

# **GROWTH POLICY 2020**

**\$15.00**

# **City of Kalispell**

## **Growth Policy 2020**

**Prepared by:  
Kalispell City Planning Board  
201 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue East  
Kalispell, MT 59901  
(406) 758-7940**

**Adopted by Kalispell City Council  
Resolution 4773  
February 18, 2003**

This document can be viewed, printed or downloaded at  
<http://www.kalispell.com/planning>

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
<b>Introduction</b> .....	1
1. Administration .....	5
2. Growth Management .....	8
3. Land Use: Housing .....	11
4. Land Use: Business and Industry .....	14
5. Land Use: Agriculture .....	21
6. Economy .....	23
7. The Natural Environment .....	26
8. Urban Design, Historic and Cultural Conservation .....	30
9. Parks and Recreation .....	32
10. Transportation .....	34
11. Infrastructure and Public Services .....	42
12. Neighborhood Plans .....	58
13. Implementation Strategy .....	60
14. Amendments	
Highway 93 North.....	74
Highway 93 South Corridor .....	78
Kalispell West .....	85
Kalispell Annexation Policy.....	87
 <b>Future Land Use Map:</b> .. .....	 Back of Document
 <b>Appendix A:</b> Resources and Analysis Section .. .....	 Separate Document
 <b>Appendix B:</b> Neighborhood Plans .. .....	 Separate Documents

**KALISPELL GROWTH POLICY 2020  
AMENDMENTS**

<b>Resolution No.</b>		<b>Adopted</b>
<b>5073</b>	<b>Highway 93 South (Map &amp; Text Amd) <i>*Superseded by Highway South Corridor Amd below</i></b>	<b>11/7/05</b>
<b>5121A</b>	<b>Eisinger Motors (Map Amd Only)</b>	<b>6/19/06</b>
<b>5129B</b>	<b>Highway 93 North (Map &amp; Text Amd)</b>	<b>8/07/06</b>
<b>5215A</b>	<b>Section 35 – Starling (Map Amd Only)</b>	<b>7/16/07</b>
<b>5247A</b>	<b>Foys Lake Rd – (Willow Creek) (Map Amd Only)</b>	<b>11/05/07</b>
<b>5329A</b>	<b>Highway 93 South Corridor (Map &amp; Text Amd)</b>	<b>12/01/08</b>
<b>5362A</b>	<b>Kalispell West (Map &amp; Text Amd)</b>	<b>5/4/09</b>
<b>5484 A</b>	<b>Kalispell Annexation Policy</b>	<b>3/7/11</b>

## **Introduction**

The Kalispell Growth Policy is an official public document adopted by the City of Kalispell as a guide future growth in the city. The growth policy is not a law or regulation, but rather the adopted policy when making land use decisions for the community. The term “growth policy” is synonymous with “master plan,” “comprehensive plan” or “community plan.” Montana statutes require a growth policy be adopted and state that the city council must be guided and give consideration to the general policy and pattern of development set out in the growth policy. The growth policy is implemented through different methods, including the adoption of zoning and subdivision regulations. When considering zoning, subdivisions and other development issues; the growth policy should be consulted and the development should be in substantial compliance with the goals and policies. The plan is intended to reflect the economic, social, and environmental policy of the City of Kalispell, and is fundamentally, a guide to the physical development of the community.

The growth policy area boundaries are shown in Figure 1, Kalispell Growth Policy Area. There are three boundaries shown on this map:

- The planning jurisdiction for the City of Kalispell is the city limits of Kalispell that contains approximately 6.83 square miles. Because the city limits is the planning jurisdiction, this is the only area the city can implement the growth policy. The future land use designations indicated on the map are only applicable when a property is proposed for annexation and do not have any effect on lands under County jurisdiction with regard to zoning, density, land use, subdivision or other land use decision.
- The potential utility service area boundary was primarily taken from the City of Kalispell Water, Sewer and Storm Drainage Systems Facility Plan adopted by the Kalispell City Council in December of 2002. This is the area anticipated to be served by City of Kalispell water and / or sewer over the next 20 years and beyond. It has been used in this document to anticipate the future development potential of land within that area and that City services can be provided to land inside the potential utility service area. In order to provide some vision for the future and to provide a basis for zoning upon annexation, the uses and density inside this area have been assigned with this consideration.
- The growth policy area also includes land beyond the potential utility service area that served as the previous city-county planning jurisdiction boundary for which research data and information had already been gathered and has been updated.

A vision statement has been developed for the community that is intended to reflect overall ideas about future growth and development in Kalispell.

"Kalispell is a community that expects excellence and will continue to strengthen its position as the regional commercial and government center for the Flathead Valley community in creating a diverse economic base, efficient public services, a variety of housing options and serving as a center of higher learning. As new development and redevelopment occurs, it is expected to be in areas where public services and

infrastructure can be provided. Development in the city core should preserve and enhance the historic and cultural heritage of the community. The integrity of the natural and scenic resources should be maintained to ensure a high quality of life."

The essential characteristics of the growth policy are that it is comprehensive, general and long range. Comprehensive means that the document applies geographically to the entire community in order to coordinate its overall pattern of growth. Comprehensive also means that consideration is given to all of the basic functions that make a community work such as housing, the economy, land use, the environment, transportation, and public facilities and services. General means that the policy is broad in scope, focusing more on general principles and philosophy than detailed standards. Accordingly, the format of the document is an outline of issues, goals, policies, and recommendations, rather than legally described locations, engineered solutions or detailed regulations on specific property.

Long range means that the growth policy looks beyond the present to anticipate future problems and opportunities. The period addressed by this policy is through the year 2020, with a scheduled annual review by the planning board and update every five years or sooner as needed. The update may result in a partial revision or full revision of the document as deemed necessary by the Kalispell City Council.

Legal foundations of the growth policy are found in Montana's Local Planning and Enabling Act (Sections 76-1-101 through 76-1-606, MCA) which outlines the contents and process for the preparation and use of the growth policy. These provisions state that the planning board shall prepare and propose a growth policy for review and approval by the governing body, in this case the Kalispell City Council. Some of the key elements that must be included in the growth policy are:

- Community goals and objectives;
- A description of the policies, regulations, and other tools to be implemented to carry out the policy;
- Maps and text which describe the jurisdictional area (including information on land uses, population, housing needs, economic conditions, local services, public facilities, natural resources, and other jurisdictional characteristics);
- Projected trends for each of the above listed items for the life of the growth policy (except for public facilities);
- A strategy for development, maintenance, and replacement of public infrastructure;
- An implementation strategy for the document;
- A list of conditions that will trigger a revision of the growth policy;
- A timetable for reviewing the growth policy at least once every five years and revising the policy if necessary;
- An explanation of how the governing body will coordinate and cooperate with other jurisdictions;
- An explanation of how the governing body will evaluate and make decisions regarding proposed subdivisions with respect to "public interest" criteria established in section 76-3-608(3)(a), MCA.

The City of Kalispell adopted its first master plan in 1962. In 1974, the Kalispell City-County Planning Board updated the plan to reflect the changing conditions in the community. The 1974 plan was re-affirmed in 1978 when the County and the three cities of Whitefish, Columbia Falls and Kalispell jointly undertook the preparation of the Flathead County Comprehensive Plan. In 1984 the Kalispell City-County Planning Board again undertook the task of updating the plan, a process that was completed in 1986 and the Kalispell City-County Master Plan was adopted.

Preparation of the current growth policy is the culmination of a planning effort that was started in 1997. A draft growth policy was produced by the efforts of the past Kalispell City-County Planning Board and the Kalispell City Council through August 2001 but was not adopted. The Kalispell City-County Planning Board, which represented a jurisdiction area of the city of Kalispell and surrounding county area of four and a half miles, was dissolved by Flathead County in 2001. The Kalispell City Planning Board was created with the city limits as a jurisdictional boundary and they have continued work on the growth policy. The Kalispell City Planning Board used draft August 2001 document as a basis for the current growth policy. The resource and analysis section of the growth policy is included as Appendix A and was prepared in conjunction with those earlier efforts and updated as new information became available and with 2000 Census information.

