noted in 1911, 1914, 1929, 1935, 1947, and 1953, traffic signs installed in 1931, speed limits established in 1935, street superintendent hired in 1944, drainage problems noted in 1948-present, house numbering (addressing) established in 1950-1951, and street signs installed in 1952.

County Roads:

The County began working on roads in the Columbus area immediately after the County was formed. Some of these roads predate Stillwater County. Work on the County roads has continued throughout the County's history. Dates when specific roads were declared a County Road are listed below along with significant developments. Centennial Road 1892, 1914, 1963, 1970; Keyser Creek Bridge originally built on Centennial Road in 1935 and rebuilt in 2005.

State Highways:

Work on the state highways in the Columbus area was noted as early as 1915 and again in the 1930's. The interstate was built around 1970. Yellowstone Trail Paved by State in 1919, reconstruction of U.S. Highway 10 in 1931, Columbus-Absarokee Highway construction in 1915, 1935, and 2008, Yellowstone River Bridge built in 1915, replaced in 1956, repaired in 1995, Rapelje Road construction in 1892, 1914, 1963, 1970; Keyser Creek Bridge on Hwy. 10 built in 1931 and replaced in 2004, I-90 Interchange issue 1965-1968, Interstate construction 1968-1972, and reconstruction of 9th/Pike/South Pratten in 1995.

Street Lights:

The earliest street lights date back to around the time the Town was incorporated and continues today. Two light districts were established in the 1950's and two more in the 1970's as noted below. Street lights were installed in Town in 1911, street light system expanded from 1912 - 1970, Montana Power Company supplied power in 1920, MPC replaced 100 W bulbs with 150W in 1943, Light Districts #38 and #39 1953, MPC changed street lights to Mercury Lights 1963, Light District #40 formed in 1971, and Light District #41 formed in 1976.

Sidewalks, Curb and Gutters:

Sidewalk, curb and gutter work also dates back to around the time the Town was incorporated. The most notable issue related to these improvements is that almost all of this work was paid for with special improvement districts (SIDs) or by private individuals. Sidewalk improvements began in 1910, sidewalk improvements using SID's from 1911-1927, curbs and gutter improvements using SID's from 1916-1928, location and grade of sidewalks required to be established by an engineer in 1949, sidewalk replacement on Pike Avenue in 1956, sidewalk curb and gutter work in Town from 1961-1962, sidewalk, curb and gutter standards developed in 1972, SID's suggested for replacement of sidewalks in 1978. Sidewalk improvement projects

continued using grant funds in 1996. Additional curb, gutter and drainage improvement projects were contracted in 2003 and finished in 2004.

Public Buildings:

Town Facilities:

The Town Water Works Department was established in 1915. The original Town Hall was purchased in the 1930's after Stockman's Bank went out of business during the Great Depression. The old Town Hall was utilized from 1931-1999. Fire halls were later added onto the Town Hall as noted below. Fire hall established in 1911, Water Works Department built in 1915, Town leased old county jail in 1917, Fire Hall added to north side of old Town Hall in 1946 and 1957, old Town Hall remodeled in 1955, Town Hall heating and ventilation system improvements in 1968, and original City Shops building constructed in 1984. The new City Hall was constructed in 1999 and a new fire hall built in 2002. A new public works building was built in 2012.

County Facilities:

The County jail and shops were the initial facilities, followed by the construction of the Courthouse in 1920. The fairground buildings were built in 1963 and the current county shops were built in 1975. The old County jail was built in 1913; machine shed (shops) built in 1916; County Courthouse built in 1920; Library Association formed in 1923; Fairgrounds buildings built in 1963, remodeled from 1967-1968, Leuthold Building constructed in 2011; Courthouse roof repaired in 1973; Sheriff's office remodeled in 1979; Courthouse 2nd floor remodeled in 1980; Norton House listed on National Register of Historic Places in 1982; Fairgrounds parking lot built in 1984; Courthouse foundation underpinnings installed in 1984; Courthouse parking lot rebuilt in 1986; Courthouse 1st, 3rd, and 4th floor remodels from 1988-1991; Courthouse masonry repairs 1995-1996; and Courthouse roof replacement 1996. There are currently (2012) plans for the County to remodel the old Hospital building and to relocate some County offices to that building from the Courthouse.

Hospital:

Original Stillwater Hospital 1915-1941, County operated hospital and nursing home from 1941 to 1961. A new Hospital was constructed in 1952 and a Hospital Association was formed in 1961. A twenty year general obligation bond paid for Hospital improvements from 1968-1988. The Copulos Trust was established 1975. Major additions to Hospital were built in 1970. Long term care units were added in 1987 and ten more rooms converted in 1993. A radiology unit was added to the clinic in 1989. The Meadowlark assisted living facility was added in 2000. A 2004 community assessment was performed to determine future needs for the hospital. In 2010 the Hospital purchased land on the northeast part of Town for a new hospital, which was completed in 2012.

Schools:

The first schools were established in the late 1800's. Both the High School and elementary school building were replaced in the mid 1900's, and have had recent additions. A log school house was built in 1890; the first school building was utilized from 1899-1970; old High School from 1918-1953; land purchased for athletic field in 1936; WPA repaired the auditorium in 1938; Columbus High School built in 1952; Columbus Elementary School built in 1960; five room

addition at elementary school in 1963 new bus barn in 1973; new roof, multipurpose room, and classrooms added to Elementary School in 1989; new science room and classroom additions at High School in 1989. Major additions to the high school building were added in 1999 through 2000, including a middle school, new gym, classrooms and bus barn.

Industrial Development:

The industrial development of the area is relatively recent, beginning in the 1950's. An important feature is the platting of the industrial sites in 1959. Timberweld Mfg. was established in 1957, Mouat Industries in 1957, Mouat site clean-up from 1967-1968, and 1990-1995; Schessler Cement in 1971, Chrome stockpile from 1975-1980, Montana Silversmith's in 1976, Stillwater Mining Co. Smelter in 1990, Base Metals Refinery 1996 and expansion of these facilities from 1998 through present.

Utilities:

Early records indicate electrical and telephone service was in the Columbus area by 1905. A gas distribution system was constructed in 1930. Improvements to these utilities have continued.

Telephone:

The Rocky Mountain Bell Telephone Company established a telephone exchange in Columbus in 1905. A magneto switchboard was installed to serve the community in 1907. The Mountain States Telephone Company was formed and served 148 telephones in Columbus in 1911. An improved magneto switchboard connected in 1915 to serve 100 telephones. Mountain States Telephone and Telegraph probably acquired about 1915 or 1916. A common battery switchboard was installed in 1938. Montana's largest single telephone communications project went into operation with the inauguration of the radio-relay microwave system from Denver to Great Falls. Columbus is located on the main "backbone" route with a tower situated about 15 miles northeast of the city in 1957. The Columbus exchange was converted to dial service and Direct Distance Dialing. The exchange served 764 telephones at the time of conversion in 1963. Numerous long distance options are available. The 911 emergency communication system was installed in 1991 and enhanced 911 services became operational in 2004. Electronic switching system was installed in 1992. Cellular phone service has been available in the Columbus area since 1994. The primary cellular phone service providers at this time (2012) are AT&T and Verizon.

Gas distribution:

The gas distribution system was installed in 1930, construction of new transmission line in 1936, and pumping station and gas lines upgraded in 1991.

Communication systems:

Cable T.V. was installed in 1970. Digital satellite systems became available in 1995 followed by internet and broadband services.

Airport:

The history of the Columbus Airport dates back to the 1930's when land was acquired for this purpose. The runway was first oiled in the 1940's and later paved in 1960. Other major developments in the airport include: land for airport purposes acquired (1933), airport runway work done with County assistance (1945), Airport Manager appointed 1945, hangar space leased

(1945), Army given permission to land at the airport (1946), Airport property graded and seeded (1946), runway oiled (1947-1948), sale of property not needed for Airport (1949), air show sponsored by Jaycees (1949), airport regulations established (1952), runway improvements proposed for Airport (1954), County participation in Airport project (1955), additional Airport property acquired (1956), airport property used for Industrial Sites (1958), Airport loan application (1959), Joint City-County Airport proposed (1960), land exchange on some Airport property (1960), Airport runway paving and Lighting Project (1961), flight pattern and basic airport rules adopted (1961), Airport runway resealing (1971-1977), Rickman Aircraft Building (1978), Airport Capitol Improvements Fund Established (1983), Joint City-County Airport Board created in (1991), Airport Master Plan approved in (1992), Airport reconstruction (1997-2003), Pilot lounge constructed (2007), Animal Control Fence built (2008), and snow removal equipment acquired and storage building constructed (2010-2011). Hangar development continues and pavement maintenance has been performed as needed.

Parks and Recreation:

The Town of Columbus has a long history of involvement with Parks and Recreation. A park levy was assessed for almost 50 years to pay for the development and operation of a Parks and Recreation Program. Parks Commission established in 1917, Pike Avenue Park Plan and landscaping (1920), park levy (1922-1969), mower purchased and band stand constructed (1922), Trees and fertilizer purchased for Parks in (1923), parkland purchased (at Itch-Kep-Pe location) (1925), park trees planted (1929), park improvements-Swimming Pool Grant (1935-1937), completion of swimming pool (1938), golf club allowed to use portion of Airport Property (1939), Swimming Pool Committee formed in (1943), tables and benches installed in Pike Avenue Park (1952), playground equipment purchased for park (1954), baseball backstops built (1957), sprinkler system for City Park (1957), Kiwanis Ice Skating Rink (1959), swimming pool heating system (1964), swimming pool renovation (1966), boat ramp built on Yellowstone River in 1965, Itch-Kep-Pe Park improvement project (1965-1968), Golf Course improvement project proposed in 1966, basketball and tennis courts paved at City park in 1967, additional land purchased for Itch-Kep-Pe Park in 1967, charge for overnight camping \$1 in 1969, playground equipment installed in Park by Jaycees (1969), swimming pool repairs (1969-1970), tables, grills and brush clearing in Itch-Kep-Pe Park (1970), Stillwater Golf Association agreement for Land Purchase in 1970, grant payment for ball fields in 1972, baseball fields construction (1974-1978), Golf Association Clubhouse built in 1975, horse shoe courts at City Park (1978), Beartooth Park Plan (1979), capital improvements program for parks established (1979), Itch-Kep-Pe Park rip-rap project (1983), swimming pool filtration system improved (1983), Itch-Kep-Pe Park redevelopment by Kiwanis (1986-1994), Granite Peak Park Project development (1991-1999), Sherwood Park dedicated in 1997, Granite Peak Park Master Plan developed (2000), Sherwood Park improved (2009), and soccer and softball fields added to Granite Peak Park (2011).

Cemetery:

The original cemetery was along Sheep Dip Road north of Town. There was a Cemetery Association from 1921 through 1931 before the Town began to operate the cemetery. Tombstones date from 1895-present. Cemetery Association established (1921-1931), Columbus Cemetery Plat (1922), municipal cemetery fund and grave permits established in 1931, Cemetery Sexton hired in 1934, irrigation ditch for Cemetery (1941), Cemetery/Superintendent of parks hired in 1945, mower purchased for cemetery in 1950, Cemetery roads developed 1951, map of

Cemetery prepared (1951), Cemetery mapped in 1966, Cemetery irrigation system developed in 1979, and Mountain View Cemetery registered as a historic place in 1983.

Law Enforcement:

The history of law enforcement goes back to the beginning of the Town and County. The Town utilized a night watchman until the 1950's when a Police Department was established. City and County Law Enforcement was consolidated from 1975 through 1983. The old jail was established in 1911, Sheriff's Department was formed in 1913, Town leased old jail in 1917, dog control issues in 1913, 1926-1929, 1964, 1972, 1979, and 1984-86; Town Night Watchman hired (1932-1949), Town Marshal employed (1950), Police Commission appointed (1954), Police Policy Agreement in 1973, City-County police consolidation in 1975, deconsolidation of City-County Law Enforcement in 1983, Stillwater Alternatives program established in 1990, animal control building constructed in 1999, the police reserve was established in 2004, and the Search & Rescue building was completed in 2004.

Fire Protection:

Fire Protection also dates back to the early days of Town's incorporation. Fire hydrants have been available since the construction of the Town's water system. Fire alarms installed (1910, 1933, 1943); fire trucks purchased from 1911 to present, Fire Regulations initiated in 1915, fire hall construction in 1911, 1932, 1946, 1957 and 2002; fire hydrants (1915, 1940-present), and Columbus Rural Fire District Created in 1990. A New fire hall was constructed in 2002.

Planning:

A joint City-County Planning Board was established in 1967. The Board began by dealing with water and sewer issues. During the 1970's the Planning Board processed subdivisions. Throughout the 1980's the Board dealt with subdivisions, public facilities, economic development and mining impact issues. Comprehensive Area Plan approved in 1970; Needs Assessment completed in 1983, 1986 and 1989; City-County Planning Jurisdictional Area established in 1984; Hard Rock Mining Economic Impact Plans adopted in 1985, 1988 and 1998; Columbus Certified Communities (1987), and Overall Economic Development Plan adopted in 1989. Columbus Area Master Plans were adopted in 1993 and 1997. A Columbus Area Growth Policy was adopted in 2004. The City-County Planning Jurisdictional Area was revised in 1996.

Zoning:

A Zoning Ordinance has been in place in Columbus for over 50 years. First Zoning Ordinance (1950-1953), Trailer Court Ordinance (1963), Revised Zoning Ordinance (1967), Zoning Committee Formed (1969), Planning Board prepared zoning map in 1970, Zoning variances and hearing procedures established in 1973, mobile home court zoning (1976), Council approved zoning outside town limits in 1978, Zoning Ordinance rewritten (1997), and Zoning Ordinance updated in 2004.

Subdivision Regulations:

Subdivision guidelines and regulations have been in place for over 25 years. These regulations have been amended from time to time as changes in state law required. The Town

and County have joint regulations. First Subdivision Guidelines and Regulations (1970), Amended Guidelines and Regulations (1973), Subdivision Regulations amended in 1982; Subdivision Regulations amended in 1988 1993, 1994 and 1995. Since 2004, the Subdivision Regulations have been amended at least every two years to keep current with state law.

Flooding and Floodplain Regulations:

Occasional flooding has been documented on Keyser Creek, the Stillwater River, Yellowstone River and other tributaries since the 1930's. The Soil Conservation Service (SCS) studied flood hazards in the early 1970's. Stillwater County has had floodplain regulations since 1975. The Town of Columbus adopted floodplain regulations in 1997. Major Floods occurred in 1937, 1943, 1944, 1948, 1967, 1970, 1974, 1975, 1978, 1997, and 2011; SCS flood hazard studies in 1973; Floodplain maps for the Yellowstone River were approved in 1984. Map amendments are processed as needed.



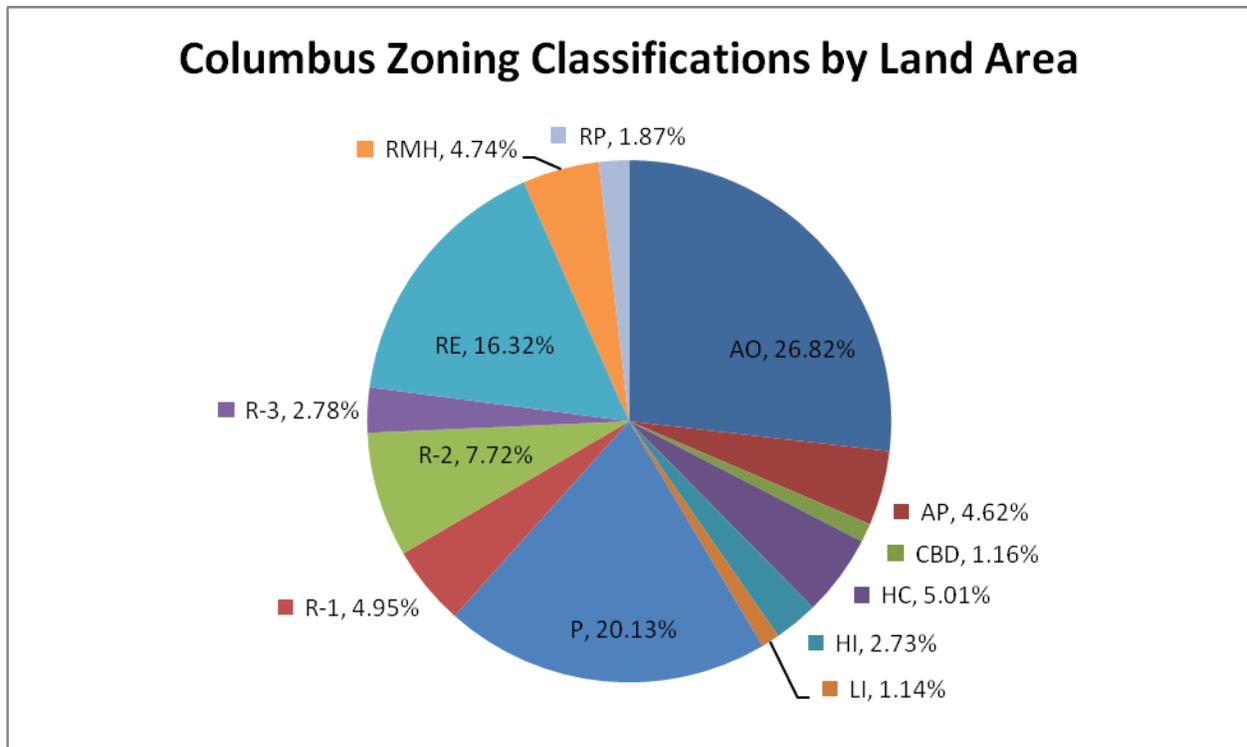
Yellowstone River at Itch-Kep-Pe Park

CHAPTER 5: EXISTING CHARACTERISTICS & FEATURES

5.1 LAND USES:

INTRODUCTION

There is a diversity of agricultural, residential, commercial, industrial, recreational and public land uses in the Columbus area. The zoning districts map shows the geographic distribution of land uses in the Columbus area. The following pie graph displays the percentage of land area within the jurisdictional area for each zoning classification.



AGRICULTURAL

Nearly 27% of the city-county planning jurisdictional area is zoned as agricultural open space. There is some irrigated cropland, hay land and rangeland in the planning jurisdictional area around Columbus. Primary crops in the Columbus area are hay, wheat and corn. Some cattle, sheep, and horses are raised in the Columbus area on agricultural lands.