As a City document, the growth policy applies only to the city limits which is the planning jurisdiction boundary and areas to be annexed. This growth policy also includes a potential utility service area and projected land use scenario within those boundaries as a basis for zoning upon annexation. The planning jurisdiction in the previous Kalispell City-County Master Plan was used since Appendix A, the resource and analysis section, includes background information on demographics, land uses, the economy, population and housing projections, the environment, and public facilities and services for that area. Computerized mapping of the growth policy area was also prepared including the street system, land uses, development pattern, parks and open space, historic structures, floodplain, hydrology and wetlands, topography, agricultural soils and habitat of wildlife species. In 1997, a public opinion survey on local growth issues was conducted from a random sample of households in the original planning jurisdiction, drawing a 42 percent response rate. The survey results were considered in preparing this document.

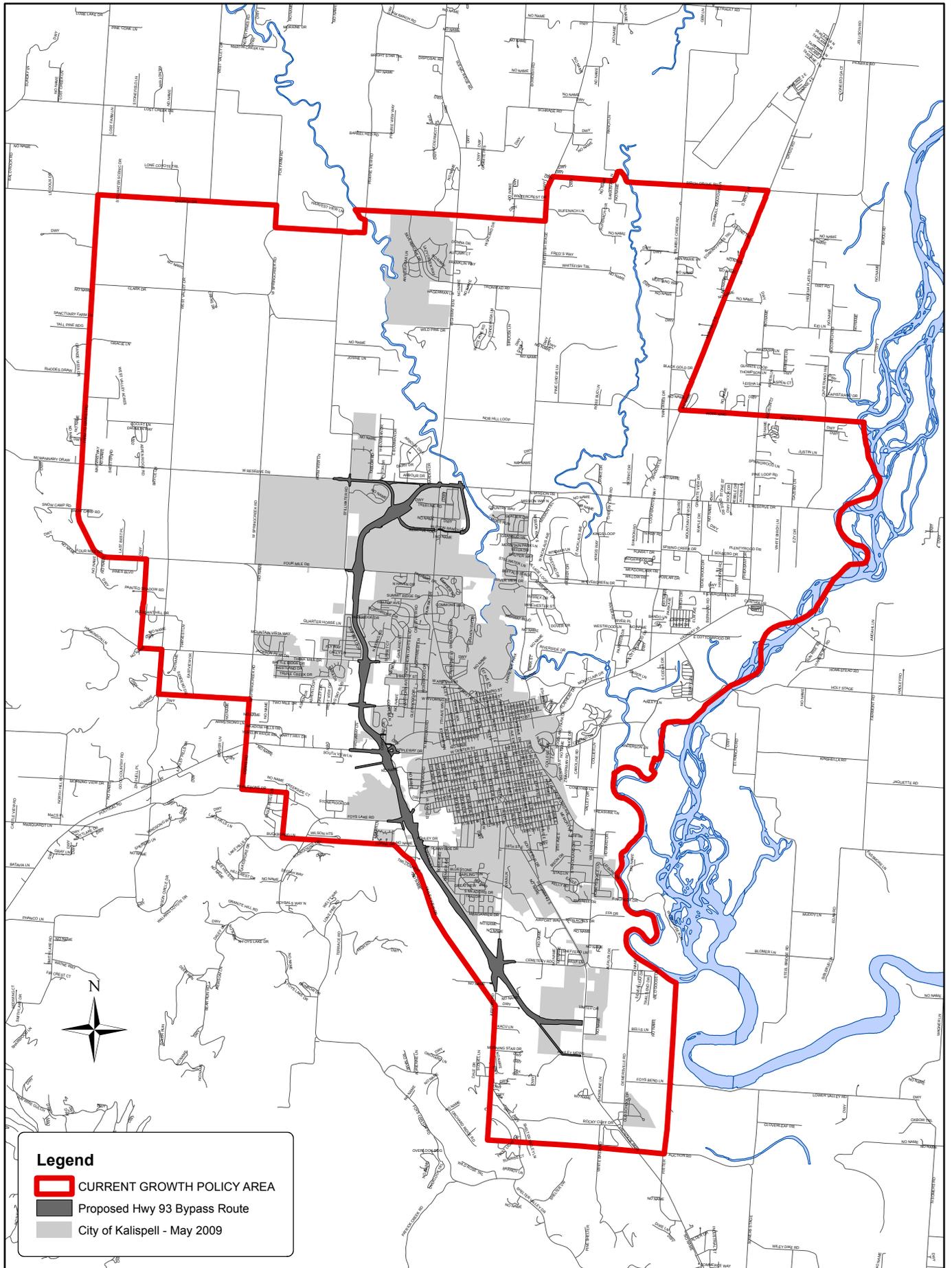
The growth policy document is composed of the growth policy document and future land use map along with appendices A and B. The primary component of the document is the growth policy text and the future land use map while the resource and analysis section provides support data dealing with social, environmental and economic factors. Appendix B incorporates neighborhood plans into the growth policy by reference.

The policy document has chapters on growth management, land use, the economy, public services and others. Each chapter is organized into a format of interrelated issues, goals, policies and recommendations. The "issues" are statements of important trends, problems, opportunities, and community values. The "goals" are basic statements of the community's aims and priorities. The "policies" are the guidelines and strategies that implement the plan's goals. The "recommendations" are specific

actions to be taken by the City to implement the goals outlined in the document and are intended as part of an overall implementation strategy.

The future land use map can be found in the back pocket of this document and is a geographic illustration of the plan's goals and policies applied to the lands in the growth policy area. The map indicates the types of land uses recommended in various locations, representing the recommendation of an orderly growth pattern. The text includes explanations of these map designations within related chapters. Like the text, the color map designation is part of the growth policy and it is intended to indicate generalized rather than exact locations for anticipated future land uses.

Figure 1. City of Kalispell and the Growth Policy Area - May, 2009



0 0.375 0.75 1.5 2.25 Miles

Plot date: May 18, 2009  
City of Kalispell Planning Department  
(406)758-7940

## **1. Administration**

Administration of the growth policy and its implementation is the responsibility of the City of Kalispell in cooperation with Flathead County. Kalispell has a council / manager form of government with an eight member council and a mayor who votes on all matters. A full-time city manager administers the day-to-day business of the City. Flathead County has a commissioner form of government with three full time county commissioners who employ an administrative assistant to assist in the day-to-day operation of the County.

### **Issues:**

1. Cooperation between the City and County is critical to reinforcing an orderly development pattern in the growth policy area, coordinating the extension of public facilities and services, and addressing the numerous issues that cross over city-county boundaries.
2. Currently there is a lack of joint planning between the City and the County that needs to be addressed through cooperative agreements.
3. There is a lack of consistency in development standards for the City and County at the urban / rural interface.
4. Often there is limited public involvement in the planning and development review process that often leaves the public unaware of certain projects or development issues.

### **GOALS:**

1. FOSTER CITY-COUNTY COOPERATION, PARTICULARLY IN MANAGING GROWTH AND COORDINATING PROVISION OF PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES.
2. PROMOTE COOPERATION BETWEEN KALISPELL, UTILITY SERVICE PROVIDERS AND FLATHEAD BUSINESSES.
3. ENCOURAGE THE COUNTY TO RECOGNIZE THE LAND USE DESIGNATIONS FOR PROPERTY WITHIN THE POTENTIAL UTILITY SERVICE AREA AND ADOPT ZONING CONSISTENT WITH THE LAND USE DESIGNATION.
4. ENSURE THAT DECISIONS ARE FAIR, OPEN AND BASED ON GOOD INFORMATION THAT IS AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC AND DECISION MAKERS.
5. THAT A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BE SIGNED BETWEEN THE CITY AND THE COUNTY THAT WOULD FORM AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE PARTIES TO ADHERE TO:

- URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS.
  - SUBDIVISION PLAT REVIEW PROCESSES.
  - ANNEXATION POLICIES INCLUDING TRANSFER OF COUNTY ROADS TO THE CITY.
  - EXTENSION OF SERVICES INCLUDING SEWER AND WATER.
  - PUBLIC SAFETY AND EMERGENCY SERVICES AND FACILITIES.
  - COORDINATION AND SHARING OF GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS, BUILDING CODES AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT RESOURCES.
5. THAT THE CITY AND COUNTY IDENTIFY WAYS TO SHARE EQUIPMENT AND OTHER RESOURCES TO INCREASE THE EFFICIENCY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS.
  6. THAT THE CITY MEET PERIODICALLY WITH THE COUNTY, SCHOOL DISTRICT, PUBLIC UTILITY AND SERVICE PROVIDERS TO SHARE AND COORDINATE LONG-TERM PLANS FOR CAPITAL EXPENDITURES, FUTURE DEVELOPMENT PLANS AND UTILITY EXTENSIONS.
  7. THAT THE CITY AND COUNTY DEVELOP AND AGREE ON A JOINT PLANNING JURISDICTION AND RE-ESTABLISH A CITY-COUNTY PLANNING BOARD.
  8. SEEK WAYS TO PROVIDE AVENUES FOR GREATER PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS.
  9. COORDINATE BETWEEN THE CITY AND COUNTY PLANNING BOARDS TO DEVELOP CONSISTENT LAND USE GOALS AND POLICIES IN AREAS OF MUTUAL INTEREST

**Policies:**

1. Use this document as a guide for development and growth within the growth policy area.
2. Zoning regulations should conform and be used to implement the provisions of this document.
3. Initiate City-County agreements or programs that would cooperatively influence the amount and type of growth within the growth policy area.
4. This document should be used when considering all development decisions.
5. Coordinate development codes in the city and outlying areas to promote the orderly expansion of the city.
6. The growth policy will be reviewed annually by the planning board for relevancy and a report given to the Kalispell City Council who may initiate an update as needed. Amendments can also be made through the general growth policy

amendment process to address specific development projects that have not been anticipated or with a neighborhood plan to address specific areas within the community that have special needs or issues. Amendments outside these updates should be viewed cautiously and be based primarily on unanticipated changes.

7. Comprehensive updates of the growth policy should be considered when there is a major change in circumstances such as a significant increase or decrease in population, changes in economic or environmental conditions or significant changes in public infrastructure and services.
8. Statements on how the public will be informed regarding development projects can ensure the integrity of the public review process.
9. Provide a mechanism to address large scale projects that have not been anticipated in the growth policy.
10. The city council should be guided by their core values and vision statement when making land use decisions.

**Recommendations:**

1. Develop a cooperative relationship between the elected officials, government agencies, service and utility providers that results in consistent development standards, efficient use of public infrastructure and resources, and quality development.
2. Continue to pursue joint planning and an interlocal agreement between City and County that will lead to the establishment of a joint planning jurisdiction and a joint planning board.
3. Find ways to provide greater exposure for the public to the planning process such as the local media to encourage greater public involvement and interest.
4. Schedule meetings between the City and County planning boards to discuss goals and policies in areas of mutual interest and coordinate the growth policy to reflect a shared vision of the future.
5. Use the general growth policy amendment process to address large scale and / or complex projects that have not been anticipated in the growth policy.
6. Develop zoning standards that are generally consistent with County zoning standards for property within the potential utility service area.

## 2. Growth Management

Growth in the Kalispell area has been cyclic with bursts of growth and then a leveling of the growth rate. During the early part of the 1990's there was a relatively high level of growth that stabilized during the last half of the 1990's and early 2000's. Affordable housing, delivery of services, location of new development, redevelopment of the existing urban core and quality of life are all issues that have increased in significance during this period of growth.

### Issues:

1. Growth rates have fluctuated between moderate and high levels making land use and planning difficult. Kalispell is a growth area. The population grew approximately 19.3 percent within the city limits and approximately 16 percent within the growth policy area between 1990 to 2000.
2. Growth has had both positive and negative effects on the local quality of life. Along with a good economy and many examples of well designed development, the impacts of growth have also included disruption of established neighborhoods, strain on public facilities and services, environmental impacts, increasing traffic and housing costs and changing cultural values.
3. Most of the outlying zoning districts were adopted between 1987 and 1993 and have been applied throughout the growth policy area by the City and County as a result of development pressure. The City and County regulations are not always consistent leading to conflicts in development standards and confusion from the public.
4. The issue of property rights continues to be a matter of public discussion and interest. While periods of rapid growth have increased support for new and stronger government controls on property development, local public acceptance of new restrictions has tended to come slowly and has been mixed with apprehension and opposition.
5. Low-density development in outlying areas has been the predominant local growth pattern of recent decades creating inefficiencies in providing services. For example in 1960, 77 percent of the residents within the growth policy area lived in Kalispell, but by 2000, the proportion had fallen to 49 percent. Factors in this urban to suburban shift include national trends toward suburban and rural growth, the appeal of the Flathead Valley's rural setting and a variety of public policies that have made suburban and rural development more attractive than concentrated urban development.
6. Finding ways of making infill growth more attractive and economical is necessary to equalize the trend toward low-density development. Along with the predominant growth pattern of low-density development, there has also been a trend towards reinvestment and redevelopment of land in established urban areas, drawn by convenience, variety, stable neighborhoods and small-town

quality of life. There are more traditional development patterns associated with this trend and they differ from suburban design with regard to density, development standards and uses.

7. Increasing land and home values have created problems in providing adequate affordable housing in large sectors of the community. Wages have not kept pace with these rising costs leaving some with marginal housing options
8. There has been resistance to Kalispell having a building code enforcement presence outside of the city limits.

**GOALS:**

1. ENCOURAGE EFFICIENT USE OF SPACE, ORDERLY GROWTH CONSISTENT WITH HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE, FISCAL SOUNDNESS, ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION AND COMMUNITY VITALITY.
2. IMPLEMENT A COMPREHENSIVE, EFFECTIVE GROWTH MANAGEMENT PROGRAM THAT RECOGNIZES AND UPHOLDS THE GENERAL WELFARE OF THE COMMUNITY AS WELL AS INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS.
3. ENCOURAGE HOUSING TYPES THAT PROVIDE HOUSING FOR ALL SECTORS AND INCOME LEVELS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY.
4. NEW COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT OCCURS IN AREAS WHERE PUBLIC WATER AND SEWER CAN BE PROVIDED AND AS EXPANSION OF EXISTING COMMERCIAL AREAS.
5. NEW URBAN AND SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT OCCURS IN AREAS WHERE PUBLIC WATER AND SEWER ARE AVAILABLE.
6. PROVIDE ADEQUATE AREAS FOR GROWTH AND EXPANSION WITH REGARD TO AMOUNT, TIMING AND LOCATION.

**Policies:**

1. Encourage resolution of disputes involving land use policy by broad participation, education, compromise and consideration of private property rights. Maintain mechanisms to provide for open, well-publicized public processes.
2. Encourage consistent government policies for development and infrastructure within urban areas.
3. Conserve well-established residential areas that have significant neighborhood and cultural integrity, such as Kalispell's historic districts.

4. Affordable housing should be recognized as a primary consideration within the community when adopting or amending land use regulations. The ability of the average wage earner to either buy or build a home is an essential component of the standard of living, quality of life, and general welfare in our community.
5. Individual property owners have the right to sell, develop or to manage their property in accordance with the rules and regulations adopted by the City of Kalispell and the laws of the State of Montana
6. Design and locate development to protect public health and safety; insure adequate provision of services; be compatible with the character of its surroundings and encourage the most appropriate use of land.
7. Development by the public sector should comply with the same standards and rules as that of private sector development. Encourage, where feasible, development by the private, rather than public sector.
8. Partnering between public and private sector should be considered when greater efficiency of resources can be realized by both parties.

**Recommendations:**

1. Update and adopt a municipal annexation program in conjunction with the City of Kalispell Water, Sewer and Storm Drainage Systems Facility Plan to address service to fringe developments.
2. Use the Kalispell potential utility service area as indicated in this document and taken from the Kalispell Facility Plan as a guide when deciding the future use and densities in a particular area.
3. Continually monitor, update, and streamline development codes to keep abreast of changing trends and technologies, to better coordinate the development review process and to avoid unnecessary costly delays in processing applications.
4. Encourage infill housing where public services are available by allowing guest cottages, garage apartments and accessory dwellings when feasible.
5. Pursue a cooperative building code enforcement program between the city and county.