TOWN OF COLUMBUS ZONING DISTRICTS

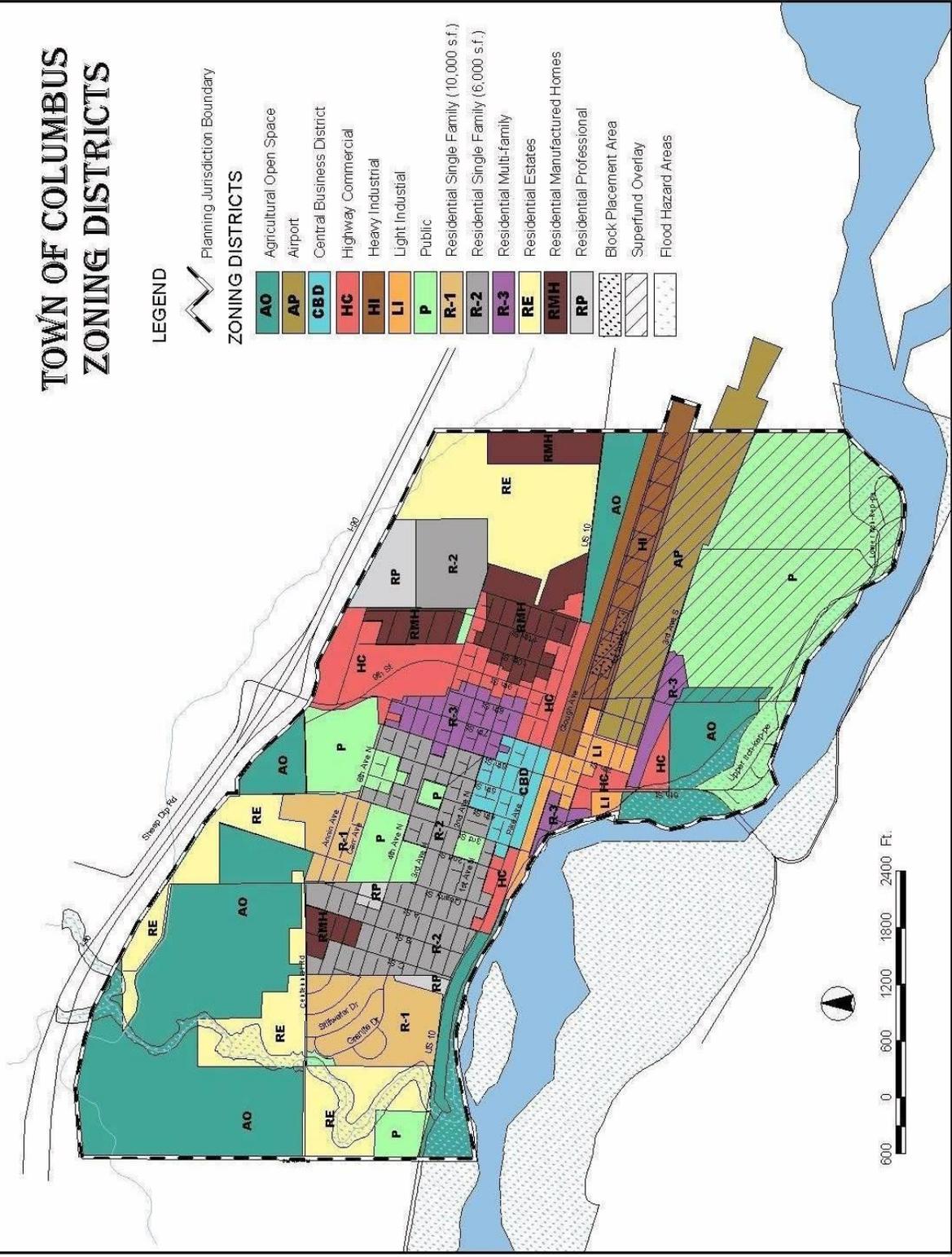
LEGEND



Planning Jurisdiction Boundary

ZONING DISTRICTS

AO	Agricultural Open Space
AP	Airport
CBD	Central Business District
HC	Highway Commercial
HI	Heavy Industrial
LI	Light Industrial
P	Public
R-1	Residential Single Family (10,000 s.f.)
R-2	Residential Single Family (6,000 s.f.)
R-3	Residential Multi-Family
RE	Residential Estates
RMH	Residential Manufactured Homes
RP	Residential Professional
	Block Placement Area
	Superfund Overlay
	Flood Hazard Areas



RESIDENTIAL

Jurisdictional Area:

Over 40% of the city-county planning jurisdictional area is zoned for residential use. There are four subdivision plats and over twenty individual tract developments outside the town limits and within the planning jurisdictional area. Many of these tracts within the planning jurisdictional area were established through exemptions from the Subdivision and Platting Act.

SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

Over 12% of the city-county planning jurisdictional area is designated for single family residential use. Single family residential use areas are well delineated. However, some other uses are interspersed in the residential area as a result of past variances, special use permits or zone changes.

Full development of existing subdivisions and additions to the townsite could provide land for the projected future growth. There are a few vacant lots within the town that could be developed for single family homes. These sites consist of lots ranging from 25 to 100 foot widths.

The most logical areas for future growth of single family residential use within the town's current jurisdictional area are north of town, between Centennial Road and Interstate-90 and east of town. Both of these areas would need to be annexed into town when subdivision.

MANUFACTURED HOMES

The East Side Addition to Columbus has developed as mobile home use in addition to the five established mobile home courts in the Columbus area. The Valley Vista mobile home court is located at C Street and Centennial Road and has 14 units. Another six unit mobile home court is located on Fifth Avenue between B and C Streets. A seven unit mobile home court is located on Fourth Avenue and Diamond Street. A & M Trailer Court is on Twelfth Street east of town and currently has ten units.

The East Side Addition could also provides an area to absorb future development, but the lack of fully developed streets with curbs, gutters, and sidewalks, as well as a known soils problem, could influence the immediate development of that area. Presently, this section of the town is developing into an area that will serve to meet the need for manufactured home spaces and lots. The Two Rivers Subdivision on the east side of town added 63 residential lots.

MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

A limited amount of land is presently being used for multifamily residential purposes. Approximately 3% of the jurisdictional area is designated for multi-family use. Only six major multifamily sites were identified in the town.

The Edgewater Apartments are located at First Avenue South and Fifth Street and have 12 units. Columbus Apartments have eight units for senior citizens and are located at Fourth Avenue and Pratten Street. Pinecrest Apartments are located at Second Avenue and Second Street and have four units. Sage Apartments have 12 units and are located on Second Avenue and Allen Street. There are also fourplexes located on B Street between Second and Third Avenues and another

one on Pike and Third Street. Additional multi-family units were built since 1997 on Pike Avenue between 2nd and 3rd Streets and in the east side of town on 1st Avenue North between 10th and 11th Streets.

Goode's Addition and Norton's Second Addition could also serve future multi family residential development, but this area lacks the infrastructure and amenities that will be necessary to attract quality development at this time. The development of more fully developed streets, proper drainage, a traffic circulation plan and the annexation of islands that are not within the town limits could result in these areas becoming residential growth areas for the Town of Columbus.

COMMERCIAL

Commercial land uses comprise more than 6% of the land in the jurisdictional area. These uses are primarily located along Pike Avenue, First Avenue North, Sixth (Pratten) Street and Ninth Street. Since Pike Avenue was once the main highway (Old Highway 10) through town, most of the retail and traditional commercial uses, servicing both the local population and the traveling public are located along this route.

There are some vacant areas along Pike Avenue and Ninth Street that could service future commercial growth.

The development of the Town Pump, Super 8 Motel, McDonalds and other commercial enterprises along Ninth Street and Eighth Avenue has established this route as a highway commercial zone. The area around the Town Pump is large enough to provide patron parking, and is convenient to the traveling public.

The Apple Village area has experienced additional commercial growth with a variety of shops built since 1997.

The area around the intersection of Fourth Avenue and Ninth Street has also seen commercial development.

INDUSTRIAL

The Columbus industrial area is mostly located along First Avenue South. It is adjacent to the railroad tracks, a sewage trunk line, and the airport. The railroad tracks have served as a boundary to delineate use areas. Almost all of the heavy industrial uses are located south of the railroad tracks.

Industrial usage comprises approximately four percent (4%) of the total platted land in the Town of Columbus. All manufacturing, including Timberweld and Montana Silversmiths were classified to be industrial uses. A differentiation has been made between light and heavy industrial uses in the current zoning regulations.

Each block in the heavy industrial zone encompasses approximately two (2) acres, which are large industrial sites for a town the size of Columbus. A portion of the industrial area was previously designated as an EPA Superfund Site (Mouat Industries site). This site was cleaned up in 1994, and is now partially delisted.

The largest occupant of the industrial site has been the Stillwater Mining Company precious metals smelter and base metals refinery. Seven blocks at the east end of the industrial sites were purchased for these facilities. The company also purchased a site east of the airport from the Town for central warehouse purposes.

The Town's new public works facility is located in the industrial area. Construction of this facility was completed in early 2012.

The Town has studied potential future industrial expansion on the east side of the jurisdictional area, but this land is still currently privately held and not zoned for industrial purposes.

PARKS and RECREATION

A substantial amount of land within the Town of Columbus is utilized for recreational purposes. It is estimated that approximately twenty percent (20%) of the total land within the town limits is used for recreation. Baseball fields, a golf course, a swimming pool and a general use parks account for most of the acreage.

The main sites for recreational use are the Stillwater Golf Course, Itch-Kep-Pe Park, Heritage Park, Columbus Railroad Park, Beartooth Park, Granite Peak Park and Sherwood Park. It is estimated that these sites encompass over 250 acres, with the golf course containing nearly 100 of those acres.



Granite Peak Park

A master plan has been prepared for Granite Peak Park, which is administered by the Granite Peak Park Steering Committee.

The following is a listing of recreational opportunities within the Town of Columbus:

- A nine-hole golf course with a driving range, putting green and clubhouse.
- A track and football field at the high school.
- Two tennis courts at the city park.
- A municipal swimming pool.
- Four horseshoe pits at Heritage Park.
- Children's playground equipment at Heritage Park and Sherwood Park.
- Two basketball courts at Heritage Park.
- Picnic tables and benches at Heritage Park and Sherwood Park
- Itch-Kep-Pe Park, which is used as a general recreational area along the river, contains a boat ramp, 49 campsites with tables and camp fire grills.
- The grade school also provides one basketball courts and a variety of playground equipment.
- The high school provides facilities for a variety of athletic and civic events.
- Three baseball fields, a softball field, a soccer field and a walking/jogging path on the north side of town at Granite Peak Park.

PUBLIC LANDS

Over 24% of the city-county planning jurisdictional area is publicly owned land, including ownership by State of Montana, Stillwater County, Town of Columbus and Columbus Schools. The public land map shows the location of public land within the city-county planning jurisdiction in relation to private land.

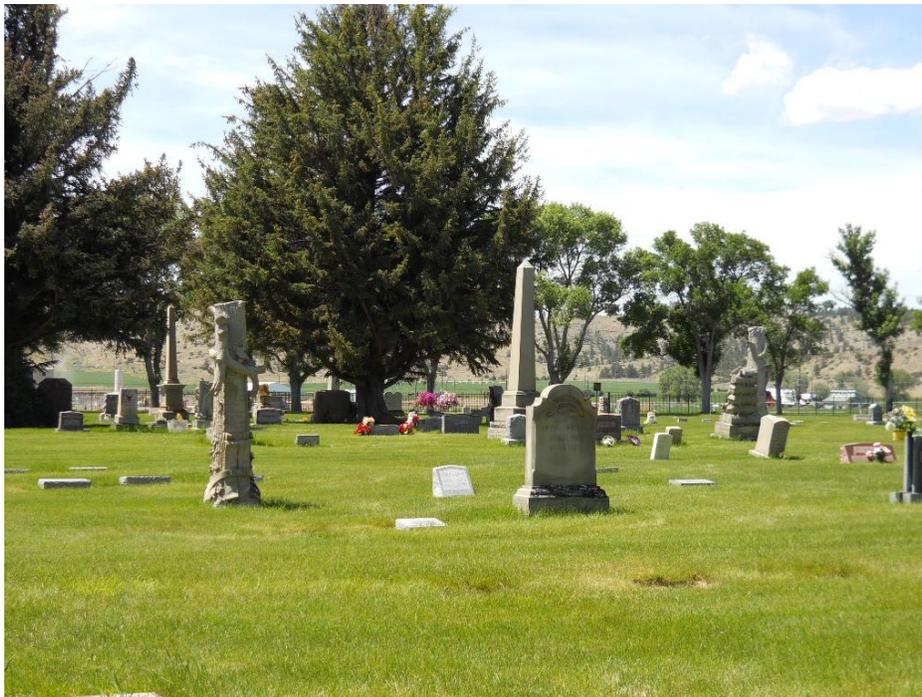
Town Property:

The Town of Columbus owns a substantial amount of public land use within the town limits. This can be attributed to the land east of the airport and tracts owned by the town, county and school district.

Town owned land includes the following properties:

- New City Hall (Deed #295593). Block 1, Lots 19-24 Oddfellows Revised Addition.
- Old City shops (Deed Book 11 pg. 285). Block 11, Lot 2 Original Townsite.
- Industrial Sites (Deed Book 31 pg. 397). Blocks 3-4, part of Block 5.
- Park Addition, Block 9, lots 6-10, (Deed Book 31 pg. 396).
- Airport Property:
 - < SE1/4 NW1/4, NE1/4 SE1/4, Fraction of NE1/4 Section 27, T2S, R20E
 - < Block 6, lots 1-6, Block 7, lots 1-24, Block 12, lots 1-20
 - < Block 13, lots 1-24 Park Addition, Columbus
 - < Block 8, lots 1-24 Park Addition, Columbus
 - < Block 8, lots 1-24 and Block 11, Lots 1-24 Park Addition (Deed Book 31 pg. 397, Book 35 pg. 354 and Misc. Book 20 pg. 386).
- Itch-Kep-Pe Park (Deed Book 11 pg. 224, Book 75 pg. 277, Book 99 pg. 174)
 - < Lot 4 Section 27, T2S, R20E, COS 257466 (Upper Park)
 - < Lot 1 Section 34, T2S, R20E, COS 257465 (Lower Park)

- Cemetery: SW1/4 Section 21 T2S R20E Plats 55784 and 208905 (Deed Book 30 pg.530, Book 31 pg.395, Book 78 pg. 930 and Book 83 pg. 266).
- Heritage Park: Block 2, Knause & Becker Addition, Columbus Plat 30415 Kern's Acre and Norton's Fraction (Deed Book 27 pg. 165, Deed Book 32 Pg. 355 and Deed Book 35 pg. 360).
- Beartooth Park: NE1/4SW1/4 Section 21, T2S, R20E, Plat 225845 (Deed Book 87 pg. 784).
- Golf Course: Part of NW1/4SE1/4, Part of NE1/4SW1/4, part of Lot 2, part of Lot 3 Section 27, T2S, R20E Plat 180647 and 193507 (Deed Book 63 pg. 395 and Book 70 pg. 305).
- Sewer Lagoons: part of NW1/4 SE1/4, NE1/4 SE1/4, Lot 1 and part of Lot 2 Section 27, T2S, R20E as shown on plat 180647 (Deed Book 63 pg. 395).
- Granite Peak Park, 32.5 acres (Quit Claim Deed #302069). Fraction of NW1/4 NW1/4 Section 22, T2S, R20E.
- Fire Hall, Lots 1-6 Block 2 East Side addition, Town of Columbus and Fire District #3,
- Columbus City Park is located on Railroad Property and used as a park with a lease.
- Sherwood Park: Two Rivers Subdivision, plat 287159.



Columbus Cemetery

County Property:

County owned land within the Planning Jurisdictional area includes the following properties:

- New Search and Rescue Facility (Deed Book 14 pg.530 and Book 15 pg.489). Block 4, lots 5-12 Columbus First Addition and Block 4, Lots 13-18 Myers and Nice Addition to Town of Columbus.
- Stillwater Community Hospital (O&D Book 1 pg. 178) Block 9, Lots 5-18 Mountain View Subdivision, Columbus.

- County Fairgrounds Parking Lot (Deed Book 91 pg. 240). Block 2, Lots 15-18 Norton's Second Addition, Columbus.
- County Fairgrounds: Block 4, lots 1-6 and 19-24 Norton's Second Addition, Block 5, all lots Norton's Second Addition, Columbus, Block 4, Lots 5 and 6 Carr Addition, Columbus (Deed Book 53 pg. 417 and Book 59 pg. 444).
- County Courthouse (Deed Book 1 pg. 62). Courthouse Square, Norton Addition, Columbus.
- County Library (Deed Book 106, page 182).

School District #6 Land:

- Columbus School District owned land within the Planning jurisdictional area includes the following properties:
- Elementary School: Block 16, First Addition, Columbus (Deed Book 3 pg. 266, Book 3 pg 276 and Book 4 pg. 185).
- High School: Block 1, School Addition and all of Second School Addition (Deed Book 13 pg. 638, Book 14 pg. 52 and Book 50 pg. 381).

State Land:

- State owned land within the Planning Jurisdictional area includes the following properties:
- Fraction of Government Lot 4 Section 27, T2S, R20E Plat 170328 old gravel pit north of Itch-Kep-Pe Park.
- Vacant land, Lots 1-5, Block 8, Park Addition (Warranty Deed #297528).

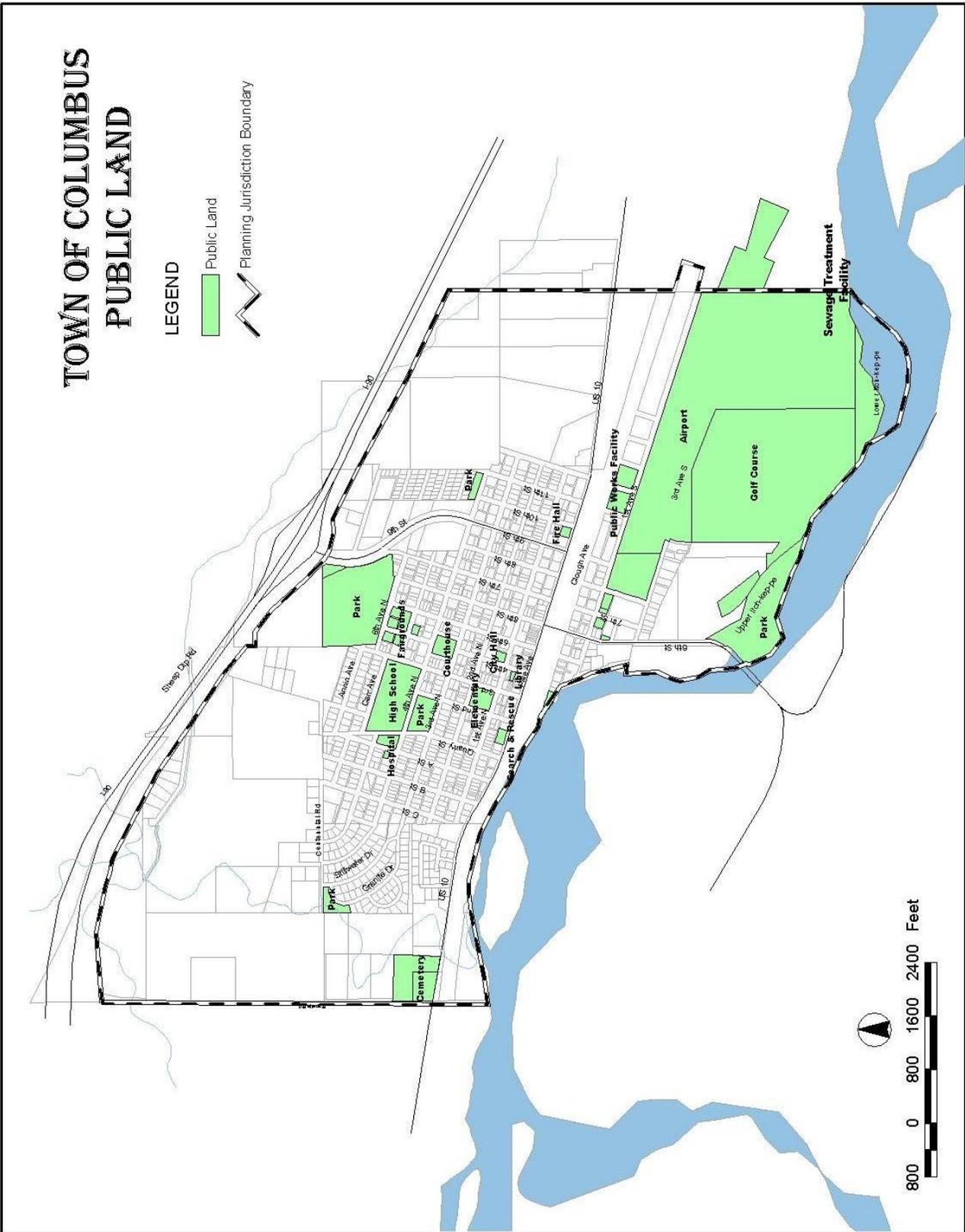
VACANT LAND

It is estimated that approximately 2% of the land in Columbus is vacant. The major areas that are vacant are east of Ninth Street and Sandstone Estates Subdivision.

The Town of Columbus has some additional vacant land within the town limits and adjacent to those limits. Within the areas of residential, commercial and industrial uses, land that is presently served by public water and sewer as well as paved street is vacant, and could be developed without the need for further expansion of the town limits.

ADJACENT LAND DEVELOPMENT

The Yellowstone River is a barrier for growth to the south of town. The most logical directions for growth outside of the town limits would be to the north, between the northern boundary of the town and the interstate and to the east, especially around the new hospital. There have already been some developments undertaken in these areas. Single family homes have been constructed north of Centennial road on the northwest side of town. Future development in these areas could occur if the demand for growth were to justify additional developments to be annexed to town and water, sewer and streets were to be connected into existing systems.



5.2 POPULATION

The 2010 Census population in the Town of Columbus was 1,893 people. Approximately 168 additional people reside in the surrounding planning jurisdictional area. The total city-county planning jurisdictional area was estimated to have a population of 1,911 in the spring of 2000.

Population by Race

The 2010 Census profile of general demographic characteristics indicates 96.5% of the total population was white and 3.5% were other races (see following table).