### **3. Land Use: Housing**

Providing adequate affordable housing within the growth policy area has become an important issue. Inflation of housing prices, increased demands due to population increases and an expansion of service related jobs have resulted in a critical need for additional moderate to low income level homes. There is also a need for more diverse housing types such as townhomes, multi-family and accessory dwellings to accommodate smaller households.

#### **Issues:**

1. As population growth continues over the next two decades, the demand for additional housing is projected to grow in the growth policy area.
2. The combination of rapid inflation of housing prices and an expanding proportion of service related jobs has produced a significant shortage of low and moderate-income housing.
3. Kalispell has a high proportion of seniors with special needs. While most local housing consists of single-family detached houses, demand is growing for a mix of housing types, such as more one-person households, assisted living housing for seniors, townhouses, apartment buildings, accessory apartments and second homes.
4. Most residents in the community object to having single-wide mobile homes in their neighborhoods, even though manufactured housing presents an affordable housing alternative and is becoming more acceptable because of improved quality of construction and improved financing.

#### **GOALS:**

1. PROVIDE AN ADEQUATE SUPPLY AND MIX OF HOUSING THAT MEETS THE NEEDS OF PRESENT AND FUTURE RESIDENTS IN TERMS OF COST, TYPE, DESIGN AND LOCATION.

#### **Policies:**

1. All residents should have the opportunity to live in neighborhoods that provide safe and affordable housing.
2. Encourage the development of urban residential neighborhoods as the primary residential land use pattern in the growth policy area by allowing urban residential densities in areas designated as suburban residential provided the development is consistent with the character of the area and public services are adequate.
3. Provide an adequate supply of affordable housing to meet the needs of low and moderate-income residents.

4. Give special consideration to functional design to accommodate seniors and disabled, who have various special needs regarding housing, transportation, handicapped access and services.
5. Provide adequate areas for manufactured homes and manufactured home parks.
6. Allow low-impact home occupations that do not undermine a neighborhood's residential character.
7. Maintain the integrity of well-established residential districts so that they are bicycle safe and pedestrian friendly.
8. Protect the residential integrity of the Woodland Avenue area by providing a bike and pedestrian trail linking Woodland Avenue to Seventh St. East rather than the construction of a roadway which would undermine the character of the area and substantially impact the neighborhood and beyond with additional traffic.
9. Suburban Housing:
  - a. Densities should be appropriate to the limitations of the particular site, and should not exceed two to four dwellings per gross acre.
  - b. The suburban residential designation is intended to reduce density and development impacts in sensitive areas and existing rural neighborhoods.
  - c. Single-family houses are the primary housing type.
  - d. These areas should have paved streets, public sewer and water and access to services. New subdivisions located in or near Kalispell should generally include sidewalks where appropriate and installation of low intensity street lighting appropriate to the area.
10. Urban Residential:
  - a. Urban residential areas shown on the plan map should be encouraged to be developed when adequate services and facilities are available.
  - b. Typical densities are four to twelve dwellings per gross acre.
  - c. Single-family houses are the primary housing type, but duplexes, guest houses, accessory apartments, and small dispersed areas of multi-family housing are also anticipated.
  - d. Urban and high density residential areas should be fully served by urban infrastructure and municipal services, including paved streets, curbs, sidewalks, landscaped boulevards and public sewer and water.
  - e. These areas should have convenient access to neighborhood business districts, parks and elementary schools.
11. High Density Residential:
  - a. Typical densities are eight to twenty dwellings per gross acre, occasionally reaching up to 40 dwellings per gross acre as may be appropriate to the site.
  - b. Small high-density residential districts are encouraged to be dispersed throughout the urban area. These districts should be located

predominantly near schools, employment and service centers, and urban arterials.

- c. Multi-family housing developments should be designed to fit compatibly within larger single-family neighborhoods.
- d. Townhouses are encouraged to be a primary housing type in these areas. Additional common housing types include low-rise apartments, duplexes, manufactured home parks and upper floors of mixed-use buildings.
- e. High-density residential districts may be mixed with professional offices and various low-intensity commercial and institutional uses, particularly where located along urban arterials and as appropriate to the neighborhood.
- f. In transitional areas zoned for multi-family residential use but developed primarily as single-family houses, conversion of existing houses to offices is encouraged, in order to maintain investment in the existing building stock and ease the land-use transition.
- g. These areas should be within close proximity to small parks or common open spaces. Location of buildings to create engaging, centrally located courtyards.
- h. These areas should be fully served by urban infrastructure and services.

#### **Recommendations:**

1. Develop and implement an affordable housing strategy to effectively provide for the needs of low and moderate-income residents.
2. Develop programs for rehabilitation of deteriorating and historically significant housing and infrastructure.
3. Review the zoning text and map periodically to remain current with changing technologies and policies.
4. Inclusion of offices in some areas designated as high density residential may be appropriate depending on the character of the surrounding neighborhood and anticipated trends.
5. Inclusion of multi-family dwellings in some areas designated as urban residential may be appropriate depending on the character of the surrounding neighborhoods and anticipated trends.
6. Develop a comprehensive sidewalk system in the community that includes the installation of new sidewalks and replacement of existing deteriorating sidewalks. Install crosswalk improvements where appropriate.
7. Support the ongoing efforts of the Kalispell Community Development Department to provide affordable housing options and programs.
8. Maintain the integrity of the historical east and west side districts by recognizing the existing roads as local streets rather than as collectors or minor arterials.

#### **4. Land Use: Business and Industry**

Kalispell is the retail, commercial and government center for the Flathead Valley. Kalispell's commercial core is generally more pedestrian oriented with an emphasis on the historical character of the area. Development has occurred around the highway corridor with recent commercial expansion of businesses that require larger undeveloped parcels. A regional medical center and community college are also located in the Kalispell area and provide an important contribution to the economic diversity and prosperity of the area.

##### **Issues:**

1. Although the main design advantages that make commercial corridor areas attractive for business such as highway visibility and concentration of business traffic along arterial routes, these areas also present design problems such as traffic congestion during peak periods because of the lack of secondary street access; the lack of bike and pedestrian access and lack of general appeal.
2. Land with commercial or industrial zoning is available in the community but is often located in undesirable locations that lack adequate infrastructure.
3. As technology changes there is less demand for traditional industrial sites and a greater need for areas with full urban services.
4. Downtown Kalispell has been hurt by the loss of department stores and general commercial dispersion, but has been reinforced by the downtown shopping mall, expansion of specialty stores and rehabilitation of existing historical structures.
5. Traditional higher paying industrial and manufacturing jobs are being replaced with lower paying service and tourist oriented jobs as an economic base in the community.
6. Auto-oriented design of commercial areas that lack pedestrian access and landscaping, have poorly designed parking lots, obtrusive signage, and reflect franchise architecture contribute to visual clutter that diminish the quality of life in the area.
7. There has been a question about the need and amount of commercial and light industrial property that is needed for future growth, but no quantifiable information is available to assess the market absorption and vacancy rates.

##### **GOALS:**

1. ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH OF PROSPEROUS COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS, EACH WITH A VIABLE MIX OF BUSINESSES, SUITABLE INFRASTRUCTURE, AND A COORDINATED DEVELOPMENT PATTERN THAT REDUCES BUSINESS COSTS AND INCREASES SMALL BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES.

2. NEW COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT SHOULD OCCUR IN AREAS WHERE PUBLIC WATER AND SEWER ARE AVAILABLE.
3. ENCOURAGE DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT IN THE "TARGET DEVELOPMENT AREAS"
4. HIGH TECH INDUSTRIAL BUSINESS AND E-COMMERCE BASED BUSINESS ARE ENCOURAGED TO LOCATE WITHIN EITHER THE COMMERCIAL AND / OR INDUSTRIAL AREAS OF THE GROWTH POLICY AREA CREATING A MIX OF COMPATIBLE AND COMPLEMENTARY USES.
5. LARGE SCALE RETAIL SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO DEVELOP IN AN ARCHITECTURALLY COMPATIBLE WAY AND WITH AN INTEGRATED SITE DESIGN RATHER THAN AS AN ISOLATED DEVELOPMENT.
6. PROVIDE ADEQUATE AREAS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY FOR COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION AND DEVELOPMENT.
7. MAINTAIN THE INTEGRITY OF WELL-ESTABLISHED RESIDENTIAL AREAS BY AVOIDING THE ENCROACHMENT OF INCOMPATIBLE USES.
8. IMPLEMENT STANDARDS THAT ENSURE A HIGH QUALITY FUNCTION AND DESIGN IN NEW DEVELOPMENT.
9. DEVELOP A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF FUTURE COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL NEEDS IN ORDER TO BE RESPONSIVE TO POTENTIAL GROWTH.
10. SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION OF THE KALISPELL REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER RECOGNIZING IT AS AN IMPORTANT AND DESIRABLE ELEMENT IN THE ECONOMY THAT CAN BE EXPANDED ON A REGIONAL BASIS AND PROVIDE HIGH-TECH, HIGH-QUALITY HEALTH CARE AND SERVICES WHILE PROVIDING AN IMPORTANT AND HIGH PAYING EMPLOYEMENT BASE.

**Policies:**

1. Central business district:
  - a. Recognize downtown Kalispell as the center of the community.
  - b. Recognize a prosperous core of retailers, restaurants and entertainment uses that keeps downtown active and vibrant.
  - c. Reinforce and take advantage of downtown's strengths including its higher concentration of people, investment in buildings and infrastructure, intricate mix of land uses, historic and architectural character, pedestrian orientation and visitor attraction.

- d. Recognize that there are special parking considerations downtown which differ from other areas. Encourage innovative parking management, effective regulation of on-street parking, shared parking provisions, parking standards that encourage reuse of upper floors, and provision of public parking lots and structures.
- e. Encourage the rehabilitation and reuse of existing downtown buildings. New development should give adequate consideration to downtown's historic character and be compatible.
- f. Support and encourage the concentration of community events, civic functions and activities in the downtown.

## 2. Neighborhood Commercial Areas:

- a. Establish neighborhood commercial areas designed to provide convenient goods and services that address the daily needs of the immediate neighborhood.
- b. Neighborhood commercial areas should generally be three to five acres in size and be spaced one-half to one mile apart. Sites should be configured to enable clustering of neighborhood commercial businesses, encouraging bike and pedestrian access where practicable.
- c. Uses should be designed, set back, landscaped and buffered to fit the surrounding neighborhood.

## 3. General Commercial

- a. Established commercial districts along major arterials are anticipated to provide areas for commercial uses that require space for outdoor display of merchandise, storage of materials and / or equipment and outdoor sales areas as well as general retail.
- b. Expansion of commercial districts is anticipated to occur as infill and a continuation of existing commercial areas to avoid the creation of new commercial district and leapfrog development.
- c. Expansion of commercial areas should be contingent upon the provision of public services and adequate infrastructure with consideration given to anticipated impacts on the neighborhood and natural environment.
- d. Commercial development in association with the Two Rivers RV development plan should be after the construction of the connection between Conrad Drive and LaSalle Road has been completed and when public utilities are available, taking care to avoid filling the 100-year floodplain.

- e. Additional commercial development along North Meridian Road should be after the reconstruction of the roadway to avoid additional generation of traffic and congestion.
- f. Development of frontage roads may be required to accommodate traffic circulation and access.
- g. The Kalispell Regional Medical Center campus and associated Buffalo Commons area is anticipated to develop as a mixed use area that will accommodate wide range of compatible residential, office, commercial and medical uses.

#### 4. Highway Community Entrance:

- a. Emphasize the objective of a pleasing entrance to the city that encourages highway landscaping.
- b. In designated mixed use areas, allow for a compatible mix of office, commercial, light industrial, residential, and public facilities. In limited industrial areas, allow light industrial uses which do not create off-site impacts.
- c. Encourage the use of innovative land use regulations to achieve a pleasing community entrance.
- d. Encourage highway commercial and industrial development to adhere to the following design guidelines:
  1. Encourage access by a secondary street or use of shared driveways and interconnected parking lots where secondary street access is not feasible.
  2. Landscape highway frontage and parking lots to enhance development sites and reduce visual impacts of development.
  3. Keep signs simple to reduce clutter and allow rapid comprehension by highway motorists without undue distraction. Encourage variety and creativity in sign design.
  4. Outdoor storage, machinery, utilities, trash dumpsters, service bays, antennas, rooftop equipment, and similar accessory facilities should be hidden or screened from public view to protect aesthetic qualities.
  5. Outdoor lighting should be low intensity, directed downward and shielded to prevent glare.

#### 5. Industrial Districts:

- a. Designate adequate and suitable areas for industrial uses.
- b. Consider the addition of some high-tech industrial uses within commercially zoned areas.

- c. These areas should have adequate access to rail, highway, and airport facilities and be of sufficient size to allow for future expansion.
- d. Encourage the redevelopment of currently designated light industrial areas for a variety of uses when public sewer becomes available. Areas on the west side of Kalispell near the railroad tracks, on the north side of the railroad tracks east of Third Avenue East and north of the Stillwater Bridge east of Whitefish Stage Road may be most suitable for redevelopment.

## 6. Target Development Areas

- a. Target development areas are generally located in the southwest part of Kalispell, around the City airport, the southwest area of West Reserve Drive and Highway 93 primarily the State Lands Section 36 and the Center Street area.
- b. Encourage development and redevelopment in the City's established urban renewal districts.
- c. The target development areas are where commercial and / or light industrial development or redevelopment is encouraged. Integration of residential uses within these areas is also encouraged.
- d. In general, the northwest area of the city is intended for commercial development and the southwest area of the city is intended for industrial development.
- e. The railroad right-of-way west of Seventh Avenue East should be included in the growth policy as a target development area. The City should pursue a mutually agreeable development or redevelopment of the corridor with quality commercial development and/or expansion.

## 7. Urban Mixed-Use Areas:

- a. Encourage the development of compact, centrally located service and employment areas that provide easy connections between existing commercial and residential neighborhoods.
- b. A complete system of pedestrian and bike paths is important in the mixed use areas.
- c. Expand the depth of urban highway commercial areas as mixed-use corridors, in order to provide an alternative to continued linear commercial development, concentrate more intensive uses along traffic arterials, improve business district circulation and transportation efficiency areas, by secondary street access, provide flexibility for larger development sites, and expand small business opportunities.

- d. Within these corridor areas, provide for higher-intensity, mixed-use areas roughly two blocks on both sides of urban highways. As distance from the highway increases, create a gradual transition into the residential neighborhoods by encouraging multi-family, offices and other compatible uses as a transition tool with sensitivity to compatible design.
- e. Avoid encroachment into established, intact residential areas.
- f. Allow a compatible mix of higher-intensity uses including office as well as some commercial and light industrial; medium and high-density residential and public facilities.

**Recommendations:**

1. Historical character of the downtown area should be enhanced with compatible architectural design of buildings.
2. Adequate consideration should be given to parcel boundaries to avoid splitting lots into different zoning districts when reasonable.
3. Develop design standards for highway community entrance areas that incorporate design guidelines outlined in this section.
4. Encourage the development of compact, centrally located service and employment areas in order to provide easy access to existing commercial and residential neighborhoods.
5. When large-scale development may have significant impacts on the community, studies should be provided to assist in assessing impacts including analysis related to traffic, infrastructure and the cost of providing services.
6. Establish development standards that encourage residential mixed-use development in established commercial and light industrial areas.
7. Create and adopt a mixed use zoning category that reflects the purpose and intent of a mixed use district as described herein.
8. Reinforce the major strengths of downtown which are its central location; its density and intricate mix of land uses, its historic districts and appealing pedestrian environment, its civic functions as the seat of city and county government, and its symbolic importance as the center of community.
9. Explore ways the City of Kalispell can create financial and other incentives to encourage improvements that lead to the redevelopment of unused existing commercial and downtown housing space.
10. Aggressively seek cooperative redevelopment and / or acquisition of the railroad right-of-way west of Seventh Ave East.

11. Review and revise sign standards and policies so that existing non-conforming signs are eliminated through a more aggressive attrition program.
12. Encourage design standards for commercial projects that contribute to the character of the community area.