Total Population	One Race Only	White	Black or African American	American Indian and Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	Some Other Race	Two or More Races	Hispanic or Latino (of any race)
1,893	1,854	1,826	1	11	8	0	8	39	52
Percentage	97.9%	96.5%	0.1%	0.6%	0.4%	0.0%	0.4%	2.1%	2.7%

5.3 HOUSING NEEDS

Total number of housing units reported for the town of Columbus in the 2010 Census was 762. Over 90 percent of housing units were occupied. With a population of 1,893, occupied housing units had an average of 2.47 residents, as shown in the following table.

Housing Units	Occupied	Percent Occupied	Vacant	Percent Vacant	Population	Average Number of Residents per Occupied Dwelling Unit
843	767	90.98%	76	9.02%	1,893	2.47

5.4 ECONOMIC CONDITIONS:

ECONOMIC BASE:

Commercial trade, manufacturing, precious metals processing and tourism are the economic base of the Columbus area. Montana Silversmiths and Timberweld are the two primary manufacturing firms in Columbus. Stillwater Mining Company has a precious metals smelter and base metals refinery located in Columbus. Git's Big Sky Motel, Super 8 Motel, the Town Pump facility, and Apple Village are the primary tourism related businesses in the Columbus area. There are over 100 people employed in these service related businesses during peak season. There are also portions of a few farm/ranch operations within the planning jurisdictional area.

There are numerous commercial businesses in the Columbus area providing a variety of goods and services including cafes, groceries, motels, dry goods, gas, drug store, post office, hardware, farm supply, floral, grain elevator, barber shop, beauty shops, bars, appliances, machinery, auto and truck sales, auto repair, attorneys, accountants, insurance, real estate, doctors, dentists, gift stores, antiques, liquor, second hand goods, contractors, and other services.

5.5 LOCAL SERVICES:

TOWN OF COLUMBUS:

The Town of Columbus is governed by an elected Mayor and six member council. The Town provides basic services typical of small towns. Town services and operating budgets include legislative, city/municipal court, administrative, elections, facilities, law enforcement, police reserves, fire protection, roads and streets, parks/cemetery, animal control, swimming pool, liability insurance, airport, light districts, water system, sewer system, and solid waste. Capital funds include streets and alleys, industrial park, parks, administrative/computers, police car replacement, swimming pool, fire, cemetery, and buildings. The town currently employees approximately 23 individuals; 12 of them are full-time and the rest are part-time.



Columbus City Hall

STILLWATER COUNTY:

The County is governed by a three member Board of Commissioners and has an elected Attorney, Clerk and Recorder, Clerk of District Court, Justice of the Peace, Superintendent of Schools, Sheriff, and Treasurer. Stillwater County provides and operates numerous services and facilities typical of a rural county government. Non-elected county departments and operating budgets include building maintenance, disaster & emergency services, economic development, extension service, fire control, GIS, library, sanitarian, planning, road & bridge, solid waste, and weed control.

Some services such as city-county airport, health, planning, dispatching and solid waste are coordinated between Stillwater County and the Town of Columbus to achieve efficiency and avoid duplication of services.



Stillwater County Courthouse

MEDICAL FACILITIES AND SERVICES:

A full range of medical facilities are available in Columbus. There have been several significant changes in the medical industry in Columbus recently, especially owing to the new hospital construction on the northeast side of town.

Historically, the old Stillwater Community Hospital building was located on a parcel of land surrounded by 4th Avenue North, Quarry Road, A Street, and 5th Avenue North. This building was owned by the County and leased to the Stillwater Hospital Association, Inc. until the new hospital was constructed and occupied. The main wing fronting on 4th Avenue North was built in 1952, with the east wing being added in 1970. The hospital contained 13 short term and 10 long term beds, an emergency room, laboratory, physical therapy facilities, nursery facilities and expanded outpatient services in a clinic across the street from the hospital. Remodeling completed in 1992 included large scale fire alarm and sprinkling system improvements as well as other room improvements. A 21 unit limited care retirement home was added to the hospital in 1986 and expanded in 2000. An ambulance garage was added in 1994 and a day care facility was started in 1995. The Columbus Branch of the Billings Clinic was located directly across the street from the hospital. The Stillwater Hospital Association owns the clinic building and also an adjacent building which houses day care services. The clinic offered independent medical care from that provided by the hospital. Stillwater County is, as of this writing, considering remodeling options that would allow for utilization of the old hospital building as office space.

The new hospital building was constructed on land acquired in the northeast part of Columbus. Construction was financed utilizing funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and is at time of this writing scheduled for completion in late 2012. The new hospital will house both hospital and clinic services, allowing for a more streamlined process of service delivery. The Hospital Association owns two parcels of land in the area, one being a seven-acre parcel which contains the hospital building, and one being a 13-acre parcel which is currently unused. This land is accessed off of 11th Street and the east end of 8th Avenue. This is considered a critical access hospital operated in association with Billings Clinic.

The hospital currently has over 70 full and part time employees including registered nurses, LPN's, lab technicians and a radiology technician. There are currently three local family practice physicians and a nurse practitioner serving the community. The physicians are independent of the hospital, however, all have staff privileges at the hospital. Additional specialists also visit the hospital as needed.

The sources of revenue for the hospital consist of fees for the services provided, minimal maintenance and public health funds from the County, the Copulos Trust and other endowments. The Copulos Trust consists of \$1,000,000, the terms of which allow the hospital to use interest earned for capital expenses. The Copulos Trust has played a significant role in allowing the hospital to obtain new medical technologies.

In 1973, an 82 bed convalescent center was constructed in Columbus. This facility, located on the southeast side of town along Pike Avenue, is privately owned and offers care for all ages. Over 50 people are employed including RN's and LPN's. The remaining employees consist of administration, nurses' aides, kitchen help, housekeepers, workers helping the developmentally disabled, and activity directors.

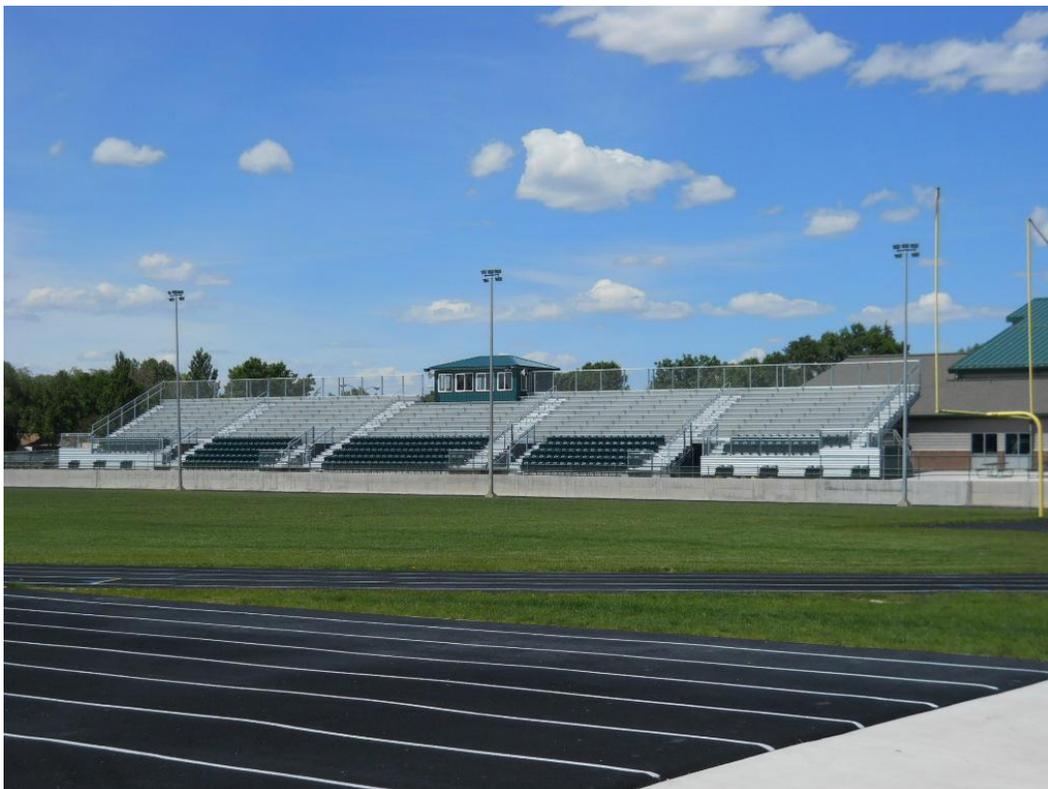
Two dentists maintain offices in Columbus, each supported by hygienists and assistants. An optometrist and a chiropractor both have offices in Columbus. The Columbus ambulance service

is a volunteer organization comprised of EMT's with dispatch services through the Stillwater County Sheriff's Office. Ambulance crew members carry page beepers with them.

COLUMBUS SCHOOLS

The elementary school is located on Block 16 of the plat of the First Edition to the Town of Columbus, which consists of approximately 2 acres. Most of the grounds are occupied by buildings which include twelve classrooms constructed in 1970, and a gymnasium and 3 classrooms constructed in 1989. The remaining grounds are used for recess and play consisting of 6 basketball goals located on a 5000 sq. ft. concrete playing surface, a sand surface open play area, and various pieces of playground equipment.

Columbus High School and Columbus Middle School is located on the School Addition and the Second School Addition, and comprises approximately 12 acres. Approximately half of the grounds are occupied by buildings and parking area. Major renovations of the school in 1999 and 2000 added classrooms and a new gym. The high school and middle school are connected by a corridor that passes by the old high school gym, which now operates as the middle school gym. The rest of the high school grounds are occupied by a lighted football field, running track, and other open areas used as athletic playing fields by school students and the community baseball program.



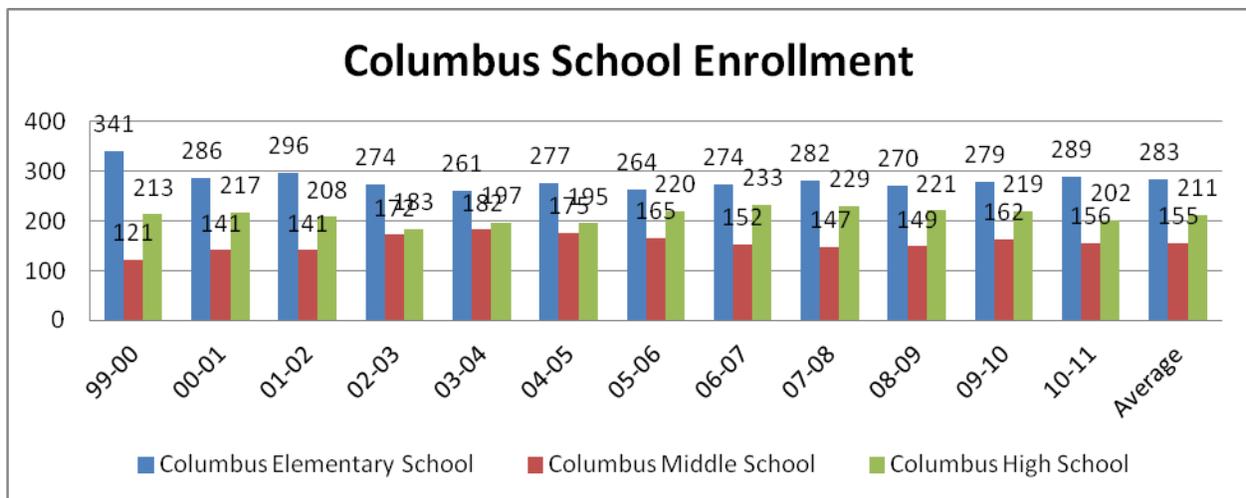
**Columbus High School
Track and Football Field**

The bus garage is located on the high school grounds with six buses which travel over 300 miles and bring over 200 elementary and high school students to school each day. The schools also operate four additional buses for extra curricular activities.

The curriculum for the elementary school includes math, reading, health, writing, language, spelling, social science, physical education, art, music, library, and computer classes. The high school is required to offer a minimum of 20 units consisting of 4 units English Language arts, 2 units of mathematics, 2 units of social studies, 2 units of science, 1 unit of health enhancement, 1 unit of fine arts, 1 unit of vocational/practical arts, and other elective classes.

Both schools are fully accredited and offer extra curricular activities. The high school competes on the class B level in basketball, cross country, football, golf, softball, track and field, volleyball, and wrestling. Columbus also has strong programs for speech and drama, music, and cheerleading.

The City-County Planning Board jurisdictional area contains portions of the Columbus High School District and Columbus Elementary School District #6 within the jurisdictional area. The following bar graph shows enrollment at the Columbus Schools.



COLUMBUS RURAL FIRE DISTRICT

The City-County Planning Jurisdictional area is within the Columbus Rural Fire District which was formed in 1990. There are 5 elected trustees and a number of volunteer fire fighters. The Fire District currently has equipment for structure and grass fires including tender/tank trucks.

The Columbus Rural Fire District was formed in August, 1990 and operates out of new facilities in Columbus.



Columbus Fire Department

5.6 PUBLIC FACILITIES

COLUMBUS WATER SYSTEM:

Water Supply:

The existing water supply for the Town of Columbus is obtained from two sources, an infiltration gallery and production wells. The infiltration gallery supply is located on an island area in the Yellowstone River south of the existing town shop. The production wells are located on the west edge of Columbus in the Beartooth Heights Subdivision, and in Heritage Park in central Columbus.

The gallery lines for the infiltration system are constructed radially from the pump house wetwell. Water is pumped from the gallery with two vertical turbine pumps. The maximum sustained yield of the infiltration gallery water supply is directly affected by the water level in the Yellowstone River. The infiltration gallery facility and equipment is well maintained and in satisfactory condition.

The production well in the Beartooth Heights Subdivision was constructed in 1986 and has a capacity of 610 gpm. (0.878 mgd). The well and pump house facility is in good condition and satisfactorily maintained. The Heritage Park Well came online in 2010 and has a capacity of approximately 350 gpm. Although disinfection of both water supplies is not required, gas chlorination is provided for both sources in order to maintain a chlorine residual throughout the distribution and storage facilities.

Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and Water Quality Bureau (WQB) permit these public water sources and require ongoing monitoring.

Water Requirements:

The overall average daily use for the period was 0.346 mgd, or 216 gallons per capita per day (gpcd) based on a population of 1600 people. The water supply has been meeting demand.

The combined maximum capacity of the two existing water supplies based on a 24 hour continuous operation is estimated to be:

Island infiltration Gallery	=	1.17 mgd
Beartooth Heights Well	=	0.79 mgd
<u>Heritage Park Well</u>	=	<u>0.50 mgd</u>
Total	=	2.46 mgd

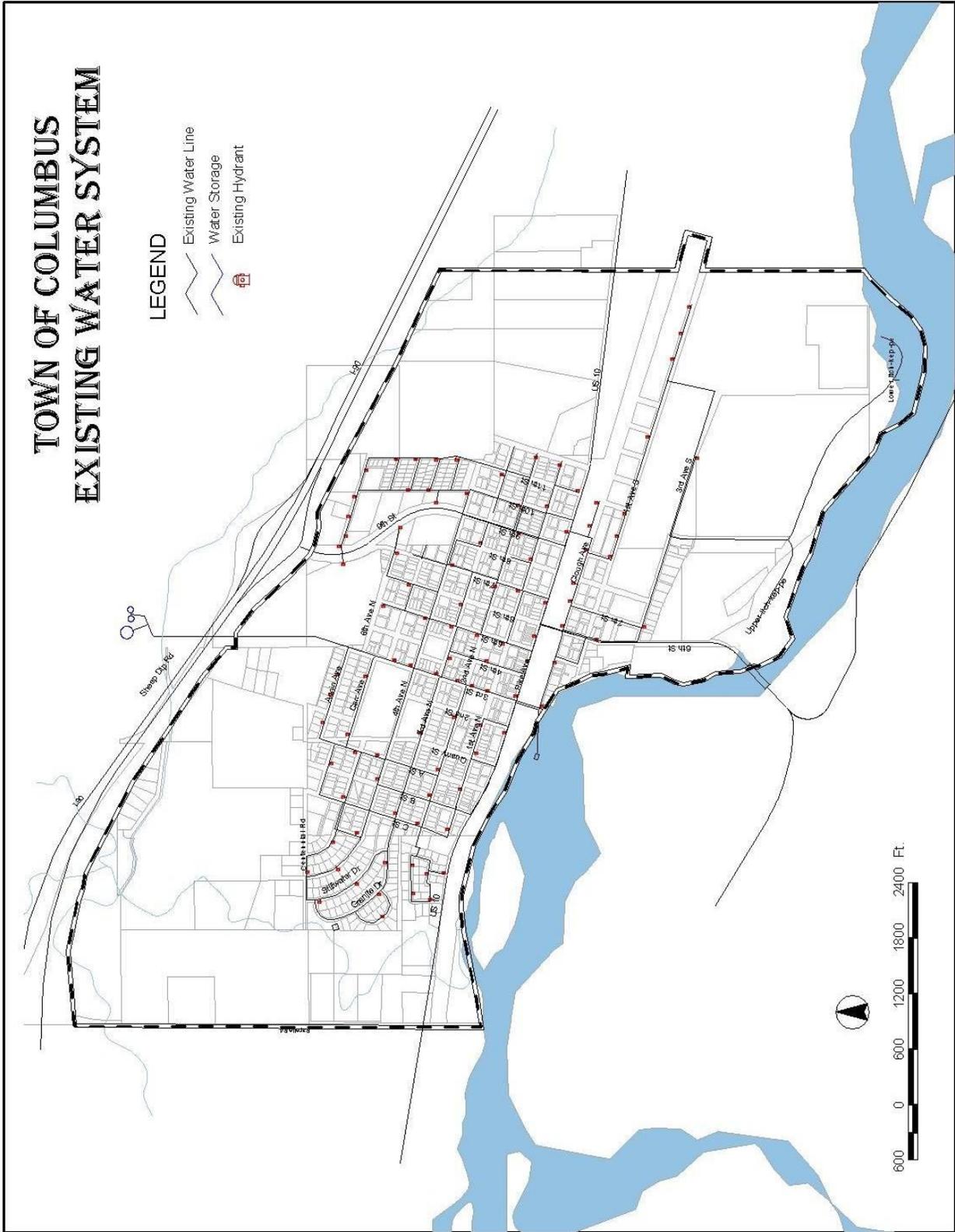
Water Distribution:

The existing water distribution system consists of lines ranging from two inches to sixteen inches in diameter. Pipe materials include cast iron (CI), asbestos cement (AC), and polyvinyl chloride (PVC). The oldest lines are cast iron, and the newer lines constructed in the 1960's and early 1970's are asbestos cement. Welded steel pipe from the Annin Avenue to the storage tank was recently replaced with sixteen inch PVC pipe. The existing water system is shown on the water system map.

TOWN OF COLUMBUS EXISTING WATER SYSTEM

LEGEND

-  Existing Water Line
-  Water Storage
-  Existing Hydrant



Maximum fire flow capabilities range from 1600 gpm to 3400 gpm throughout town. Desired fire flow levels for Columbus range from a minimum of 750 gpm to 1000 gpm to a maximum of 3500 gpm for commercial areas. Recommended fire flow levels are dependent on building space, type of use, and type of building construction. The Capital Improvements Plan should address any deficient lines and installation of new fire hydrants consistent with state WQB regulations.

Transmission Line to Tank:

A sixteen-inch diameter water transmission line extends from the north edge of Town to the water storage tanks north of I-90. The fire department conducted fire flow tests in 2007 and they appeared to be adequate. The new Heritage Park well has provided an additional water source since that time.

Island Supply Line:

An eight inch cast iron line carries water from the island infiltration gallery across the north channel of the Yellowstone River to the distribution system. Further review suggests that the line is adequately sized. This line has a low maintenance history, but suffered a break in 1982, that was subsequently repaired. Measurement of the friction losses will indicate the interior condition of the line and thus is a reflection of the condition of the pipe.

Water Line Looping:

In general, all water lines should be looped within the water distribution system and dead end lines should be avoided. Where dead end lines are present, a fire hydrant or other means of flushing is desirable. The majority of the Columbus distribution system is looped with the exception of several areas. Dead end locations with small diameter lines and deficient fire flow capabilities are a high priority to improve.

Small Diameter Lines:

There are currently several reaches of small diameter four-inch lines in the distribution system. Replacement of these lines is desirable from a fire protection standpoint. Dead end, four inch lines are the most serious cases. Although total replacement of all four inch lines is desirable, it is costly and may not be necessary in locations where four inch lines may provide adequate service. Fire hydrant flow test are conducted throughout town to identify severely deficient areas for high priority replacement.