## **5. Land Use: Agriculture**

Agricultural preservation and maintaining the rural character of some of the urban / rural fringe areas of the community have become increasingly difficult issues because of the decline in commodity prices and increased development pressures. Suburban areas immediately surrounding Kalispell become important for future urban development.

### **Issues:**

1. Development of agricultural lands that provide a source of food and wood products, export income, scenic open space, wildlife habitat are at risk because of economic and development pressures.
2. Agriculture in the urban / rural fringe areas although a traditional component of the regional economy, is in transition resulting in the conversion of agricultural land to residential subdivisions that can create conflicts between agriculture and expanding urban and suburban uses.
3. Rural lands close to the city are an important part of the city's future urban expansion area and can be vulnerable to untimely low density development that is not supported by urban services and facilities.
4. Conservation easements and similar voluntary mechanisms have become successful methods of conserving agricultural land, but no local government programs currently exist to purchase development rights.
5. High land costs are a major impediment to maintaining and expanding the farming business.

### **GOALS:**

1. MAINTAIN A SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY BASED PRIMARILY ON SMALL SPECIALITY CROPS INTENDED FOR A LOCAL MARKET.
2. ENCOURAGE VOLUNTARY CONSERVATION OF AGRICULTURAL LANDS.
3. RECOGNIZE THE NEED OF AGRICULTURAL LANDOWNERS TO HAVE OPTIONS WITH WHICH TO MAXIMIZE THE RETURN ON THEIR PROPERTY.
4. CLUSTER DEVELOPMENTS ARE ENCOURAGED IN THE RURAL AREAS THAT ARE WITHIN THE POTENTIAL UTILITY SERVICE AREA AND A PROVISION SHOULD BE CREATED THAT ALLOWS FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE OPEN SPACE AREAS WHEN UTILITIES ARE AVAILABLE.

**Policies:**

1. Encourage and create incentives to conserve agricultural lands
2. Encourage urban growth into areas which are not environmentally sensitive or productive agricultural lands.
3. Encourage the use of conservation easements, clustering or other options to protect productive agricultural lands in suburban areas.
4. Develop innovative land use policies which maintain the important agricultural lands.
5. Open space areas in cluster developments that are located in close proximity to the city limits should be considered as an urban reserve area so that it can be redeveloped when public services and utilities become available.

**Recommendations:**

1. Cooperation between the city and county governmental bodies should be fostered so that redevelopment of the rural areas close to urban services can be easily accomplished.
2. Suburban and rural areas that are in close proximity to the city limits and public services should be developed in such a way that accommodates future redevelopment to a higher density.

## 6. The Economy

The Kalispell area is the commercial, governmental, health care and educational center of the Flathead Valley with a diverse economic base. Retail and general commercial development is a major component of the economy as well as education, tourism, manufacturing and the regional medical center. Wood products and agriculture are also important economic components although there has been a decline in these sectors of the economy over the past decade as a result of complex local, national and international policies relating to these industries.

### **Issues:**

1. Although Kalispell functions as the commercial, retail, health care, educational and government center of Flathead County, it comprises only 20 percent of the area population.
2. Per capita income in Flathead County during 2000 was slightly higher than the state averages, but it was only 79 percent of the national average.
3. The traditional economic base of the Kalispell area industries including wood products manufacturing, metal refining, railroad, and agriculture was replaced during the 1990's with more service based, lower paying jobs and this continues into the 2000's.
4. The service sectors of the economy including health care, retail, personal services, real estate, finance, insurance and government provide most of the employment base for the Kalispell and are responsible for creating most of the new jobs in the area with a substantial increase in retirement income as well as tourism. These service sector jobs include most higher paying professional jobs as well as lower wage paying jobs.
5. Because the city is influenced by the forces of the county, business and industry benefit from being able to locate in healthy business districts and a quality built environment. This presents challenges in providing sound infrastructure planning, growth management, and environmental protection but also offer opportunities to strengthen the local economy.
6. No comprehensive economic study has been completed to quantify the amount of commercial, industrial and residential land that will be needed to accommodate future growth on a regional level leading to unresolved debate about the need for additional or less land anticipated for commercial and/ or industrial development.

**GOALS:**

1. PROVIDE FOR AND ENCOURAGE AN ADEQUATE SUPPLY OF JOBS, HIGHER MEDIAN INCOME FOR THOSE JOBS, AND A STABLE, DIVERSIFIED ECONOMY.
2. ENCOURAGE THE LOCATION OF HIGH TECH INDUSTRIAL BUSINESS AND E-COMMERCE BASED INDUSTRIES IN EITHER COMMERCIAL OR INDUSTRIAL AREAS.
3. SMALLER SCALE HIGH TECH INDUSTRIAL AND E-COMMERCE BASED BUSINESSES SHOULD ALSO BE CONSIDERED COMPATIBLE USES IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL AND MIXED USE AREAS.
4. STRENGTHEN KALISPELL AS A REGIONAL RETAIL CENTER THAT STRIVES TO CAPTURE MORE LOCAL AND OUT OF COUNTY DOLLARS.
5. STRENGTHEN KALISPELL AS A REGIONAL HEALTH CARE CENTER THAT PROVIDES A BROAD SPECTRUM OF HEALTH CARE RELATED SERVICES WITH DIAGNOSTIC, THERAPUTIC AND VARIED MEDICAL SERVICES AVAILABLE.
6. NEW BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO LOCATE IN AREAS WHERE SOUND INFRASTRUCTURE CAN BE PROVIDED.
7. FUND AN ECONOMIC / MARKET STUDY ON A REGIONAL LEVEL THAT WOULD BE SPONSORED AND SUPPORTED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODIES THAT COULD BE USED TO DEVELOP MARKET STRATEGY TO ENCOURAGE COMPLEMENTARY DEVELOPMENT IN THE COMMUNITY.

**Policies:**

1. The growth policy should be the central document for guiding economic development efforts.
2. Encourage a land-use pattern that supports viable business and industrial districts that integrate a residential component but does not negatively impact or encroach into well-established residential neighborhoods.
3. Provide adequate space for growth that carefully considers the type, location, and design of industrial sites, shopping areas, and tourist facilities.
4. Provide for adequate infrastructure and public services to support viable business and industrial districts.
5. Work with educational institutions such as the Flathead Valley Community College to provide technical education and training programs that meet the needs of new or expanding job markets.

6. Work with business and industrial associations to promote and coordinate business and industry in accordance with the growth policy.
7. Work with economic development organizations to further growth policy goals and policies and to encourage countywide coordination of their efforts.
8. Support the Kalispell area's position as a regional commercial center and a location of major health care, government, industrial facilities and retail services.
9. Support activities to ensure that the Central Business District remains strong and viable by providing adequate off-street parking; protect and promote the historic district; make downtown more aesthetically appealing; cater to the needs of the pedestrian; promote downtown events and activities; encourage a compatible mix of retail, restaurants, services, entertainment, and housing.
10. Support amenities and activities that promote the Kalispell area as a retirement, tourism, convention, and arts destination.

**Recommendations:**

1. Support the formation of business improvement districts (BID) to strengthen area commercial districts.
2. Coordinate with Jobs Now, Job Service and other organizations to develop jobs within the community.
3. Pursue grants to help with economic development and locating businesses within the growth policy area.
4. Develop incentives for business and industry that offer higher paying wages to encourage them to locate within the growth policy area.
5. Seek funding for a regional economic study to assist in assessing the long term needs for additional land to accommodate future growth and development of commercial, light industrial and residential uses.

## **7. The Natural Environment**

Important natural resource and environmental factors in the growth policy area include hydrology, floodplain, air quality, steep slopes, soil limitations, wildfire hazards, important habitat and important agricultural lands. The topography and geography of the Kalispell growth policy area presents certain development constraints due to hydric soils, steep slopes, floodplain and other soil limitations. Most of the growth policy area consists of nearly level alluvial lands, bottom lands and low terraces. The Flathead, Whitefish, and Stillwater Rivers in the eastern half of the growth policy area are part of a large riparian complex which creates a large floodplain area. Steep slopes in the southwest portion of the growth policy area pose limitations to development. The steep slopes in combination with timberlands create wildfire hazards. Productive farmlands in the southern and northern part of the growth policy area provide an important element to the cultural, economic and historic element in the growth policy area.