Water Storage:

Existing storage for the Town of Columbus consists of one storage tank located on the hills north of I-90. The reservoir has a total storage volume of 1million gallons. The present level of storage is adequate for Columbus for the current condition and for the projected future development.

The reservoir is a 1,000,000 gallon welded steel tank constructed in 1973. The tank is 90 feet in diameter and 22 feet high. In 2010 this tank was recoated and work was done around the tank to improve the drainage in the area.

COLUMBUS SEWER SYSTEM

Collection System:

The existing wastewater collection system is a conventional gravity system with discharge to the treatment facility near the southeast corner of Town. The collection system consists of 6, 8, 10, 12, and 15 inch diameter conduits. The main trunk system consisting of 10, 12, and 15 inch lines are clay tile pipe constructed in 1961. The majority of the system between "C" Street and Ninth Street, south of Third Avenue is clay tile pipe. Remaining portions of the system are newer and generally consist of PVC pipe. The Columbus sewer system is shown on the sewer system map.

Treatment Facility:

The existing treatment facility consists of a three cell aerated lagoon with land application on the golf course. The facility is comprised of two primary cells of approximately two acres in size each, and one secondary cell of about four acres. The lagoon operates as either a continuous or intermittent discharge system.

An updated Facility Plan was completed in 1996 with alternatives for spray irrigation and aerators. The new facility constructed in 1999 has a design capacity for a population of 2,500 people. Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and Water Quality Bureau (WQB) permit these public water sources and require ongoing monitoring.

STORM DRAINAGE

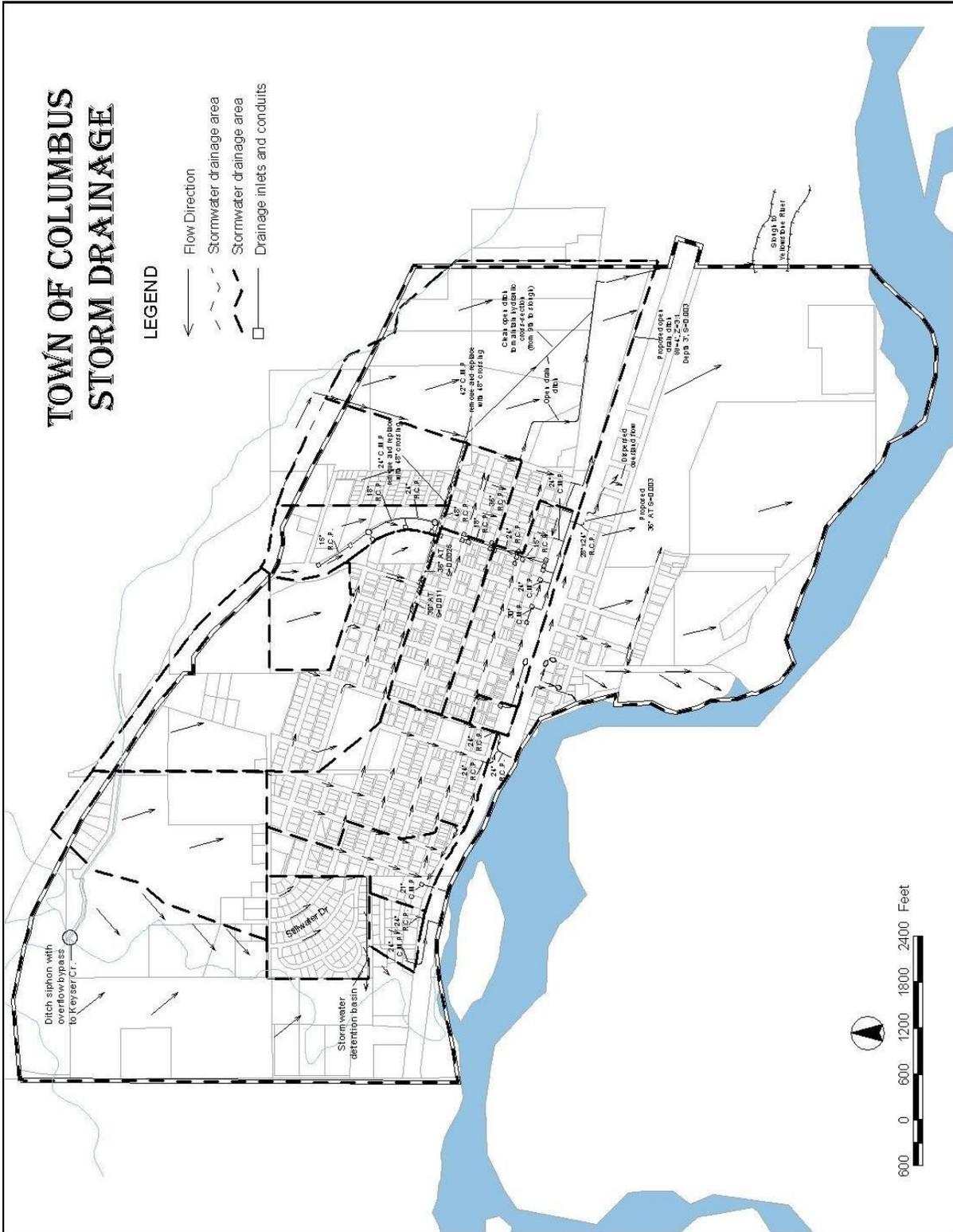
Existing storm drainage features and patterns are shown on Storm Drainage Map. The Columbus area drains to the southeast at slopes ranging from 0.5% to 1.5%. Interstate 90 on the north and Keyser Creek on the west provide drainage cutoff, preventing drainage from outlying areas from entering the Town. An exception exists on the northeast edge of Columbus where drainage crosses interstate 90 and flows to the existing drainage ditch east of Columbus. The Yellowstone River lies to the south and agricultural land to the east, both down gradient of Columbus.

The Columbus Water Users Association ditch is situated at the north of Town. This ditch crosses Keyser Creek via a conduit siphon with upstream spillway capabilities into Keyser

TOWN OF COLUMBUS STORM DRAINAGE

LEGEND

- Flow Direction
- Stormwater drainage area
- Stormwater drainage area
- Drainage inlets and conduits



600 0 600 1200 1800 2400 Feet

Creek. The spillway acts as a cutoff to prevent upstream storm flows that reach the ditch from being propagated into Columbus.

The portion of Columbus lying north of the railroad tracks is drained primarily through surface gutters and roadside swale system. Intermittent curb and gutter and roadside ditches with culvert crossings at intersections exist throughout the Town. Generally, all areas observed have positive drainage to remove storm runoff from the area following storm events. However, several culverts were observed to be partially blocked requiring cleaning and maintenance.

A major underground drainage system was installed in 2007 along First Avenue North from Fourth Street to Ninth Street. This system has the capacity to be expanded north to collect water south of Fourth Avenue, between Fourth Street and Ninth Street.

Storm drainage conduit facilities are present in Ninth Street and were constructed in conjunction with State Highway 78. The north portion of Ninth Street is served by fifteen and eighteen-inch conduit, discharging to the existing drain ditch at Fourth Avenue North. The south portion of Ninth Street is served by fifteen, eighteen, and twenty-four inch conduit to Second Avenue North where a thirty-six inch conduit conveys storm water to the east.

Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) storm drain facilities are generally designed to handle runoff related to the highway but not to accept other drainage sources. However, the existing conduit facilities south of Fourth Avenue North have inlets to drain the area west of Ninth Street. Several pipe inlet taps have been made in the thirty-six inch line east of Ninth Street to provide drainage of the surrounding area.

A new underground drainage system was installed on 2008 to address drainage concerns on Second Street and Third Street as well as the undersized pipe under the railroad tracks. A 36-inch pipe was bored under the railroad tracks and tied to an underground drainage system that has inlets at Second Street and Pike Avenue, Third Street and Pike Avenue, and Third Street and First Avenue North. The piping under Second Street and Third Street has the capacity to be expanded north to collect additional runoff.

Drainage on the south side of Pike Avenue on the railroad right-of-way, east of Sixth Street is conveyed across the railroad tracks through a 28x24 inch reinforced concrete pipe (RCP). South of the railroad tracks, drainage is conveyed through open ditches along Clough Avenue between South 10th Street and South 13th Street where it is collected by a 36-inch culvert that empties into the large drainage ditch south of First Avenue South.

An open irrigation drain ditch begins just east of the intersection of Fourth Avenue North and Ninth Street. The ditch flows in an easterly direction on the north side of Fourth Avenue and then turns south, discharging to a swampy area prior to making its way to the Yellowstone River. The drainage ditch is a significant drainage feature, and will become the desired outlet for future projected development on the north side of Columbus. Presently, the drain ditch has an estimated capacity ranging from 100 to 200 cfs throughout its reaches. Conduit crossings have an estimated capacity ranging from 50 to 100 cfs. The culvert crossing of the Old Highway 10

just east of town is the greatest flow restriction with an estimated capacity of less than 50 cfs prior to overtopping the roadway.

The drain ditch is governed by an irrigation district with authority to insure that the existence of the ditch is perpetuated. It is recommended that future planning of storm drainage improvements include exploring the status and authority of the drainage district to assure that storm water can be diverted through the existing corridor. The planning effort should encompass the swamp area, extending from the point where the defined drainage channel terminates, and extending to the Yellowstone River.

The west side of Columbus drains to Keyser Creek. With future development in the area, it is desirable to divert runoff to Keyser Creek whenever possible. This will minimize future impacts to existing storm drain systems flowing east through Columbus. Beartooth Heights Subdivision drains via curb and gutter to the southeastern portion of the subdivision, then back to Keyser Creek via a storm drainage system constructed in 1995.

Drainage of the area south of the railroad tracks occurs primarily by overland flow. There are limited areas where roadway borrow ditches and swales divert and concentrate storm flows.

A Storm Drainage Plan was adopted in March of 2002.

SOLID WASTE SERVICES AND FACILITIES

TOWN OF COLUMBUS

Collection:

The Town of Columbus provides a transfer station as part of the integrated waste management system. Solid waste collection services are provided by contract with Mackenzie Disposal, Inc. Household waste is collected once each week within the corporate limits. Commercial and industrial firms receive more frequent collection where required. Columbus averages 16 tons of solid waste per week.

Disposal:

Reuse and recycling is encouraged in Columbus prior to disposal. Solid waste from the Town of Columbus is hauled to the Billings landfill for disposal.

STILLWATER COUNTY

SOLID WASTE

Stillwater County formed a refuse disposal district in 1975. The district is governed by an appointed board of directors. The membership of this board is county-wide with members being from Absarokee, Nye, Park City, Reed Point, Molt, Rapelje and Columbus rural. Members are appointed to three year terms by the Board of County Commissioners. The district changed from 64 unattended collection sites throughout the county to a transfer station near of Columbus and

seven attended sites located south of Absarokee, north of Nye, west of Park City, west of Reed Point, and near Rapelje, plus two unattended sites in the Molt and Broadview areas.

The district operates a collection system which utilizes 28 and 40 yard roll-off boxes which are picked up by two hook frame assembly trucks. The solid waste collected is compacted in three locations; the main transfer station in Columbus as well as at Absarokee and Park City. The compacted waste from Absarokee and Park City is hauled directly to the Billings landfill. All other uncompacted solid waste is hauled to Columbus where it is compacted and then hauled to Billings. This landfill is operated by the City of Billings and the district pays tipping fees at the landfill per ton of compacted waste. Approximately 5,000 tons are transported to Billings annually.

Recycling bins are currently available in Park City, Absarokee and Nye with plans to have these bins available at all attended sites. Cardboard is collected in separate bins, transported to Columbus where it is recycled. The district employs a Solid Waste Supervisor, one full time driver, one part time driver, one part time secretary, eight part time site attendants and five roving site attendants.

The Stillwater County Solid Waste District is a countywide district established in 1975 to eliminate the need for county landfills, as well as to facilitate the prohibition of private trash burning in the county. A solid waste assessment charged per year per household funds the Solid Waste District. There is no charge to county residents that live outside the Town of Columbus, for disposing of household trash at the collection points or transfer station.

TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES

INTRODUCTION:

The transportation system in the Columbus area includes Interstate 90, two state highways, county roads, and all Town of Columbus streets and sidewalks. The transportation map shows the highways, roads and streets. There are also railroad lines and the Columbus airport within the city-county planning jurisdictional area.

STATE HIGHWAYS:

Interstate 90 is the main east-west route through the Columbus area. The Interstate is not within the planning jurisdictional area, but forms the north boundary. This four lane divided highway was completed in 1973. The Town of Columbus is served by an interchange. The average daily traffic on Interstate 90 was 8,410 vehicles per day, at the last count.

Highway No. 10 is also an east-west road through the Columbus area. The highway now serves as a frontage road to I-90 and a minor collector for the Columbus area. This is a two lane asphalt road. Approximately two miles of this route is within the planning jurisdictional area. Highway 10 is the main street (Pike Ave.) for the Columbus Business District. The average daily traffic was as high as 4,360 in the Town of Columbus. This route parallels the Yellowstone River and

replaced the original Yellowstone Trail. Old Highway 10 is a two lane paved road maintained by the Montana Department of Transportation.

Highway 78 between Columbus and Red Lodge is a primary route maintained by the Montana Department of Transportation. Approximately 1.6 miles of this route is within the planning jurisdictional area. This is a paved two lane road which serves as the arterial north-south route in southern Stillwater County. The average daily traffic on this route ranged between 3,730 and 6,360. Major reconstruction occurred on this route between Columbus and Absarokee from 2006 to 2010.

Highway 306 (Rapelje road) between Columbus and Rapelje, is a secondary route and is a paved two lane road. The Rapelje road serves as a major north-south collector for northern Stillwater County. Approximately one mile of this route is in the planning jurisdictional area. The average width is 26 feet. Average daily traffic on this route is 630.

COUNTY ROADS:

Centennial road is about .8 mile long; the entire length is paved two lane road. Stillwater County maintains the portions of this road that lie outside of town limits.

BRIDGES:

In addition, there are two bridge structures in the planning jurisdictional area. One structure is on state controlled right-of-way and the other one is a County structure. The State controlled structure is the bridge over Keyser Creek Bridge on old Highway 10.

The County bridge structure is the Keyser Creek Bridge on Centennial Road, which is 32 feet long and 24 feet wide with concrete end walls, steel stringers and a concrete deck.

TOWN STREETS:

The town of Columbus has over 19 miles of streets. Most town streets are paved, but some have a gravel surface. There are also over six miles of alleys in Columbus and approximately six miles of concrete sidewalks. Two streets in Columbus have been classified as arterials. These are Ninth Street and Pike Avenue. Four streets are classified as collectors. These are Centennial Road, Fourth Avenue, Pratten Street and A Street. All other streets in Columbus are classified as local streets. Most platted right-of-way in Town is 80 feet wide. However, there are some 60-foot wide rights-of-way. These are mostly in the Beartooth Heights addition on the northwest end of Town, the north half of Quarry Street, the streets on both sides of the Courthouse block, the streets south of Apple Village and Eighth Avenue into Town Pump. All new subdivision are required to provided 60-foot wide rights-of way.

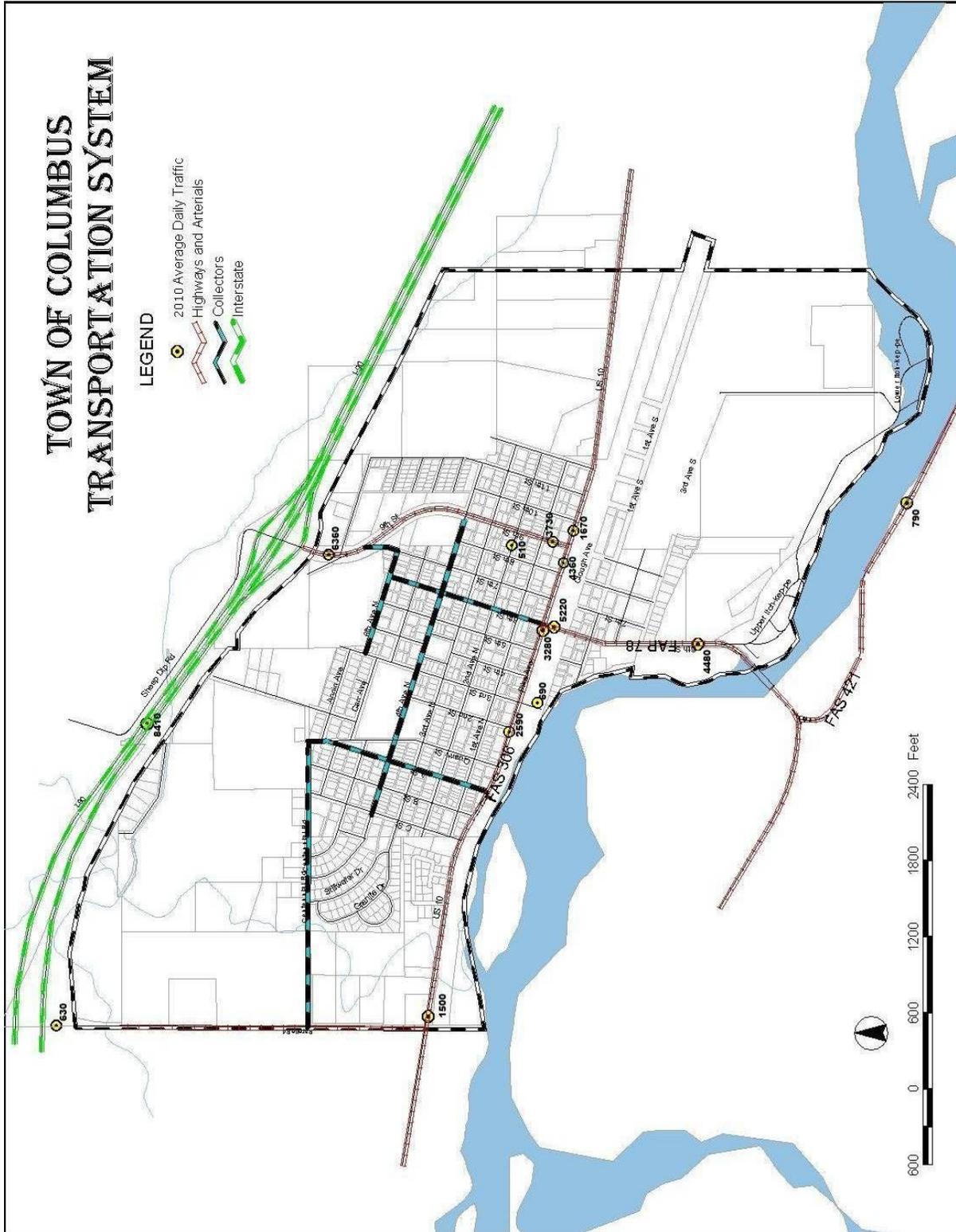
AIRPORT FACILITIES:

A joint city-county airport facility is located in Columbus. The Columbus airport consists of one active runway, a connecting taxiway, a beacon tower with light, remote radio controlled runway lighting system, tie down and hangars located on or adjacent to the airport. The existing runway

TOWN OF COLUMBUS TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

LEGEND

- 2010 Average Daily Traffic
- Highways and Arterials
- Collectors
- Interstate



is 3,800 foot long by 75 feet wide and is paved. The airport has a full time fixed base operator and certified flight instructors are available. The airport undertook a major renovation in 1998, and completed a taxiway extension in 2002. In 2010 the airport was renamed Columbus Airport – Woltermann Memorial. An Airport Board, jointly appointed by the Town of Columbus and Stillwater County, oversees airport improvements and makes recommendations to the governing bodies on airport matters.



Hangars at Columbus Airport

RAILROAD:

Montana Rail Link serves Stillwater County. The main rail line parallels the Yellowstone River east-west through the Columbus area. There is approximately ten miles of track in the planning jurisdictional area, additional track railroad sidage through Columbus and a loading facility in Columbus. There is currently an average of 13 to 14 freight trains passing through the Columbus area daily, though this number may increase based on eastern Montana coal development and shipping yard construction on the west coast. Passenger service was discontinued on this route in 1980.

MOTOR FREIGHT CARRIERS:

United Parcel Service serves the Columbus area. Freight traffic service is also available in Billings. Freight traffic services can make arrangements with numerous commercial motor freight operators serving this area.

TOWN SIDEWALKS:

There are sidewalks in the central business district and in the older residential areas of the Town of Columbus. The sidewalk inventory map shows the location and condition of sidewalks in Columbus. Most sidewalks were initially financed by special improvement districts (SID's) and

some extensions or replacements have been made by individual land owners. As a result, there is a somewhat irregular pattern of sidewalks in Town. The majority of the sidewalks are in a good serviceable condition. Other sections of sidewalk are in fair condition or have deteriorated to a poor condition in need of replacement.

Sidewalks have not been constructed in Beartooth Heights, Huff Addition, Hamlett Addition, Norton Second Addition, Goodes Subdivision, Industrial Sites, Mountain View Subdivision, Progressive Addition, Apple Village Addition, most of the East Side Addition, Stillwater Heights, High Ground and Fairway North. The hospital was required to construct a sidewalk as part of subdivision approval. Sidewalks are now required in all new subdivisions.

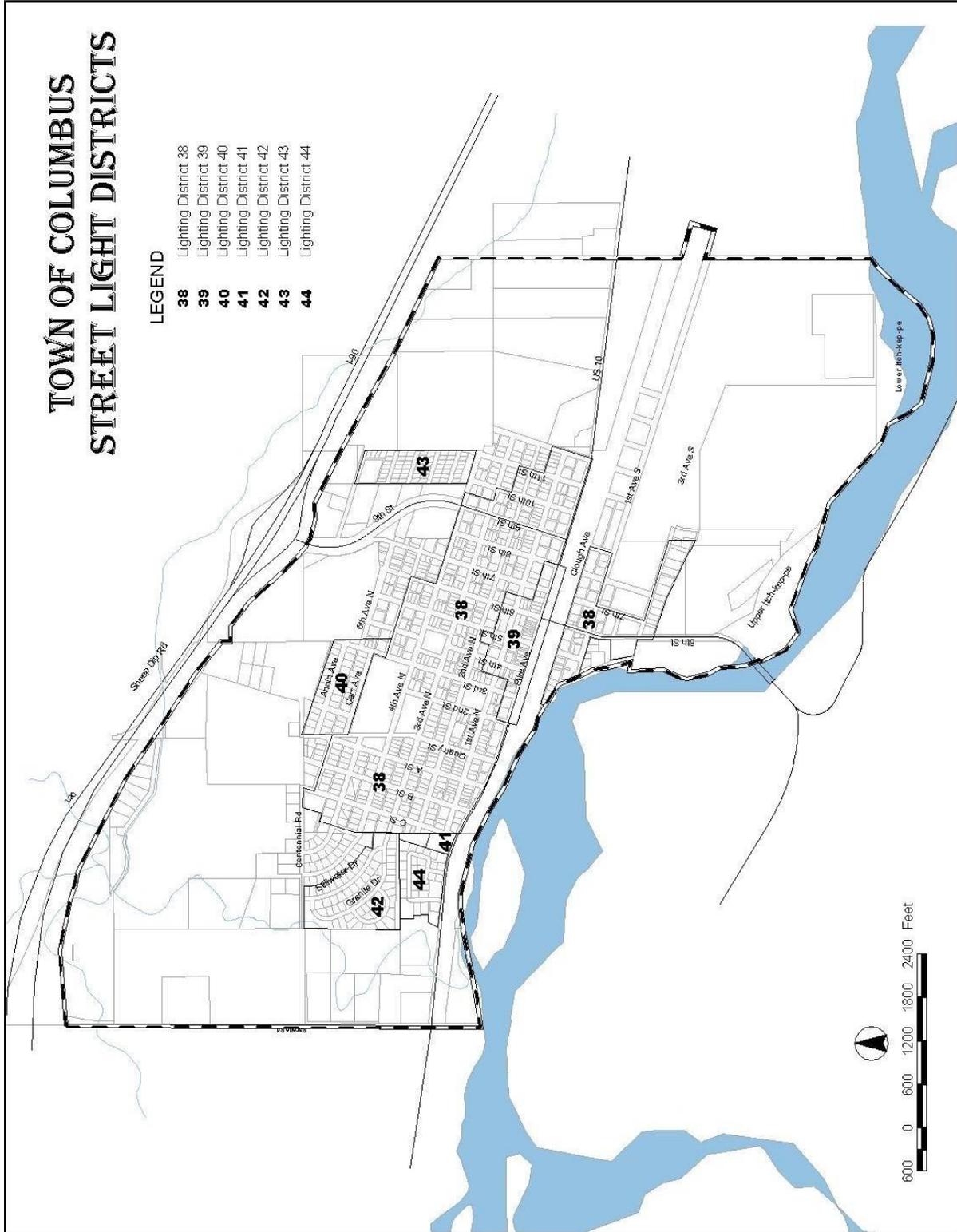
LIGHTING DISTRICTS:

The Town of Columbus has seven light districts numbered 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, and 44. The map showing street light districts identifies the district boundaries. District 38 is the largest and serves most of the residential area in town. District 39 serves the central business district. District 40 serves the Carr addition on the north side of town. District 41 serves the convalescent center. District 42 serves the third phase of Beartooth Heights. District 43 serves the Two Rivers Subdivision, and light district 44 serves the Stillwater Heights Subdivision. Apple Village area, portions of the east side of town and the airport/industrial area are not served by light districts. Assessments for the cost of the light districts are paid twice a year along with the property taxes.

TOWN OF COLUMBUS STREET LIGHT DISTRICTS

LEGEND

- 38** Lighting District 38
- 39** Lighting District 39
- 40** Lighting District 40
- 41** Lighting District 41
- 42** Lighting District 42
- 43** Lighting District 43
- 44** Lighting District 44



PRIVATE UTILITIES

Electricity:

Northwestern Energy provides the electricity for the Columbus area which has the capability to provide 3 phase power. A new substation was constructed in Columbus in 1990 on its 50 kv line in conjunction with providing electricity to the Stillwater Mining Company (SMC) smelter.

A 100 kv line running north/south through the jurisdictional area from the 161 kv line north of Columbus was completed in 1993 and is intended to provide greater capacity to serve the area.

Northwestern Energy operates one substation in Columbus, known as the Columbus East substation and is located immediately east of the Super 8 Motel. Beartooth Electric also operates a substation near the Northwestern Energy Columbus East substation. The estimated capacity and demand on these substations are listed below:

	Cap. kv.	Peak Demand
Columbus East	7500	2500
Beartooth	3750	2000

Peak demand can exceed capacity for short periods which has been the case with the Columbus substation. A transmission substation is located west of the city-county planning jurisdictional area and intersects a 100 kv line with a 50 kv line.

Natural Gas:

The jurisdictional area is traversed by a 4" high pressure natural gas transmission line owned by Northwestern Energy Company. The Town of Columbus is served with natural gas from the 4" transmission line from the Lake Basin Fields and is tied into their main gas transmission system, giving the Columbus area and elsewhere along the line virtually an unlimited supply for expansion. The gas provides 1000 BTU/cubic foot.

Propane is also used by many rural customers. There are several locally owned propane suppliers.

Telephone:

Qwest Communications provides local telephone service for the jurisdictional area. In 1992 the Columbus switch was upgraded and new fiber optic lines were installed in the area. The improvements mean faster and clearer long distance connections, and the availability of enhanced services such as call waiting.

Long distance phone service is available from a number of companies. US Sprint constructed a fiber optic cable in 1987-1988 which is buried in the railroad right of way, through the jurisdictional area. The 911 emergency communication system was installed in 1991. Cellular phone service is available in the jurisdictional area from AT&T and Verizon.

Television and Radio:

Cable television is provided by Optimum. Multiple channels are available with additional pay per view movie channels. Three television stations are broadcast from Billings and can be received in the jurisdictional area. Television service is also available from digital satellite systems utilizing a small satellite dish and converter. Numerous radio stations broadcast in the region.

PARKS AND RECREATION

HERITAGE PARK

Heritage Park is centrally located in Town just south of the High School. The size of this park is about 3.5 acres. Heritage Park contains a swimming pool facility, tennis courts, one basketball court, two horseshoe courts, playground equipment, a picnic area and additional open space.

The 130,000 gallon swimming pool is 39 ft. wide x 81 ft. long and 3 ft. to 8 ft. deep. There is a 14 ft concrete deck around the pool. The wading pool is 16 ft. x 16 ft. and one foot deep with a 6 ft. concrete deck around it. The pool facility is fenced with a 6 ft. high chain link fence. A new bathhouse was completed in 2011 and provides men and women's changing rooms. The filtration system consists of one large capacity sand filter with a chlorinator. The heating system includes assistance from solar collectors.

The tennis court area is 100 ft. x 130 ft. 6 ft. high side fences and 10 ft. high end fences. The tennis courts were resurfaced in 1994 and were reconstructed in 2004. The basketball court area was reconstructed in 2005 and is 45 ft. wide x 72 ft. long asphalt surface with two fan-shaped backboards/structures complete with hoops and nets and all required markings.

The two horse shoe courts are regulation layout with wood backstops, concrete pitching platforms and grass courts. A variety of playground equipment was provided with assistance from local civic groups. Portable picnic tables, trash cans and volleyball net are provided by the Town in the summer for public use in the open area. A new restroom building was built in 1997.

ITCH-KEP-PE PARK

Itch-Kep-Pe Park is located along the Yellowstone River. The upper park contains about 22 acres, has a road network with three loops and a parking area with access to the Yellowstone River. There are thirty (30) developed campsites with a gravel parking area, picnic tables and campfire grills. There is a restroom facility with men's and women's bathrooms, water and electrical service. The bathroom facility was developed with federal grant funds in the late 1960's. There is a solid waste collection container near the entrance to the upper park.

The lower park contains about 39 acres, has a road network with two loops and a boat ramp for access to the Yellowstone River. There are nineteen (19) developed campsites in the lower park. These campsites include a gravel parking area, an anchored picnic table and a campfire grill. A solid waste collection container is located near the boat ramp. There is a concrete, sealed pit privy located near the boat ramp. This park is a former State fishing access site which was deeded to the Town in the mid 1980's.

CITY PARK

Pike Avenue Park is located north of the railroad tracks and south of Pike Avenue between Highway 78 and Fourth Street. This park is on railroad right-of-way but is leased to the Town of Columbus. This is a lineal park containing about three fourths of an acre. There are picnic tables, park benches, trash cans, flower beds and a sign display area. Pike Avenue Park is decorated every Christmas by volunteers as the major Christmas display in the Central Business District. This park is also the location of a farmers' market, usually held every Thursday in late summer.

BEARTOOTH PARK

This park is located south of Centennial Road along Keyser Creek and contains about 1.6 acres. This land was dedicated to the Town when Beartooth Heights was platted along with cash in lieu of land for park development. Beartooth Park is currently undeveloped, but provides a sledding area in the winter.

GRANITE PEAK PARK

The Town of Columbus acquired 34 acres of land north of Sixth Avenue and west of Interstate 90 access road (9th Street). Three baseball fields, a softball field, and a soccer field have been developed on this site. The Columbus Community Garden is also located in the park. The Granite Peak Park Steering Committee coordinates activities in the park. This committee has expressed interest in rebuilding an old jogging path around the park. The fields have an underground sprinkling system connected to a well on site. Underground electrical serves the pump for the well. The fields are fenced with chain-link fencing along with chain-link backstops for the baseball and softball fields. A master plan has been prepared for the development of this park.

SHERWOOD PARK

Sherwood Park is located along East 4th Street North between 9th Street and North 11th Street. The park is less than one acre in size and was dedicated to the town of Columbus with the platting of Two Rivers Subdivision. Picnic tables, playground equipment, playground area, and swing set have been installed.

GOLF COURSE

The golf course is located in the southeastern section of Town between the Yellowstone River and the Airport property. The Stillwater Golf and Recreation Association leases approximately 100 acres from the Town of Columbus on a long term lease. This is a nine-hole golf course which was re-built in 1986 to U.S.G.A. specifications. The golf course includes a driving range, practice green, clubhouse and two comfort stations.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PLAYGROUND

The elementary school playground contains a variety of playground equipment including a slide, swings, jungle gym, merry-go-round, balance beam, teeter-totters, and basketball hoops.

HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC FIELD

The High School Athletic Field contains a football field, track and field facilities and other athletic practice fields. All athletic facilities are in good condition.

5.7 NATURAL RESOURCES

CLIMATE

The jurisdictional area is located within a region described as semi-arid and characterized by colder temperatures. The weather of the area consists of cold dry winters; cool, moist springs; hot, dry summers, and cool, dry falls.

The climatic data summary gives mean monthly precipitation and temperature data. Mean annual precipitation for Columbus is 14.28 inches. Average total snowfall is 35.2 inches. Temperatures ranged from average maximums of 87.5 degrees F in July to 35.7 degrees F in January. Average minimums were 9.3 degrees F for January and 52.2 degrees F for July.

Montana is noted for its great extremes in weather conditions. In the Columbus area, summer high temperatures can exceed 100 degrees F while an invasion of arctic air in winter can plummet temperatures to -30 degrees and lower. Temperature can also change very rapidly. "Chinook" winds can raise winter temperatures 40 - 50 degrees in a day. The number of frost free days averages 110 -120 days near Columbus.

The Columbus area is located in a belt of westerly winds. The mountains of the Pacific Northwest and the Rockies receive most of the moisture before it reaches here. This predominately westerly flow changes in the spring months. This allows for intrusions of moist air from the Gulf of Mexico brought in by an easterly flow. Relative humidity is low in the area. The air quality in Columbus is considered to be excellent. The area is designated a Class II airshed for purposes of determining available ambient air quality increments. There are no known violations of Ambient Air Quality Standards in Stillwater County at this time.

GEOLOGY

The surface geology of the Columbus area is Quaternary Alluvial deposits which are located in the Yellowstone River Valley. This valley fill consists of mainly silt, sand and gravel with some terrace deposits. Ground water yields of 10 to 300 gpm have been reported in the alluvium.

There are no known active faults within the jurisdictional area. There are also no known oil, gas or mineral deposits within the Columbus jurisdictional area.

SOILS

Two soil associations have been identified in the jurisdictional area. The Havre-Harlem-Glendive Association is found in the Yellowstone River Valley. This is a deep, nearly level or gently sloping, well drained loam, clay loam and sandy loam formed in alluvium of flood plains, alluvial fans and terraces. These soils are suitable mainly for dryland and irrigated crops and range. These soils often have severe limitations for building site development because of flooding, shrink-swell and low strength characteristics. They have slight to severe limitations for sanitary facilities because of floods and slow percolation. They have moderate limitations for

recreational developments such as campgrounds, picnic areas, playgrounds, paths and trails. They support good to fair wildlife habitat.

The Yamac-Kobar-Attawan Association is found in the northern portion of the Columbus area between the railroad tracts and Interstate 90 as well as the Keyser Creek drainage. This is a deep, nearly level to moderately sloping, well-drained loam and clay loam formed in alluvial fans and terraces. These soils are used for irrigated and dryland crops and range. These soils have varied rating for wildlife habitat potential and slight to moderate limitations for recreational development. Moderate to severe limitations may exist for building site development primarily due to shrink swell and low strength problems. Some moderate to severe conditions may also be encountered for sanitary facilities due to high ground water and slow percolation.

More detailed information on specific soil series and capability classes are provided in the Soil Survey of Stillwater County. All land developers are encouraged to research specific soil characteristics as described in the Soil Survey. Additional soil testing may be required for more detailed and reliable information for specific development projects.

HYDROLOGY

Both surface and groundwater are very important features in the Columbus area due to the semi-arid climate. The areas most productive farmland is because of irrigation water from the Yellowstone River and Keyser Creek. The Town of Columbus municipal water supply is from alluvial aquifer which is recharged by the Yellowstone River. The quantity and quality of water available from the Yellowstone is good. The river water features neutral pH levels which are influenced by natural forces, low dissolved solids, and microbiologic conditions.

Groundwater in the jurisdictional area varies in its availability and quality. The alluvial deposits are the easiest to develop and are of good quality. Availability of groundwater is dependent on geologic factors which make it difficult to predict. Utilizing information from well logs is the best method of predicting water availability and quality.

TOPOGRAPHY

Columbus area topography consists of the relatively flat valley of the Yellowstone River and Keyser Creek drainage located in the western side of the jurisdictional area. Elevations range from a low of 3560 feet to a high point of 3700 feet. There are no slopes in excess of 25% within the Columbus planning jurisdictional area.

VEGETATION

Four major vegetation types have been identified within the jurisdictional area. They are riparian, wetland, cultivated/pasture, and urban disturbed. Soil and climate are the primary factors that determine the kind and/or amount of natural vegetation. Man's activities affect this natural vegetation in varying degrees.

The planning jurisdictional area is in one geographic area as defined by the USDA. It is classified as part of the Western Sedimentary Plains. The climax (natural) vegetation of the region consists primarily of tall grasses, the most dominant species being blue bunch wheatgrass and rough fescue.

The riparian areas are characterized by nutrient rich soils which result from flooding. As a result vegetation here is diverse and plentiful. Cottonwoods are the dominant trees and common under story species include prairie cordgrass, hair grass, sedges and perennial forbs. The riparian zones are very important for a variety of wildlife.

The wetlands are found on the relatively level slopes adjacent the Yellowstone River and its tributaries. Cattails, sedges, and rushes along with a variety of grasses dominate. In areas of saline soils, alkali sacaton, Nuttall saltgrass, alkali cordgrass, basin wildrye and inland saltgrass dominate.

Cultivated lands in the jurisdictional area consist of irrigated river bottoms primarily of hay, with a few smaller areas of small grains and corn. The dryland areas are cultivated primarily in winter wheat and barley, with a small amount of dryland hay. The urban area is most noteworthy for its urban forestry and the developed recreation facilities consisting of the golf course and the ballfield site north of Town.

WILDLIFE

The Columbus area provides habitat for a variety of wildlife species. Most significant is the riparian habitat of the Yellowstone River and Keyser Creek tributary. The planning jurisdictional area is located in the central flyway. The rivers and wetlands provide habitat for eagles, Canada geese, ducks, cormorants, Great Blue herons and numerous other species of birds. The diverse riparian vegetation also provides excellent habitat for deer as well as many other mammals such as fox, muskrat and beaver.

The fisheries in the Yellowstone River are described by wildlife managers as good: This is due principally to high water quality. The waters of the Yellowstone River continue to be relatively free of pollutants such as excess sedimentation, municipal effluent, or agricultural chemicals. In fact, the natural features of low winter water flows and ice jams have been described as the largest negative impacts on local fisheries. Brown trout, Rainbow Trout, and Whitefish are the primary game species of fish.

There are a number of predator species present which include fox, coyote, mountain lion, and black bear in the area. The mountain lion has made a strong comeback statewide since it was reclassified a game animal rather than a varmint in 1971.

The Columbus area is home to numerous other species of birds. Most noteworthy is the bald eagle, which has increased significantly in number nationwide over the past 10 years. The Yellowstone River provides habitat for both resident and migrating eagles, and wildlife managers anticipate a breeding pair nest near in the jurisdictional area. The bald eagle is currently on the threatened species list.

Other birds include hawks, grouse, pheasant and a recent increase in Mirriams wild turkey. The peregrine falcon, an endangered species, is also a rare winter migrant through the Columbus area.

CULTURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

There are documented cultural and historic resource sites within the jurisdictional area. The statewide Cultural Resource Information System (CRIS) sites are inventoried for a variety of reasons. The CRIS listing contains all of those sites eligible for the National Register. However not all sites listed in the CRIS are on the National Register.

In and around Columbus there are 3 sites on the National Register. These are the Columbus Cemetery, W.H. Norton House on the courthouse property and the Jacobs House located at 4 W First Ave. North. The Little Stone Church in Columbus is also a historically significant building.

NATURAL HAZARDS

Flood plains, areas with high ground water, fire hazard areas, steep slopes, unsuitable soils, polluted or non potable water, earthquakes and severe weather are considered unsuitable for subdivisions. Some areas may be unsuitable for building or residential purposes, unless the hazards can be mitigated by design. The following hazards were identified in the Columbus area.

Flooding

The Yellowstone River and Keyser Creek have mapped 100 year flood plains. The Town of Columbus participates in the National Flood Insurance Program, and has experienced flooding along the Yellowstone River. Flood plain maps for the town have been developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Stillwater County has adopted a complete set of regulations pertaining to construction within the limits of the 100 year flood plain. The hazards map shows the limit of the 100 year flood plain. Most construction within the 100 year flood plain or floodway requires a permit obtained through the office of the Flood Plain Program Administrator. A map of flood hazard areas is on the following page.

Fire Hazard Areas

Vegetation type and degree of slope are the main factors in determining natural fire hazards, along with weather conditions. Riparian zones, wetlands, cultivated pastures and the urban area are considered low natural fire hazard areas.