### **Issues:**

1. The natural environment is an important part of what makes the area an appealing place to live which may be jeopardized as growth occurs.
2. Various key sectors of the area's economy depend upon and impact the natural environment.
3. Development of the farming, ranching and woodland areas reduce open space that functions in a practical and productive manner.
4. The presence of the 100-year floodplain is prevalent in many areas throughout the community and poses significant development limitations due to federal permitting requirements, fill limitations and subdivision restrictions.
5. Development of hillside areas pose limitations due to soil disturbance and potential erosion.
6. Water quality continues to be an important issue to the community and ways to avoid nutrient loading and other forms of water contamination to the Flathead River Basin become critical.
7. The Kalispell area has been designated as a non-attainment area that does not meet national air quality standards primarily due to small particulate matter.
8. Water quality has the potential to be degraded by development due to erosion, storm water discharge and on-site sewage treatment systems.
9. Prime farmlands in rural areas are being converted from agricultural to residential uses due to depressed commodity prices and increased development pressures.
10. Wildlife and wildlife habitat is being displaced by residential development resulting in the loss of important habitat.

11. Areas disturbed during development of subdivision roads, building sites and other construction activity can contribute to erosion and the spread of noxious weeds if not properly revegetated and maintained.
12. There is a high degree of exchange between the surface and groundwater in the Flathead River system. The shallow aquifer is connected to the Flathead River and helps to maintain high water quality in the river and is particularly vulnerable to contamination by human activities.

**GOALS:**

1. ENCOURAGE DEVELOPMENT THAT IS COMPATIBLE WITH OR ENHANCES NATURAL RESOURCE VALUES INCLUDING AIR, WATER, SOIL AND VEGETATION.
2. DEVELOPMENT NEAR ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS SHOULD BE ACCOMPLISHED SO THAT THESE FEATURES ARE LEFT IN A RELATIVELY UNDISTURBED STATE.
3. HIGH LEVELS OF AIR QUALITY AND WATER QUALITY SHOULD BE MAINTAINED THROUGH DESIGN STANDARDS.
4. DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE COMPATIBLE WITH IMPORTANT WILDLIFE HABITAT AND TRAVEL CORRIDORS AS IDENTIFIED IN APPENDIX A.
5. PROTECT THE HEALTH AND INTEGRITY OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT BECAUSE OF ITS IMPORTANCE IN MAINTAINING A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE WITH OTHER REGIONS.
6. PROTECT WETLAND AND RIPARIAN AREAS SINCE THEY ARE IMPORTANT IN FLOOD PROTECTION, MAINTAINING WATER QUALITY AND PROVIDING HABITAT.

**Policies:**

1. Environmental impacts attributable to new development should be identified and mitigated, where necessary.
2. Encourage infill, clustering, and other compact development patterns to lesson impacts on sensitive lands.
3. Development in environmentally sensitive areas including 100-year floodplain, wetlands, riparian areas, shallow aquifers and on steep slopes may pose inherent development limitations and design should be managed to avoid and mitigate environmental impacts and natural hazards.
4. Implement measures to assist in maintaining high water quality and load reduction for the Flathead Basin.

5. Development in areas that have known high groundwater in close proximity to public utilities should be discouraged until such time as public sewer is available.
6. Filling of wetlands and the 100 year floodplain should be avoided.
7. New commercial and industrial development and residential subdivisions should be accessible by paved roadways to protect air quality.
8. Noxious weed controls should be implemented through revegetation of disturbed areas immediately after development along with adequate controls after development.
9. Diversion, channelization and diking of natural rivers and streams should be avoided.
10. Protection of wildlife and wildlife habitat should be encouraged through conscientious actions such as avoiding loose dogs, feeding large wild animal species along with maintaining established important habitat areas.
11. Wildlife travel corridors should be conserved and maintained possibly through easements or other voluntary restrictions.
12. Compromises to the built and natural environment should be avoided by requiring underground utilities in new development, avoiding ridgeline or hilltop development, encouraging simple and unobtrusive signs and avoiding excessive lighting.
13. Development should be designed to avoid the loss and minimize impacts to environmentally sensitive areas including the 100 year floodplain, wetlands, riparian areas and shallow aquifers.

**Recommendations:**

1. The City should coordinate with the County in developing a community-wide drainage plan encompassing the city and surrounding suburbs, to reduce water pollution and flooding.
2. Coordinate regulatory programs involving floodplain, habitat and water quality.
3. Limit and mitigate impacts related to outdoor lighting and noise by developing measurable standards.
4. Protect the shallow aquifers as sensitive water quality zones and establish performance standards.
5. Develop and implement a non-point source pollution abatement plan for the growth policy area.

6. Develop and implement a water quality clean-up plan for Ashley Creek.
7. Develop and implement a storm water management plan for northwest Kalispell and the Spring Creek drainage.
8. Develop and plan for the incremental paving of all roads and alleys within the Kalispell area to improve air quality.
9. Develop policies and programs that will help to educate and assist the public in the eradication and control of noxious weeds.
10. Maintain the integrity of environmentally sensitive areas in order prevent flooding, maintain high water quality and prevent soil erosion.

## **8. Urban Design, Historic and Cultural Conservation**

The Flathead Valley is rich in cultural and natural history. The Kalispell townsite was initially developed in the late 1800's and early 1900's. Many of the historical buildings that were constructed during that time still remain and play an important role in defining the rich historical and cultural character of the community and neighborhoods.

### **Issues:**

1. Excessive through traffic detracts from the preservation and maintenance of the historical and cultural character of the downtown and surrounding areas.
2. Excessive through traffic undermines pedestrian safety and access in the downtown and surrounding areas.
3. Historic landmarks have been identified inside the city of Kalispell but have not been identified outside of the city.
4. Rapid local growth and change, as experienced in recent years, can undermine local character of the built environment as well as its patterns, landmarks, and familiar features and can detract from the community's quality of life.
5. The central business district lacks cohesiveness and a strong cultural center.
6. Development and other changes in neighborhoods, historic districts, and downtown can be incompatible with the scale, patterns, landmarks, and architecture of its surroundings.

### **GOALS:**

1. DOCUMENT AND CONSERVE OUR HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE FOR THE BENEFIT OF PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.
2. ENCOURAGE DESIGN THAT IS CONSISTENT WITH AND CONTRIBUTES TO THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA AND THAT PROMOTES SAFE AND ACCESSIBLE PEDESTRIAN ACCESS AND MOVEMENT.
3. DIVERT THROUGH TRAFFIC FROM THE DOWNTOWN AND SURROUNDING AREAS.
4. NEW DEVELOPMENT SHOULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE COMMUNITY QUALITY OF LIFE AND ITS ATTRACTIVENESS AS A RETIREMENT AND TOURISM DESTINATION.
5. STRENGTHEN THE DOWNTOWN AS A HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CENTER OF THE COMMUNITY.

6. PRESERVE AND ENHANCE KALISPELL TRADITIONAL TOWNSCAPE OF MAIN STREET AND NEIGHBORHOOD STREETS DESIGNED FOR WALKING AND HISTORIC TOWN ATMOSPHERE.
7. PRESERVE KALISPELL'S NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT THAT INCLUDES MORE THAN 1,000 HOUSES, MAIN STREET AND COURTHOUSE CIRCLE, ALL CONSTRUCTED DURING THE EARLY YEARS.

**Policies:**

1. Development and other changes in neighborhoods, historic districts, and downtown should be compatible with the scale, patterns, landmarks, and architecture of its surroundings.
2. Identify historic and cultural resources, and encourage the upkeep and rehabilitation of historically and culturally significant structures and sites, consistent with national rehabilitation guidelines.
3. Discourage the demolition of historically or culturally significant structures and sites.
4. Support the efforts of private owners and conservation groups to identify, protect, rehabilitate, and reuse historic and cultural resources.
5. Encourage the design of urban public spaces such as local streets and public squares to be central areas framed by buildings, creating a visual quality of partial enclosure.
6. Encourage the design of urban streets to provide for convenient circulation, safe pedestrian access and avoid excess road width that encourages speeding and makes pedestrian crossing difficult.
7. Encourage the design of new development to relate to significant features of the surrounding area and development of off street parking.
8. Protect the integrity of the East Side Historic District by not allowing the construction of a connection roadway between Woodland Avenue and Seventh Street.