Unsuitable Soils

Soil characteristics such as high water table, chemical properties, shrink/swell etc. all have effects on land use. The Soil Survey of Stillwater County Area identifies all soil types. Each soil type is described and a map of the entire county locates the soils. Soil characteristics which affect building construction, roads and other land uses are identified in the survey.

Both soil associations located within the Columbus planning jurisdictional area have limitations for development. Refer to the natural environment section on soils and the Soil Survey of Stillwater County for general soil locations and limitations. Site specific soil samples may be advisable before development decisions are made.

Polluted or Non-potable water supply

General information on water quality is contained in the natural environment section on hydrology. However, water quality can vary greatly from well to well. Groundwater from shales will tend to be of poorer quality than water obtained from sandstone or alluvial deposits. There are no known polluted or non-potable water sources in the planning jurisdictional area other than groundwater polluted by the former Mouat chrome industry located in the Town of Columbus. The Mouat site is a designated EPA superfund site and was cleaned up in 1994.

Earthquakes

The Columbus area is in the Intermountain Seismic Belt. Based on historic earthquake activity, earthquakes have not caused any considerable damage to structures in the Columbus area. A relatively small fault has been identified just north of the Columbus area, but it is not known to be active in recent times. There are no known landslide hazards identified for this area.

Severe Weather

Severe storms are not common in the Columbus area. However, thunderstorms, hailstorms, high winds, heavy snow, freezing rain and sleet do occur. Snow load ratings for roofs is rated 30 for the Columbus area. Available wind information indicates wind gusts in excess of 60 mph are not uncommon.



CHAPTER 6: PROJECTED TRENDS

6.1 LAND USE:

Lands classified and zoned as agricultural open space or residential estates have been converted to small tracts and residential property after being subdivided. Subdivision activity is expected to continue to meet the demand for residential properties. Development activity is occurring on the east and north side of Columbus. This trend is expected to continue into the future.

Commercial development is expected to continue to diversify with essential services including groceries, hardware, clothing, vehicles, plus specialty stores and services including banking, real estate, insurance, and medical. The trend is in the north central business district and 9th Street.

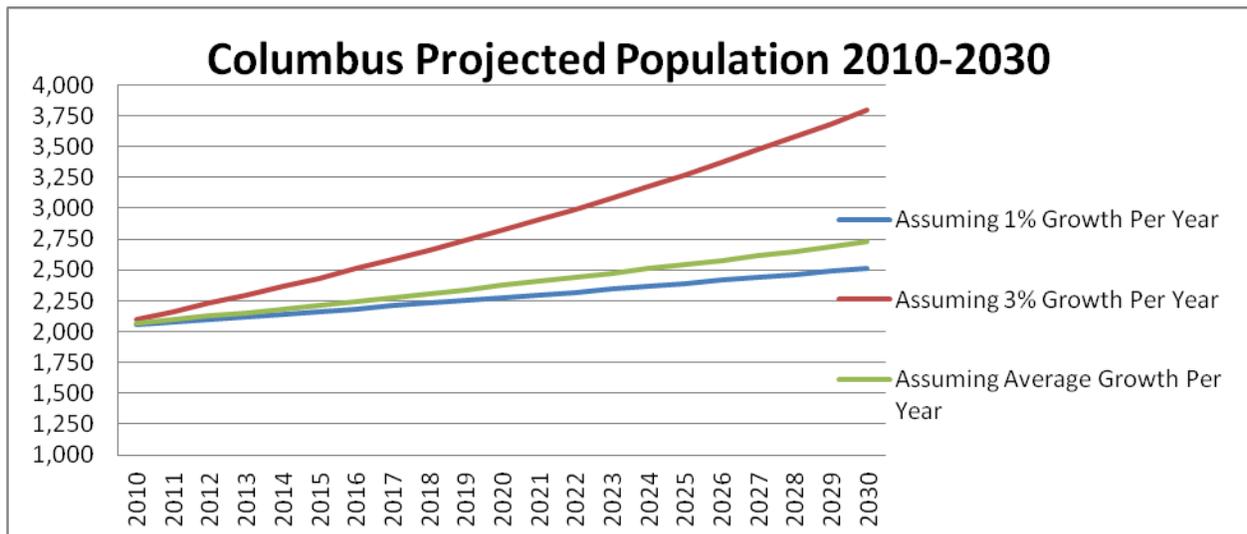
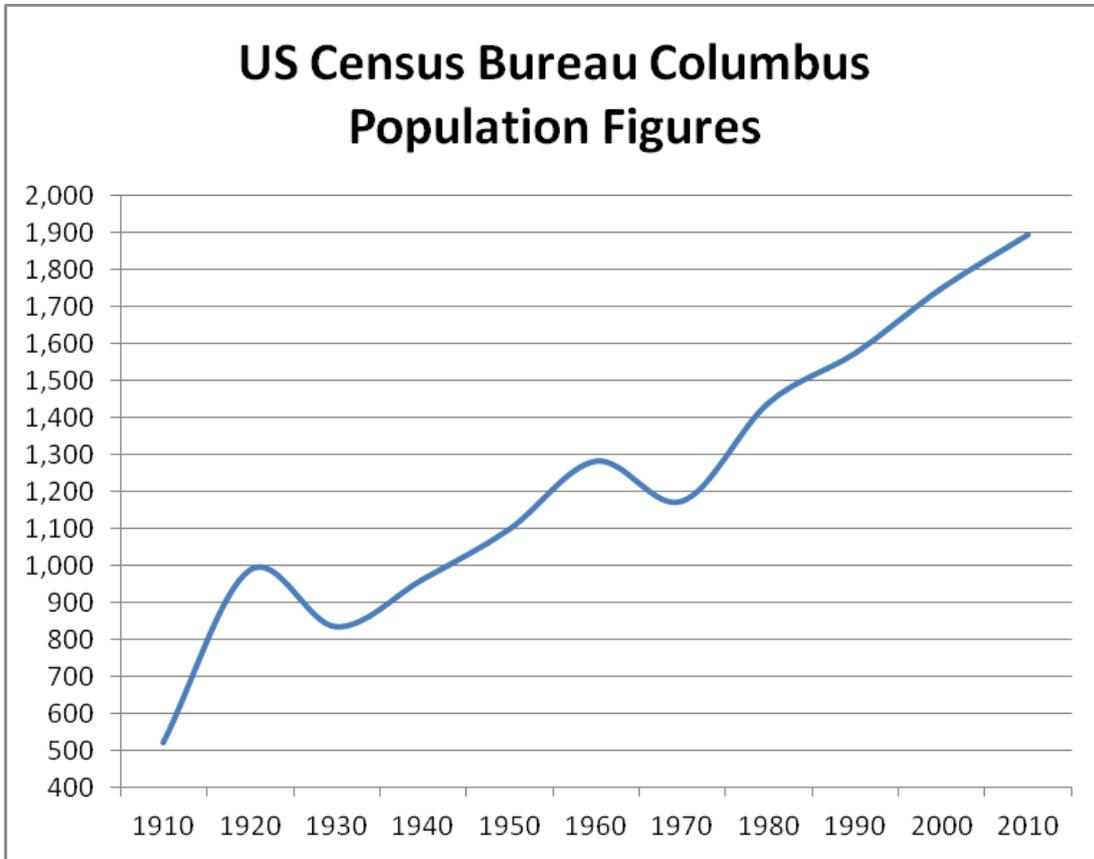
Industrial development is expected to continue, especially on the southeast side of town as Stillwater Mine expands its smelter and refinery operations. The potential for additional industrial expansion on the east side on the city-county planning jurisdictional area will also continue to be evaluated.

6.2 POPULATION:

The population of the Town of Columbus increased from 1,173 people in 1970 to 1,439 people in 1980, then to 1,573 people in 1990, increased again in 2000 to 1,748 people, and continued the trend by increasing to 1,893 in 2010.

There has been a natural increase in population of the area as a result of differences in birth and death rates. Migration has also been a factor in population growth. People began migrating into the area between 1970 and 2000 as a result of residential, commercial, industrial developments and increased mining activity.

Total population in the Town of Columbus increased from 1,748 to 1,893 between 2000 and 2010 Census. This general growth trend has continued since the first Census for Town of Columbus in 1910 with some slight declines in 1930 and 1970. The graphs on the next page show the census population from 1910 through 2010, and population projections through 2030.



The overall population trend in the Columbus area indicates estimated continued growth of 1.39% per year, based on recent census bureau estimates. Gender, age and racial composition of the population are projected to remain similar with relatively minor changes over time.

6.3 ECONOMIC CONDITIONS:

Economic trends in the Columbus area indicate growth in market and taxable value; household, family and per capita income; and labor force.

6.4 LOCAL SERVICES:

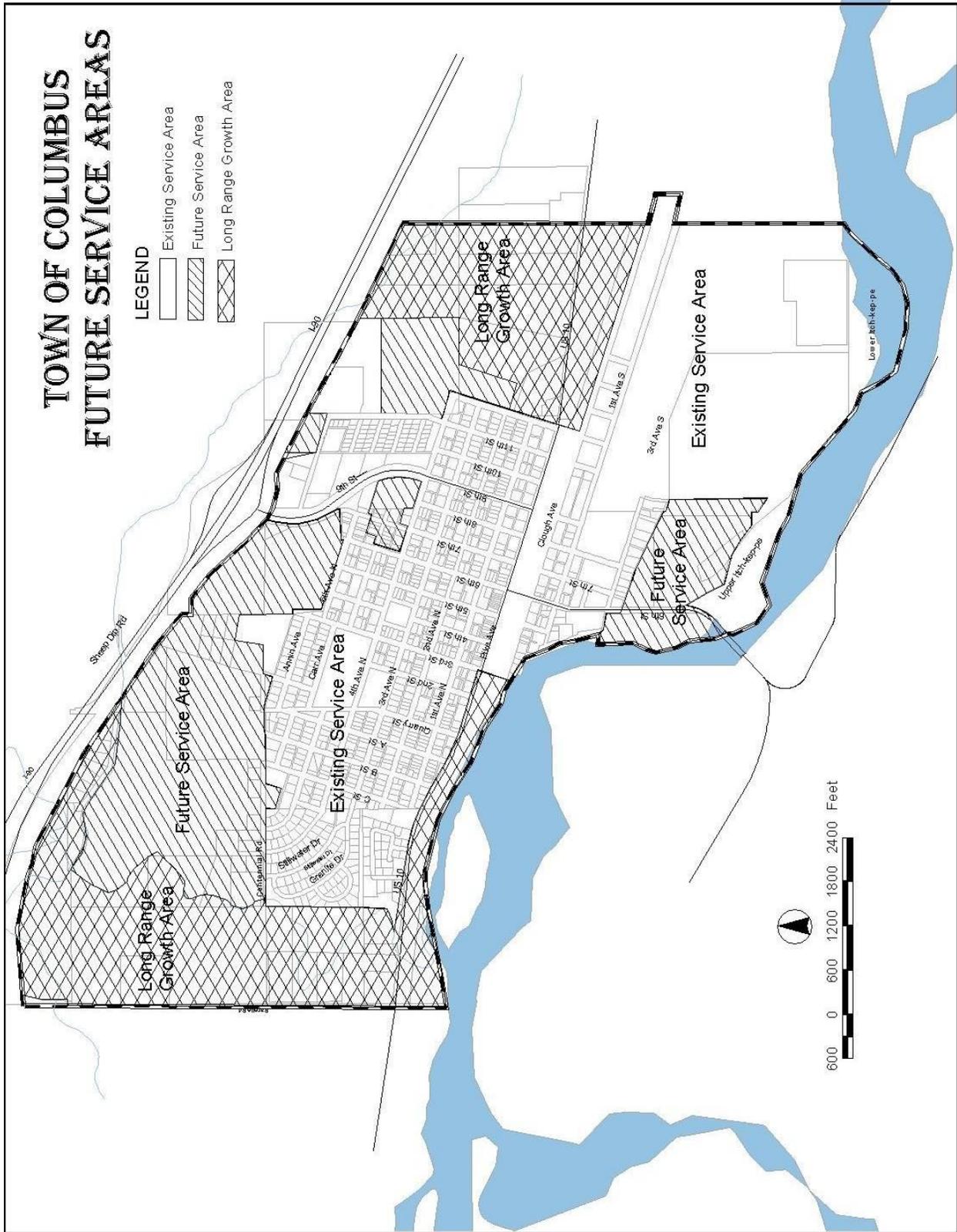
The trend in local services including legislative, city/municipal court, administrative, elections, facilities, law enforcement, police reserves, fire protection, roads and streets, parks/cemetery, animal control, swimming pool, liability insurance, airport, light districts, water system, sewer system, and solid waste is to improve and automate services where possible. Capital funds include streets and alleys, industrial park, parks, administrative/computers, police car replacement, swimming pool, fire, cemetery, and buildings. The town currently employees approximately 23 individuals; 12 of them are full-time and the rest are part-time. Capital funds and operating budgets have been increasing over time. Future service and long range growth areas for town services is shown below.



Columbus Public Works Facility

TOWN OF COLUMBUS FUTURE SERVICE AREAS

- LEGEND**
- Existing Service Area
 - Future Service Area
 - Long Range Growth Area



Proposed capital projects are provided in the Capital Improvement Plan for the Town of Columbus. This plan is updated as needed to reflect finished improvement and needed improvements as conditions change.

City-county airport, health, planning, dispatching and solid waste continue to be coordinated between Stillwater County and the Town of Columbus to achieve efficiency and avoid duplication of services where possible.

6.5 NATURAL RESOURCES:

No significant trends have been identified for natural resources in the Columbus area. Some agricultural land was converted to residential development. There has been flooding in the area in 1997 and 2011.

CHAPTER 7: IMPLEMENTATION of GROWTH POLICY

7.1 POLICIES, REGULATIONS, and IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES:

This section includes a description of policies, regulations and other measures to achieve the community goals and objectives stated in the Columbus Area Growth Policy as required by Montana Codes Annotated 76-1-601 (3)(d).

MCA refers to Montana Codes Annotated, ARM refers to Administrative Rules of Montana and CFR refers to the Code of Federal Regulations.

Annexations (MCA Title 7, Chapter 2, Parts 42 through 47)

Montana Annexation Statutes provide six options for annexation, including addition to municipalities, annexation of contiguous land, annexation of contiguous government land, annexation of wholly surrounded land, annexation by petition, and annexation with the provision of services. The Town of Columbus implements the annexation option relevant to the specific situation. In all cases of annexation, services are provided according to a plan provided by the municipality as specified in MCA 7-2-4732.

City-County Planning (MCA Title 76, Chapter 1, Parts 1 through 6)

The governing bodies of the town of Columbus and Stillwater County have created a city-county planning board to promote orderly development. The jurisdictional area includes the incorporated limits of the town and adjoining areas of the county south of Interstate 90 right-of-way, north of the Yellowstone River, east of State Secondary Highway 306 (Rapelje Road), and west of the section line between sections 22 and 23, 26 and 27, T2S, R23E.

The planning board is advisory to the governing bodies in proposing a growth policy, policies for subdivision plats, layout and development of public infrastructure and utilities to platted and unplatted lands.

Airport Regulations (MCA Title 67 and CFR 77)

Airport approach, transitional, horizontal and conical zones have been established with specified height limitations. Permitted uses on airport property are specified along with nonconforming uses and structures. Permits for future uses are also specified in accordance with Federal Aviation Regulations.

An airport layout plan and airspace plan have been prepared and existing obstructions have been identified. An airport influence area will also be established to include the areas outside the city-county planning jurisdiction.

The Airport Board has established rules for operation and management of the airport. These rules include confinement of aircraft operations; traffic patterns; taxiing; aircraft safety, reports and accidents; fuelling and defuelling of aircraft; vehicular traffic; commercial operations; snow removal and mowing plan; airport management; lease or use agreement; hangars; airport hazard areas; through the fence access; revision of the regulations; grievance procedures; and penalty for violations.

Floodplain Regulations (MCA Title 76, Chapter 5)

Federal Floodplain Regulations (44 CFR, Chapter 1, Parts 63-73)

Recurrent flooding of land resources causes loss of life, damage to property, disruption of commerce and governmental services, and unsanitary conditions; all of which are detrimental to the health, safety, welfare, and property of the occupants of flooded lands and the people of this state; and it is in the public interest to manage regulation of flood-prone lands and waters in a manner consistent with sound land and water use management practices which will prevent and alleviate flooding threats to life and health and reduce private and public economic losses.

Stillwater County has adopted floodplain regulations by resolution and the town of Columbus has adopted floodplain regulations by ordinance. Floodplain regulations are amended periodically to stay current with statutory amendments, attorney general opinions or other relevant changes.

Municipal Zoning (MCA Title 76, Chapter 2, Part 3)

The Town of Columbus has adopted zoning regulations for the purpose of promoting health, safety, morals and general welfare of the community. Zoning districts have been established to specify location, use, height, size of yards, lot coverage and other aspects of land use for agricultural, commercial, industrial, residential, public or other purposes. There are also a superfund overlay district, floodplain and airport regulations. The city-county planning board serves as the zoning commission and airport zoning commission. A board of adjustments is established to review and make recommendations on variance requests.

The zoning regulations are published in Title 17 of the Columbus Municipal Code and are amended periodically to stay current with statutory amendments, attorney general opinions or other relevant changes.

Subdivision Regulations (MCA Title 76, Chapter 3, Parts 1 through 6)

The governing bodies of the Town of Columbus and Stillwater County have adopted subdivision regulations to promote public health, safety, and general welfare by regulating the subdivision of land; prevent overcrowding; lessen congestion on streets and highways; provide for adequate light, air, water supply, sewage disposal, parks and recreation, ingress and egress, and other public requirements; require development in harmony with the natural environment; protect the rights of property owners; and require

uniform monumentation of land subdivisions by reference to a plat or certificate of survey.

The Stillwater County and Town of Columbus Subdivision Regulations contain general provisions; procedures for major and minor subdivisions; design and improvement standards; procedures and standards for subdivisions created by rent or lease, condominiums, planned unit developments, administrative provisions and other requirements. The subdivision regulations are amended periodically to stay current with statutory amendments, attorney general opinions or other relevant changes.

Sanitation in Subdivisions (MCA Title 76, Chapter 4, Part 1) Subdivision Regulations (ARM 17.36.101 through 17.36.805)

Sanitation in subdivisions and associated rules and regulations have been adopted to control water supply, sewage disposal, and solid waste disposal to include individual wells affected by adjoining sewage disposal and individual sewage systems to protect the quality and potability of water for public water supplies and domestic uses and to protect the quality of water for other beneficial uses, including uses relating to agriculture, industry, recreation, and wildlife.

A Board of Health has been established in accordance with MCA 50-2-104 to oversee environmental health issues in the county. The Board of Health has adopted rules for on-site subsurface sewage treatment systems.

In addition, circulars published by Montana Department of Environmental Quality provide implementation guidance. These include DEQ 1 – Standards for Water Works, DEQ 2 – Design Standards for Wastewater Facilities, DEQ 3 – Standards for Small Water Systems, DEQ 4 – Montana Standards for On-Site Subsurface Sewage Treatment Systems, DEQ 8 – Montana Standards for Subdivision Storm Drainage, DEQ 11 – Montana Standards for Development of Springs for Individual and shared Non-Public Systems, DEQ 17 – Montana Standards for Cisterns for Individual Non-Public Systems, PWS 5 – Groundwater under the Direct Influence of Surface Water, PWS 6 – Source Water Protection Delineation, WQB 7 – Montana Numeric Water Quality Standards.

Surveys and Coordinates Corner Recordation Requirements (MCA Title 70, Chapter 22, Parts 1 and 2)

Survey Monumentation Standards (ARM 8.94.3001 through 8.94.3003)

The purpose of these regulations is to protect and perpetuate public land survey corners and information concerning the location of these corners by requiring the systematic establishment of monuments and recording of information concerning the marking of the location of public land survey corners. Also, to allow for the location of other property corners and providing for property security and a coherent system of property location and identification of ownership and thereby eliminating the repeated necessity for reestablishment and relocations of corners once they are established and located.

These records are maintained by the County Clerk and Recorder.

Local Government Budgeting (MCA Title 7, Chapter 6, Part 40)

Local government budgets conform to the fund structure prescribed by the department of administration. Local governments submit a complete copy of the final budget together with a statement of tax levies to the department of administration by the later of October 1 or 60 days after receipt of taxable values from the department of revenue.

The Town of Columbus, Stillwater County and other units of local government prepare an annual budget that includes funding for local services and public facilities necessary to achieve community goals and objectives.

Capital Improvements (MCA Title 7, Chapter 6, Part 6)

Authorization to provide a capital improvement fund for the replacement, improvement, and acquisition of property, facilities, or equipment that costs in excess of \$5,000 and that has a life expectancy of 5 years or more. This capital improvement fund must be formally adopted by the governing body. Capital improvement funds are approved during the annual budget process. The Town of Columbus has a formally adopted capital improvement and maintenance management program.

Montana Public Works Standard Specifications are used as a guideline on public works projects. The town of Columbus is in the process of establishing Standards for Public Works Improvements. Rules and regulations governing utility services and streets are also being developed and may be implemented to achieve community goals and objectives in Columbus.

Improvement Districts (MCA Title 7, Chapter 12, Parts 41-46)

The town council may create special improvement districts, designating them by number; extend the time for payment of assessments levied upon the districts for district improvements for a period not exceeding 20 years or for a period not exceeding 30 years if refunding bonds are issued; make the assessments payable in installments; and pay all expenses of whatever character incurred in making the improvements with special improvement warrants or bonds.

The town council may create special improvement districts for acquiring by purchase, building, constructing, or maintaining facilities intended to protect the safety of the public from open ditches carrying water; constructing municipal swimming pools and other recreation facilities; streets, avenues, alleys, or public places of the town graded to the official grade; surfaced or resurfaced; sidewalks, crosswalks, culverts, bridges, gutters, curbs, steps, parking; sewers, ditches, drains, connecting sewers; waterworks, water mains, and extensions of water mains; pipes, hydrants, and hose connections for irrigating purposes or for fire protection; retaining walls, bulkheads, and walls of rock or other material and the planting of tree; make monetary advances or contributions to aid in the construction of additional natural gas and electric distribution lines and

telecommunications facilities in order to extend those public utility services; and maintain, preserve, and care for any of the improvements authorized by state statute.

The Town of Columbus has utilized improvement districts for various public improvements in the past. Active improvement districts at this time are for street lighting. Improvement districts may be utilized in the future to achieve community goals and objectives and implement the growth policy.

Economic Development (MCA Title 32, Chapter 4, Parts 1 through 3)

Counties and municipalities can participate in development corporations created for the purpose of promoting, developing and advancing the economic welfare of the state. The Town of Columbus and Stillwater County participate in the Beartooth RC&D Economic Development District with representatives on the Board of Directors and the District Economic Development Committee. A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) was adopted in 2001 and as of this writing is in the process of being updated.

Hard Rock Mining Impact Plans (MCA Title 90, Chapter 6, Part 3)

Hard Rock Mining Impact Rules (ARM 8.104.101 through 218)

A Hard Rock Mining Impact Plan has been approved to assist local government units in meeting the initial financial impact of large-scale mineral development. Estimated number of persons coming into the impacted area; increased capital and operating cost to local government units for providing services expected as a result of the development; and the financial or other assistance the mineral developer will give to local government units to meet the need for services is included in the impact plan.

Stillwater County, Town of Columbus, and Columbus Schools are identified as affected units of local government in the 1998 Hard Rock Mining Impact Plan Amendment for the Nye expansion project. Stillwater County, Town of Columbus, and Columbus Schools are identified as potentially affected units of local government in the 1998 Hard Rock Mining Impact Plan Amendment for the East Boulder project.

Stillwater County, Town of Columbus, and other affected units of local government follow the rules, policies, and guidelines established by the Hard Rock Mining Impact Board and approved impact plans.

Property Tax Base Sharing (MCA Title 90, Chapter 6, Part 4)

The increase in property tax base resulting from the development and operation of large-scale mines is allocated so that property tax revenues are equitably distributed among affected local government units. Employee surveys provided in accordance with MCA 90-6-405 are utilized for the annual allocation of the increase in taxable valuation from a large-scale mineral development.

Stillwater County, Town of Columbus, and other affected units of local government follow the procedures specified in the 1998 Hard Rock Mining Impact Plan Amendment for the Stillwater Mine.

Metal Mines License Tax (MCA Title 7, Chapter 6, Part 22; and Title 20, Chapter 9, Part 2)

Stillwater County has established a hard-rock mine trust reserve account and a metal mines tax reserve account as authorized. The Columbus School District has also established a metal mines tax reserve fund. The allocation of metal mines license tax revenues received is allocated by the Board of County Commissioners annually in compliance with state statutes. The hard-rock mine trust reserve account can only be used following a mine closure or a 50% reduction in mine workforce. The County's metal mines tax reserve can be expended for planning and economic development activities. Schools can expend metal mines tax reserve for any purpose authorized by law.

Open Meetings (MCA Title 2, Chapter 3, Part 2)

Public boards, commissions, councils, and other public agencies in the Town of Columbus and Stillwater County conduct public business, actions and deliberations openly. All meetings of the governing bodies, boards, bureaus, commissions, agencies, or any political subdivision or organizations or agencies supported in whole or in part by public funds or expending public funds are open to the public.

All meetings that regulate the rights, duties, or privileges of any individual are open to the public. Provided, however, the presiding officer of any meeting may close the meeting during the time the discussion relates to a matter of individual privacy and then if and only if the presiding officer determines that the demands of individual privacy clearly exceed the merits of public disclosure. The right of individual privacy may be waived by the individual about whom the discussion pertains and, in that event, the meeting must be open.

A meeting may be closed to discuss a strategy to be followed with respect to litigation when an open meeting would have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the public agency.

School Districts (MCA Title 20, Chapter 6, Parts 1 through 7)

State statutes provide for school districts and public educational services provided under the jurisdiction of the district. An elementary district is a district organized for the purpose of providing public education for all grades up to and including grade 8 and for preschool programs and kindergartens. A high school district is a district organized for the purpose of providing those public educational services for all grades beyond grade 8, including postsecondary programs, except those programs administered by community college districts or the Montana university system. The trustees of elementary districts and high school districts have the same types of powers, duties, and responsibilities authorized and imposed by the laws of Montana.

The Columbus city-county planning jurisdiction is within the Columbus elementary and high school districts. These school districts implement the goals and objectives identified for education and schools.

Rural Fire District (MCA Title 7, Chapter 33, Part 21)

The board of county commissioners is authorized to establish fire districts in any unincorporated territory or town upon presentation of a petition in writing signed by the owners of 40% or more of the real property in the proposed district and owners of property representing 40% or more of the taxable value of property in the proposed district.

The Columbus Fire Department is responsible for the area within the town and the rural county portion of the city-county planning jurisdiction is within the Columbus Rural Fire District #3. The rural fire trustees establish policies and regulations for the district.

Conservation District (MCA Title 76, Chapter 15, Parts 1 through 9)

State statutes provide for creation of conservation districts for the conservation of soil and soil resources, for the control and prevention of soil erosion, for the prevention of floodwater and sediment damages, and for furthering the conservation, development, utilization, and disposal of water and thereby to preserve natural resources, control floods, prevent impairment of dams and reservoirs, preserve wildlife, protect the tax base, protect public lands, and protect and promote the health, safety, and general welfare.

The Columbus city-county planning jurisdiction is within the Stillwater Conservation District. The Conservation District implements their own policies, regulations, and other measures to achieve goals and objectives.

Right to Farm (MCA Title 76, Chapter 2, Part 9)

Agricultural activities are protected from governmental zoning and nuisance ordinances. A city, county, taxing district or other political subdivision may not adopt an ordinance or resolution that prohibits any existing agricultural activities or forces the termination of any existing agricultural activities.

The Town of Columbus and Stillwater County have not adopted and do not intend to adopt an ordinance or resolution that prohibits any existing agricultural activities or forces the termination of any existing agricultural activities.

Health Care Facilities (MCA Title 7, Chapter 34, Part 22)

The board of county commissioners has jurisdiction and authority, under the limitations and restrictions prescribed by law, to construct, furnish, equip, expand, improve, maintain, and operate the buildings for health care purposes.

Cemetery Districts (MCA Title 7, Chapter 35, Part 21)

The Town of Columbus currently maintains the Columbus cemetery. Interest has been expressed in creating a cemetery district equivalent to other cemetery districts in the county.

Columbus Municipal Code (MCA Title 7, Chapter 5, Parts 41-44)

The Town of Columbus has adopted a Municipal Code that includes General Provisions in Title 1; Administration and Personnel in Title 2 includes the town council, mayor, clerk-treasurer, attorney, city judge, court clerk, chief of police, director of public works, health officer, employees generally, police department, volunteer fire department, city-county planning board, board of health and civil defense. The town council has established standing committees on finance, streets and alleys, water and sewer, parks and recreation, fire and police, sanitation, airport, zoning and cemetery. Revenue and Finance in Title 3 includes the capital improvement program. Business Licenses and Regulations are included in Title 5. Title 6 includes regulation of animals in town. Title 8 includes health and safety regulations for nuisances, fire protection, fireworks, garbage, and weeds. Title 9 includes rules for public peace, morals and welfare. Vehicles and Traffic rules are in Title 10. Rules covering Streets, Sidewalks and Public Places are in Title 12. Title 13 includes public services for the water department, sewers, and franchises. Buildings and Construction are addressed in Title 15. Subdivision regulations are referenced in Title 16 and zoning regulations are in Title 17. Titles 4, 7, 11, and 14 are reserved. The Columbus Municipal Code is amended periodically to stay current with statutory amendments, attorney general opinions or other relevant changes.

The Town of Columbus utilizes policies, regulations and other measures included in the Municipal Code to achieve community goals and objectives.

Other Measures (Montana Constitution, Montana Codes Annotated and Administrative Rules of Montana)

In addition to the implementation measures described above; Stillwater County, the Town of Columbus, and other units of local government may utilize other implementation measures authorized by Montana Constitution, Montana Codes Annotated, and Administrative Rules of Montana as needed to achieve community goals and objectives established pursuant to MCA 76-1-601 (3)(a).

7.2 PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY:

The strategy for development, maintenance, and replacement of public infrastructure for the Town of Columbus and Stillwater County includes utilizing available planning, programming, budgeting and accounting options allowed by law for drinking water systems, wastewater treatment facilities, sewer systems, storm drainage systems, solid waste facilities, fire protection facilities, roads, bridges, and other public infrastructure.

7.2.1 Town of Columbus:

The Town of Columbus has developed water, sewer, solid waste systems; streets, alleys and sidewalks; storm drain systems; parks and a cemetery; public buildings, facilities, and equipment over the history of the town. Additional development of public infrastructure is addressed through annexation plans, capital improvement planning, and subdivision improvements agreements. Replacement of public infrastructure is accomplished through the capital improvement planning process. Maintenance of public infrastructure is addressed in the annual operating budgeting process including setting fees, the mill levy and utilizing non-tax revenue to fund ongoing maintenance costs.

The Town adopted a Capital Improvement Plan in 1999 and set up corresponding capital improvement funds. Projects in excess of \$5,000 with a life expectancy of five years or more are considered in the capital improvement planning process. Requests for capital expenditures are submitted by council members or Town staff during the annual budgeting process. The capital improvements program is reviewed and revised each year to change priorities or add new projects.

The Capital Improvement Plan includes the drinking water systems, sanitary sewer systems, solid waste systems, street and traffic systems, storm drain systems, park systems and the cemetery, public building facilities and equipment. Part of the capital improvement planning process is the equipment replacement program. This program covers all equipment with a value of more than \$5,000 and a useful life of three years or longer. The program is incorporated into the Capital Improvement Plan as a separate element.

The strategy for development, maintenance, and replacement of public infrastructure for the Town of Columbus is to provide for capital budgets in the annual budgeting process; identify and prioritize capital improvement needs; identify the financial requirements of each project; increase accountability through the annual budgeting process and identify individual projects to be funded; facilitate participation in the process and coordination among departments, other jurisdictions and the public; ensure the Town's annual capital budget and five-year capital improvement program is affordable and finances necessary public infrastructure; enhance the linkage between capital and operating budgets; limit debt use to long term public infrastructure; decrease reliance on debt and utilize federal and state grants when possible.

7.2.2 Stillwater County:

Stillwater County has developed roads and bridges; solid waste systems; public buildings, facilities and equipment within the city-county planning jurisdiction. Additional development of public infrastructure is addressed through capital improvement planning and subdivision improvements agreements. Replacement of public infrastructure is accomplished through the annual budgeting process. Maintenance of public infrastructure is also addressed in the annual operating budgeting process including setting fees, mill levies, and utilizing non-tax revenue to fund ongoing maintenance costs.

The County's strategy for development, maintenance, and replacement of public infrastructure is based on needs assessments, facility studies, economic development plans, growth policies, or other relevant information. The County Commissioners evaluate and prioritize requests for public infrastructure development, maintenance, and replacement received from county departments during their budgeting process in accordance with the Local Government Budget Act and other applicable laws. Public health and safety; federal, state, and local standards; costs and availability of funding are considered in the evaluation of each capital improvement project. Debt use is limited to long term public infrastructure. The County utilizes federal and state grants when possible. The County currently has a Capital Improvements Plan.

7.2.3 State of Montana

Montana Department of Transportation is responsible for the development, maintenance and replacement of Montana primary highway 78, secondary highway 306, Interstate 90 frontage road (old highway 10) and other property within the city-county planning jurisdiction.

The Town and County strategy in relation to the development, maintenance and replacement of public infrastructure controlled by Montana Department of Transportation is to communicate local community needs, issues and concerns, participate in state planning and programming of state highway projects; coordinate and cooperate on state highway projects.

7.2.4 Other Districts and jurisdictions:

The Columbus Elementary and High School Districts; Columbus and County Fire Districts; City-County Airport Board, County Library Board; County Solid Waste District; County Weed Board; Stillwater Community Hospital Board; and Stillwater Conservation District have public infrastructure development, maintenance and replacement responsibilities within the city-county planning jurisdiction.

The Town and County strategy in relation to the development, maintenance and replacement of public infrastructure controlled by other districts or jurisdictions within the city-county planning jurisdiction is to coordinate, cooperate and assist with public infrastructure projects to the extent possible.

7.3 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY:

Section 76-1-601(3)(f) MCA requires an implementation strategy that includes a timetable for implementing a growth policy; lists conditions that will lead to the revision of the growth policy; and a timetable for reviewing the growth policy at least every five years.

7.3.1 Timetable for implementing the growth policy:

Implementation of the growth policy will begin after adoption by the governing body and will continue until the growth policy is revised or repealed. The governing bodies within the jurisdictional area are guided by and give consideration to the general policy and pattern of development set out in the growth policy for public infrastructure, adoption of subdivision regulations and zoning ordinances or resolutions.

Implementation is an ongoing process and will be emphasized annually during the budget process for guidance on public infrastructure decisions and funding of public services. Implementation will also occur whenever the subdivision regulations, zoning ordinance or resolutions are adopted or revised.

7.3.2 Conditions that lead to a revision of the growth policy:

Conditions that will lead to a revision of the growth policy are listed below:

- Public initiative or referendum to change the growth policy.
- Adopted neighborhood plans would be added as an addendum.
- Significant changes in community goals and objectives occur.
- Significant change to existing conditions or population that deviate more than ten percent from the projected trends in the growth policy.
- Significant change in the pattern of development within the jurisdictional area.
- Statutory changes that affect the growth policy, subdivision review criteria, public infrastructure or other elements of the growth policy.

The process of revising the Growth Policy would then begin after one or more of the conditions listed above have been identified. The planning staff, planning board and governing bodies will coordinate and cooperate in the effort to revise the growth policy.

7.3.3 Timetable for reviewing the growth policy:

The growth policy will be reviewed at least once every five years by the planning staff and planning board as required. A recommendation will be made to the governing bodies on whether or not revisions to the growth policy are necessary. The growth policy will be revised at least once every ten years after the Census information becomes available.

7.4 Statement of Coordination and Cooperation:

The Town of Columbus and Stillwater County will coordinate and cooperate on matters relating to the Columbus Area Growth Policy through participation in the Joint City-County Planning Board. The Joint City-County Planning Board was created in 1967. The jurisdictional area now includes the incorporated limits of the Town of Columbus and the unincorporated area outside the town limits as described in resolutions adopted by the Town and County. The County Commissioners appoint two official and two citizen members, the City Council appoints two official members, the mayor appoints

two citizen members and the ninth member is selected by the board of supervisors of the conservation district.

The City-County Planning Board is the agency designated to review subdivisions as specified in a County Resolution and Town Ordinance. The City-County Planning Board also serves as the zoning commission for the jurisdictional area and as the airport zoning commission.

In relation to the Columbus Area Growth Policy and any subsequent revisions and updates, the Town of Columbus and Stillwater County will cooperate and coordinate with each other as necessary by:

- Utilizing interlocal agreements provided for by state statutes to specify roles, responsibilities and funding of shared facilities and services.
- Coordinating and combining functions on the City-County Planning Board, the Zoning Commission, Airport Zoning Commission and by communications among elected officials and appointed staff, the Town shall attempt to maintain consistency and integrity of planning efforts with those of the County.
- Collaborating and sharing certain staff and staff functions, such as with the planning staff, dispatching, environmental health, and volunteer fire departments, the Town and County shall attempt to coordinate efforts to achieve best responsiveness and effectiveness for the citizens of this area.
- Providing county officials and staff opportunities to review and comment on proposed amendments to the Columbus Area Growth Policy including implementation tools. Implementation tools include annexation, subdivision and zoning regulations and may include others that have been identified as having a material affect on unincorporated areas within the planning jurisdiction.
- The Town works with the county on identified public facilities and services of common interest, including airport, disaster and emergency services, fire protection, law enforcement, planning, and grant administration as allowed by state law.

This statement of coordination and cooperation strategies is intended to identify current strategies utilized at this time. Other opportunities for future cooperation and coordination may be pursued as they become available.

7.5 Statement on Subdivision Review Criteria:

7.5.1 Subdivision Review Criteria:

Montana Codes Annotated 76-3-601 (3)(h) requires a statement explaining how governing bodies will define, evaluate and make decisions regarding proposed subdivisions. Montana Codes Annotated 76-3-608 (3)(a) establishes six primary criteria for local government review of subdivisions. These primary criteria are: effects on

agriculture; agricultural water user facilities; the natural environment; effects on wildlife and wildlife habitat; effects on local services; and effects on public health and safety. Definitions of the criteria along with explanation of evaluation and decision making regarding proposed subdivisions follows:

Effect on Agriculture:

Agriculture is defined as all aspects of farming or ranching including the cultivation or tilling of soil; dairying; the production, cultivation, growing, harvesting of agricultural or horticultural commodities; raising of livestock, bees, fur-bearing animals or poultry; and any practices including, forestry or lumbering operations, including preparation for market or delivery to storage, to market, or to carriers for transportation to market.

Evaluation criteria to determine effects on agriculture include:

1. Subdivisions contiguous to unincorporated town sites or within the Columbus City-County Planning jurisdiction will likely have minimal effects on agriculture.
2. Subdivisions or associated improvements proposed on prime farmland or farmland of statewide importance as defined by the Natural Resource Conservation Service will have adverse effects on agriculture.
3. The first minor subdivision from a tract of record will likely have minimal effects on agriculture.
4. The second and subsequent minor subdivisions from a tract of record are considered to have potential adverse effects on agriculture when the proposed subdivision predominately (>50%) borders land classified as agricultural or timberland by Montana Department of Revenue or state trust lands.
5. Major subdivisions are considered to have potential adverse effects on agriculture when the proposed subdivision predominately (>50%) borders land classified as agricultural or timberland by Montana Department of Revenue or state trust lands.
6. Subdivisions proposed in areas adjacent agricultural lands classified by Montana Department of Revenue, state or federal lands in the county are considered to have potential weed problems and an adverse effect on agriculture. Weed management plans submitted with subdivision applications and that are evaluated for compliance with the Stillwater County Weed Management Plan.
7. Compatibility with adjacent agricultural use, right to farm, and herd district issues are evaluated in the subdivision review process. Adverse effects of subdivisions on agriculture may be mitigated by designs including, but not limited to cluster development, open space buffers, shelterbelts adjacent to neighboring agricultural lands or other site specific mitigation measures proposed by the subdivider or determined in the review process.

Effect on Agricultural Water User Facilities:

Agricultural water user facilities are defined as those facilities which provide water for irrigation or stock watering to agricultural lands for the production of agricultural products. These facilities include, but are not limited to, ditches, head gates, pipes, and other water conveying facilities.

Evaluation to determine effects on agriculture water user facilities includes:

1. Subdivisions proposed on land with agricultural water user facilities or adjoining an agricultural water user facility are considered to have potential adverse effects on the agricultural water user facilities.
2. Subdivision designs that include abandonment and removal of water rights and all agricultural water user facilities, when the facilities are no longer in use in compliance with MCA 76-3-504 and the Stillwater County and Town of Columbus Subdivision Regulations, will have minimal effect on agricultural water user facilities on a county wide basis.
3. Adverse effects of subdivisions on agriculture water user facilities are evaluated for compliance with MCA 76-3-504 and the Stillwater County and Town of Columbus Subdivision Regulations which require disclosure that adequately notifies potential buyers and providing a minimum of 20 feet wide easements for maintenance of the facilities, if the facilities are still in use for agricultural purposes.
4. Adverse effects of subdivisions on agricultural water user facilities may be mitigated by site specific mitigation measures proposed by the subdivider; or determined in the review process as conditions of approval, which may include but are not limited to piping, fencing or alternative barriers; or mitigated by agreement with persons, irrigation districts, private or public entities or other parties entitled to the water from an affected agricultural water user facility with mutually acceptable mitigation measures.

Effect on Local Services:

Local Services means any and all services that local governments, public or private utilities are authorized to provide for the benefit of their citizens.

Evaluation to determine effects on local services include:

1. Subdivisions contiguous to unincorporated town sites or within the Columbus City-County planning jurisdiction are considered to potentially effect local services, including but not limited to water, sewer, storm drainage, street or solid waste facilities. Proposed mitigation of adverse effects through a subdivision improvements agreement and guarantees is evaluated based on state standards and cost estimates. Lack of public service and/or facility capacity to adequately serve

a subdivision may be reason for denial of proposed subdivisions when adverse effects are not mitigated.

2. Major subdivisions located outside the Columbus City-County planning jurisdiction or a Census Designated Place of Absarokee, Park City or Reed Point are generally considered to have adverse effects on local services.
3. The first minor subdivision from a tract of record will likely have a negligible effect on local services.
4. A second or subsequent minor subdivision from a tract of record is generally considered to have adverse effects on local services that require additional evaluation for cumulative effects.
5. Major subdivisions are likely to have effects on traffic and require a transportation accessibility study to determine any adverse effects and mitigating measures.
6. A second or subsequent minor subdivision is likely to have effects on traffic and require a transportation accessibility study to determine any adverse cumulative effects and mitigating measures.
7. Subdivisions with access across a bridge require an evaluation, report and certification from a structural engineer on the capacity of the bridge, any adverse effects of subdivision traffic (including construction traffic), and proposed mitigating measures.
8. Subdivisions proposed in locations contiguous to existing utilities are likely to have minimal effect on utility services.
9. Subdivisions proposed in locations that are not contiguous to existing utilities are considered to have an effect on utility services and must be evaluated for availability of the service or practical alternatives.
10. Effects of subdivisions on local services may be mitigated through a subdivision improvements agreement with financial guarantees. The improvements agreement must address and guarantee construction of all on site improvements. It must also provide for payment or other means of assistance to all effected units of local government, on a proportionate share basis, for all required off site improvements. The proportionate share will be determined on a per capita basis for minor subdivisions or by a case study method for major subdivisions using the most current information available.
11. Adverse effects of subdivisions on public facilities and services provided by fire districts, water and sewer districts, other affected units of local government or utilities may be mitigated site specific mitigation measures proposed by the subdivider; mitigation may be determined in the review process as conditions of

approval, including but not limited to any mutual agreements between the subdivider and affected units of local government or utilities.

Effect on Natural Environment:

The natural environment is defined as: The physical conditions which exist within a given area, including land, water, mineral, flora, fauna, noise, light and objects of historic and aesthetic significance.

Evaluation to determine effects on natural environment includes:

1. Subdivisions that are contiguous to unincorporated town sites or within the Columbus City-County planning jurisdiction and utilize available public water, sewer, streets, storm drainage, and solid waste facilities, and other public services or extension of existing facilities and services are likely to have a negligible effect on the natural environment.
2. Any portion of subdivisions or associated improvements proposed within a 100-year floodplain, as defined in the Stillwater County Floodplain Regulations and by Flood Insurance Rate Maps. Also subdivisions containing riparian areas, or adjacent rivers, streams, lakes, or other natural surface water are considered to have potential adverse effects on the natural environment.
3. Subdivisions or associated improvements proposed on land with a high water table (less than 4 feet from the surface), and on wetlands or groundwater recharge areas are considered to have an adverse effect on the natural environment.
4. Subdivisions or associated improvements proposed on land with evidence of soils with building or site development limitations as defined by the Soil Survey of Stillwater County, or on landslides or slopes greater than 25 percent are considered to have potential adverse effects on the natural environment.
5. Subdivisions or associated improvements proposed on land with historic, cultural, archaeological or paleontological features are considered to have potential adverse effects on the natural environment.
6. Adverse effects of subdivisions on the natural environment may be mitigated by designs that incorporate natural features into open space areas, site specific mitigation measures proposed by state or federal agencies or site specific mitigation measures based on detailed scientific studies and that provide no build areas with 100-foot setbacks from important natural environment features.

These important natural environment features include rivers, streams, lakes, or other natural surface water; riparian areas; 25 percent slopes; areas with soils limitations including landslide areas; or include 100 year floodplain areas, wetlands, high groundwater areas, groundwater recharge areas, historic, cultural, archaeological, or paleontological features.

Effect on Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat:

Wildlife means animals that are not domesticated or tamed, and wildlife habitat means the place or area where wildlife naturally lives.

Evaluation to determine effects on wildlife and wildlife habitat includes:

1. Subdivisions that are contiguous to unincorporated town sites or within the Columbus City-County planning jurisdiction are generally considered to have a minimal effect on wildlife and wildlife habitat.
2. Subdivisions or associated improvements proposed in riparian areas or on land with wetlands are considered to have an adverse effect on wildlife and wildlife habitat.
3. Subdivisions or associated improvements proposed in areas with rare or endangered wildlife species, migration routes, or critical wildlife habitat identified by state or federal agencies, either on the land to be subdivided or adjoining lands, are considered to have adverse effects on wildlife or wildlife habitat.
4. Adverse effects of subdivisions on wildlife and wildlife habitat may be mitigated by designs, including but not limited to cluster development with open space buffers that protect the wildlife and wildlife habitat or by agreement with state and/or federal wildlife management agencies on mutually acceptable mitigation measures for rare or endangered wildlife species or critical wildlife habitat.

Effect on Public Health and Safety:

Public health and safety is defined as the prevailing healthful, sanitary condition of well-being for the community at large. Conditions that relate to public health and safety include but are not limited to disease control and prevention; emergency services; environmental health; flooding, fire, or wildfire hazards, rock falls or landslides, unstable soils, steep slopes, and other natural hazards; high voltage lines or high pressure gas lines; and air or vehicular traffic safety hazards.

Evaluation to determine effects on public health and safety includes:

1. Subdivisions that are contiguous to unincorporated town sites or within the Columbus City-County planning jurisdiction and utilize available public water, sewer, streets, storm drainage, solid waste facilities, other public services and utilities are considered to have a negligible effect on public health and safety.
2. Subdivisions proposed in areas identified as a high fire hazard area by a fire district, or state or federal agency are considered to have adverse effects on public health and safety.
3. Portions of subdivisions or associated improvements proposed within a 100-year floodplain as defined in the Stillwater County Floodplain Regulations and by

Flood Insurance Rate Maps are considered to have potential adverse effects on public health and safety.

4. Subdivisions proposed for mobile home parks or recreational vehicle parks in areas subject to high winds greater than 60 miles per hour are considered to have potential adverse effects on public health and safety.
5. Subdivisions proposed in areas identified as an airport influence area or that could result in an obstruction in the areas identified on an airspace plan approved by the Federal Aviation Administration are considered to have potential adverse effects on public health and safety.
6. Subdivisions or associated improvements proposed on land with high pressure gas lines or high voltage lines present are considered to have potential adverse effects on public health and safety.
7. Proposed subdivision plans for water supply systems, sewage treatment systems, storm drainage and solid waste collection and disposal submitted with the subdivision application will be evaluated during preliminary plat or summary review for adverse effects on public health and safety. Evaluation criteria used are the rules, regulations, standards and guidelines of the Montana Department of Environmental Quality and Stillwater County Board of Health.
8. Subdivisions or associated improvements proposed on land with or adjacent to Superfund or hazardous waste sites are considered to result in an adverse effect on public health and safety.
9. Subdivisions or associated improvements proposed on land with abandoned landfills, mines, wells, or waste sites are considered to result in an adverse effect on public health and safety.
10. Subdivisions proposed on land adjacent solid waste sites, sewage treatment plants, feed lots, other facilities with offensive odors, or uses with high noise levels are considered to result in potential adverse effects on public health and safety.
11. Subdivisions proposed on land containing soils with the potential for high levels of radon, pesticides, herbicides, insecticides; buried tanks; or other pollutants are considered to result in potential adverse effects on public health and safety.
12. Adverse effects of subdivisions on public health and safety may be mitigated by designs that mitigate potential public health and safety issues in compliance with local, state, and federal requirements. Proposed mitigation measures based on detailed studies by qualified professionals are used to evaluate proposed subdivisions.

7.5.2 Subdivision Evaluation and Decision Making:

The governing bodies evaluate and make decisions on proposed subdivisions utilizing primary review criteria defined above and the following statutory requirements.

- Compliance with the survey requirements required by state law;
- Compliance with local subdivision regulations, and the review procedures of the subdivision regulations;
- Provision of easements for the location and installation of any planned utilities;
- Legal and physical access to each parcel within the subdivision and the notation of that access on the applicable plat and any instrument transferring the parcel;
- Assurance that all required public improvements will be installed before final plat approval, or that their installation after final plat approval will be guaranteed as provided by the Stillwater County and Town of Columbus Subdivision Regulations. A local government may require a subdivider to pay or guarantee payment for part or all of the costs of extending capital facilities related to public health and safety, including but not limited to public roads, sewer lines, water supply lines, and storm drains to a subdivision. The costs must reasonably reflect the expected impacts directly attributable to the subdivision;
- Compliance with the requirements of section 76-3-504 and the Stillwater County and Town of Columbus Subdivision Regulations, MCA, regarding the disclosure and disposition of water rights; as provided in section 76-3-510, MCA.
- Any annexation and zoning issues are considered concurrently with subdivision review.

The basis for the governing body's decision to approve, conditionally approve, or disapprove a subdivision is whether the preliminary plat applications, applicable environmental assessment, public hearing, planning board recommendations, or additional information demonstrates the development of the subdivision will meet regulatory requirements and reasonably minimize potentially significant adverse impacts. When requiring mitigation the governing body consults with the subdivider and gives due weight and consideration to the expressed preference of the subdivider.

Unmitigated impacts of a proposed development may be unacceptable and may preclude approval of the subdivision plat. In reaching a decision, the governing body issues written findings of fact that weigh the criteria in Section 76-3-608 (3)(a), MCA; which includes the effects of a proposed subdivision on agriculture, agricultural water user facilities, the natural environment, wildlife and wildlife habitat, local services, and effects on public health and safety.

7.6 Statement on Public Hearings for Subdivisions:

This section 76-3-605 MCA require the governing body or its designated agency to hold a public hearing on the preliminary plat when required. The governing bodies have authorized the planning boards to hold public hearings to consider all relevant evidence relating to public health, safety, and welfare, including the environmental assessment to determine whether the preliminary plat should be approved, conditionally approved, or disapproved by the governing body. The planning boards act in an advisory capacity and submit written recommendations to the governing body.

The required public hearing for a subdivision proposal will be held before the Planning Board as stated in the subdivision regulations. The format for a subdivision public hearing is as follows:

- The public hearing notice will be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the county as required by state law and the Stillwater County and Town of Columbus Subdivision Regulations.
- The subdivider and property owners immediately adjoining the exterior boundaries of the proposed subdivision are notified of the public hearing by certified mail.
- The public hearing will be conducted at the time, date and place advertised. Public hearings are held in a location near the proposed subdivision whenever possible.
- People attending the public hearing are requested to sign an attendance sheet. Public hearings may be recorded or documented with minutes for the hearing.
- The planning board chair usually conducts public hearings and gives an introduction on the purpose of the public hearing.
- A presentation of the proposed subdivision is made at the public hearing by the subdivider or an authorized representative(s).
- A staff report and findings on the primary review criteria are presented by planning staff on the preliminary plat and environmental assessment if required by the Stillwater County and Town of Columbus Subdivision Regulations.
- Questions and comments on the proposed subdivision are received after the presentations. Participants are encouraged to state their name, place of residence and whether they are in favor or opposed to the proposed subdivision and give the reasons for their position. Those who are neither in favor of nor opposed to the proposed subdivision, but have comments, may state that position and provide comments as well. Both verbal and written comments are accepted.
- The public hearing is adjourned when there is no further public comment.

- When a proposed subdivision is also proposed to be annexed to the Town of Columbus, the Town Council shall hold joint hearings on the preliminary plat and annexation whenever possible.

Public hearings and associated notice requirements are included in the Montana Code Annotated. The Subdivision Regulations are revised periodically to remain current with statutory changes or other legal requirements.

APPENDIX A

Stillwater County Growth Survey 2008

Land Use Report

1: Strongly Agree

6: Strongly Disagree

	Farms and Ranches are a good way to preserve open space	The County's planning effort should guide location of new residential development	Loss of agricultural production is a problem	Stillwater County needs more jobs	Maintaining recreational access to public lands is important	The County's planning effort should determine amount of development	Gov't regulations should be kept to a minimum	subdivision of rural areas is a problem	Infringement on private property rights is a problem	Infrastructure needs to be improved	Subdivision activity should be regulated
Columbus	2.00	2.22	2.14	2.81	2.43	2.87	2.70	2.62	2.71	2.76	2.16

Stillwater County needs to plan for growth and change	Population growth should be located in or near towns	Stillwater County should provide tax breaks to attract businesses	People should be able to subdivide where and when they want	Subdivision of rural areas can be regulated without infringing on private property rights	Services need to be improved	Conservation easements are a viable tool for protecting the environment and preserving agriculture	Development should not be allowed without adequate water supply	Subdivision development should not be allowed in the floodplain
2.07	2.70	3.44	4.88	3.06	2.98	2.89	2.62	2.06

Planning Tools Report

1: Very Unacceptable 6: Very Acceptable

	Standards on development, no restrictions on land use	Restricting development in some areas	Regulations for sensitive lands	Require developers to demonstrate that there are adequate facilities to serve development	Create County bond issue to raise money to purchase development rights	Require significantly higher review fees to develop areas that are distant from services
Columbus	3.25	4.59	4.75	4.94	2.81	4.34

Services

1: Completely Satisfied/Couldn't be Improved 6: Not at all Satisfied/In need of Improvement
Percent Willing to Pay More Taxes for Improved Service

	Law Enforcement	Fire Protection	Ambulance/ EMS	Roads	Bridges	Senior Citizen Center	Public Education	Solid Waste
Columbus	3.26	2.58	2.78	3.59	3.27	2.34	2.92	2.79
Columbus	52.08%	51.04%	46.88%	43.75%	35.42%	14.58%	40.63%	25.00%

Weed Control	Community Hospital	Airport	Planning	Museum	Library	Chamber of Commerce	Parks
4.00	2.94	2.81	3.46	2.51	2.40	3.43	2.96
39.58%	40.63%	10.42%	30.21%	14.58%	35.42%	8.33%	33.33%

Features

1: Not at all Important 6: Extremely Important

	Open Space	Agriculture	Wildlife	Wilderness	The mountains	Rivers and waterways
Columbus	5.05	5.28	5.06	4.80	5.29	5.46

Affordable housing	Knowing your neighbors	Rural lifestyle	Sense of community	Area history	Stable economy
4.68	4.38	4.83	4.90	4.49	5.31

General Information

Scale for Stillwater County as a place to live: 1 being a poor quality of life 10 being a very good quality of life

	How would you rate Stillwater County as a place to live?	How long have you lived in Stillwater County?	How old are you?	Are you male or female?		Do you work inside or outside of Stillwater County?	
				Male	Female	Inside County	Outside County
Columbus	8.11	27.26 years	58.20 years old	52.43%	47.57%	74.32%	25.68%

Regulation Viewpoints

Percentage shown is percent that said they would be willing to accept some regulation of Land Use?

	Water quality	Water quantity	Economic development	Agriculture	Wildlife habitat	Open space	Subdivision design	Subdivision location	No regulations
Columbus	72.48%	60.55%	51.38%	58.72%	54.13%	59.63%	74.31%	69.72%	6.42%

Data is based on the Average of 109 Surveys Received from the Columbus Area

APPENDIX B

Stillwater County Growth Survey 2002

Land Use Report

1: Strongly Agree

6: Strongly Disagree

	Farms and Ranches are a good way to preserve open space	Land use planning should guide the location of new residential development	Loss of agricultural production is a problem	Stillwater County needs more jobs	Maintaining recreational access to public lands is important	Land use planning should determine the amount of development	Government regulation should be kept to a minimum	Subdivision of rural areas, including agricultural lands is a problem	Infringement on private property rights is a problem	Infrastructure (roads, water, etc) needs to be improved	Subdivision activity should be regulated
Average of 118 Surveys received	1.8	1.8	2	2.5	1.9	2.4	2.8	2.2	2.8	2.1	1.9

	Stillwater County needs a growth policy	Population growth should be located in or near existing towns	Stillwater County should provide tax breaks to attract businesses to the area	People should be able to subdivide where they want	Subdivision of rural lands and agriculture can be regulated without infringing on private property rights	New developments should not increase existing property taxes	Services (police, fire protection, etc) need to be improved	Conservation Easements are a viable tool for protecting environment and preserving agriculture	Development should not be allowed in areas without adequate water supply	Development should not be allowed near the floodplain
Average of 118 Surveys Received	2.0	2.5	3.0	4.8	2.9	1.9	2.9	2.2	2.2	2.0

Planning Tools and Actions Report

1: Completely Satisfied/Couldn't be Improved 6: Not at all Satisfied/In need of Improvement

	Putting Standards on development but no restrictions on land use	Setting criteria that must be met in order to develop	Zoning only in areas where landowners petition for land use regulations	Regulations for specific sensitive lands (floodplain, steep slopes, wildlife habitat, hazard areas, etc.)	Development only within boundaries around towns	Require developer to pay for roads and other demands on county infrastructure that are directly related to development	Require developer to set aside land for schools and parks or pay fees	Require developer to demonstrate that there are adequate facilities to serve development
Average of 118 Surveys received	3.6	1.7	2.6	1.9	3.2	1.6	1.9	1.3

Services

1: Completely Satisfied/Couldn't be Improved 6: Not at all Satisfied/In need of Improvement

	Law Enforcement	Fire Protection	Ambulance Emergency Medical Services	County Roads	County Bridges	Senior Citizen Center	Public Education	Solid Waste Collection	Weed Control
Average of 118 Surveys Received	2.5	2.5	2.6	3.8	3.3	2.4	3.0	2.7	3.1

Features

1: Not at all Important 6: Extremely Important

	Open Space	Agriculture	Wildlife	Wilderness	Mountain	Rivers and Waterways	Affordable Housing	Knowing your neighbors	Rural Lifestyle	Sense of Community
Average of 118 Surveys Received	5.2	4.9	5.2	4.7	5.3	5.4	4.3	4.2	4.9	4.6

General Information

Scale for Stillwater County as a place to live: 1 being a poor quality of life 10 being a very good quality of life

Community	Stillwater County as a place to live	Would you pay more taxes or higher fees for improved services?		Should new development pay for itself and not increase taxes for existing residents?		How long have you lived in Stillwater County	How old are you?	Are you Male or Female?		Do you work inside or outside of Stillwater County?	
		Yes	No	Yes	No			Male	Female	Inside	Outside
Columbus 118 Surveys	6.9	50	54	103	6	20.7	46.4	68	45	69	18

Regulation Viewpoints

Under what conditions would you be willing to accept some regulation of Land Use?

Community	Regulations to protect water quality		Regulations to protect water quantity		Regulations to promote economic development		Regulations to maintain agricultural production		Regulations to protect wildlife habitat		Regulations to preserve open space		Regulations affecting subdivision design		Regulations affecting subdivision location		No regulations	
	Yes	%	Yes	%	Yes	%	Yes	%	Yes	%	Yes	%	Yes	%	Yes	%	Yes	%
Columbus 118 Surveys	94	79%	84	71%	53	44%	75	63%	80	67%	78	66%	80	67%	84	71%	5	4%

Data is based on the Average of 118 Surveys Received from the Columbus Area

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