**Recommendations:**

1. Establish a local heritage commission to identify local landmarks, review alterations of these landmarks, expand public outreach and education and further historical and cultural conservation goals.
2. Encourage development of alternative arterials that will divert through traffic from the downtown and surrounding neighborhoods.
3. Enhance safe pedestrian access through the downtown and surrounding neighborhoods.

## **9. Parks and Recreation**

Recreational opportunities are provided through City, County and State park systems as well as private lands. These parks provide a diversity of recreational opportunities from small neighborhood parks and walking trails to larger recreational facilities for organized sports events along with an increasing network of bike and pedestrian trails. There are also some small private parks, public golf courses, rivers, lakes and private timber lands that contribute to recreational opportunities in the area.

### **Issues:**

1. Outdoor amenities and park space are highly valued in the community, but are increasingly more difficult to develop and maintain.
2. Programs for development of pedestrian access and amenities are limited or lacking in some areas.
3. It becomes increasingly more difficult to conserve habitat and the natural landscape as urban development expands in the suburban areas.
4. Public land available for parks, recreation and open space has become increasingly scarce and more difficult to acquire because of high land costs and limited vacant, developable land in close proximity to the city.
5. Development and spacing of neighborhood parks are an increasing challenge and are lacking in some areas of the community and access to larger parks can be limited.

### **Goals:**

1. PROVIDE A BALANCED DISTRIBUTION AND DIVERSITY OF RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE PATHS THAT PROVIDES ACCESS FOR ALL AGE GROUPS.
2. DEVELOP PROGRAMS TO ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT OF PARKS AND PARK ACCESS.
3. ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT OF SMALLER HOMEOWNERS PARKS WITHIN NEW SUBDIVISIONS.
4. ASSURE ADEQUATE AND SAFE ACCESS TO PARKS FROM RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISIONS.
5. CONSERVE AND ENHANCE EXISTING PARKS AND PARKLANDS.
6. CONSTRUCT A BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN CONNECTION BETWEEN WOODLAND AVENUE AND SEVENTH AVE. EAST.
7. DEVELOP A BIKE A PEDESTRIAN PLAN THAT WOULD BE ADOPTED AS AN ADDENDUM TO THE GROWTH POLICY.

**Policies:**

1. Build on the existing parks inventory to provide a unique park system that benefits residents and the regional economy.
2. Integrate a linear park running east-west through the city, connecting Woodland Park, Lawrence Park, downtown and the west Kalispell bike and pedestrian trails.
3. Provide a balanced mix of parks and recreational facilities to meet local needs, which including mini parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, regional parks, linear parks, special facilities and conservation lands or facilities.
4. Earmark cash in lieu of parkland funds to expand public access and for use in close proximity to where funds originated.
5. Insure that habitat qualities in park areas remain viable while also increasing its availability by the public to enjoy these amenities.

**Recommendations:**

1. Use available federal funding and other funding sources to develop a public trail system to link the city to surrounding suburbs and nearby rivers, streams, and lakes.
2. Develop available public land or open space by utilizing Kalispell's street tree program in those areas.
3. Identify areas of the 100-year floodplain and other areas with limited development potential that may be suitable for future park development .
4. Encourage the use of conservation easements and other methods available to private individuals or other for the creation of open space and conservation of habitat.
5. Encourage the establishment, development and maintenance of homeowners' parks within new residential subdivisions.
6. When subdivisions are close to or adjacent to school yards, coordinate the development of tot lots and neighborhood parks with the school district, where appropriate.
7. Develop a bike and pedestrian trail connecting Woodland Avenue and Seventh Street East.
8. That a bike a pedestrian plan be developed by the planning board and forwarded to the city council for adoption as an addendum to the growth policy.

## **10. Transportation**

The majority of this section is based on an executive summary from the Kalispell Area Transportation Plan done by Carter & Burgess Inc. in October of 1993. The transportation summary includes an outline of existing conditions, a proposed major street network system, a recommended bypass route as well as long term recommendations for improving the transportation system in and around Kalispell. The supporting documents underlying these recommendations are "The Kalispell Area Transportation Plan" and "The Kalispell Bypass Feasibility Study" (1993) and are adopted in their entirety as elements of this document. Since the 1993 Carter Burgess plan was adopted, some of the major projects identified have been funded, designed and are under construction. Other projects remain currently valid and remain on the recommendation list.

### **Issues:**

1. Overall traffic volumes in Kalispell have grown considerably over the last 10 years and are forecast to continue to increase over the next 20 years.
2. There are a number of collector and arterial streets that lack pedestrian and bicycle access and pose significant safety problems.
3. There is not a well-established grid street system in some areas.
4. A significant amount of traffic, including truck traffic, passes through the city on US Hwy 93 without making a stop and contributes to traffic congestion in key areas.
5. Traffic and pedestrian safety issues are especially problematic in outlying areas where narrow rural designed roadways exist because these areas have also experienced rapid growth.
6. The narrow two-lane segment of Whitefish Stage Road between Oregon Street and West Reserve Drive is substandard with volumes of traffic expected to nearly double in numbers to approximately 15,000 vehicles daily by 2015 and no plans for upgrade.
7. There is no east / west connection between Highway 93 and Whitefish Stage Road north of Oregon Street and south of West Reserve Drive contributing to traffic in some problem areas.
8. No program is currently in place to upgrade substandard existing or newly annexed streets to urban standards.
9. Excess traffic along Third Avenue East and Fourth Avenue East degrades the residential character of the area.
10. Public transportation is significantly limited.

11. Woodland Avenue and Seventh Avenue East do not make a connection and should be connected with a bike and pedestrian trail rather than a roadway.
12. Funding and construction of roadway improvement projects is time consuming, expensive and subject to delays.

**GOALS:**

1. PROVIDE A COMPREHENSIVE TRAFFIC CIRCULATION SYSTEM THAT SERVES THE COMBINED NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY AND THE REGION, AND THAT PROVIDES SAFE, CONVENIENT AND ECONOMICAL ACCESS TO ALL TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES THROUGHOUT THE AREA.
2. CONSTRUCT THE WEST SIDE BYPASS.
3. PROVIDE GREATER DIVERSITY IN TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS.
4. EXPAND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION TO SERVE BROADER SEGMENTS OF THE COMMUNITY.
5. EXPLORE THE DEVELOPMENT OF A GREATER NUMBER OF FUNDING OPTIONS FOR ROADWAYS IN THE AREA.
6. DEVELOP SIDEWALK INSTALLATION AND REPLACEMENT PROGRAM FOR ALL AREAS OF THE COMMUNITY.
7. REDUCE CONGESTION AND EXCESS TRAFFIC IN PROBLEM AREAS.
8. MAINTAIN THE INTEGRITY OF RESIDENTIAL AREAS BY AVOIDING THE INTRODUCTION OF NON-LOCAL TRAFFIC.

**Policies:**

1. Design transportation systems to minimize congestion, encourage commerce and protect the safety and quality of life in the community.
2. Street improvements that would involve the expenditure of public funds and would result in significant traffic increases should be subject to review and comment by affected area property owners.
3. Coordinate land use and transportation so that higher-intensity development is located in well established areas near arterial and collector streets.
4. Discourage routing heavy traffic and through-traffic in residential areas by creating a more thorough grid system when possible.
5. Utilize and reserve arterial and collector roads to carry through-traffic.
6. Provide access to individual lots by way of local streets to the maximum extent feasible and avoid granting individual access on to collectors and arterials.

7. Reserve adequate right-of-way for designated arterial and collector roads on lands proposed for new development.
8. Support the expansion of public transit services to meet the mobility needs of seniors, disabled persons and the general public.
9. Develop a pedestrian-bicycle system to supplement the auto-oriented street system and to meet local transportation and recreation needs.
10. Recognize the need to maintain and protect the residential and pedestrian character and integrity of the Woodland Avenue area by avoiding the construction of a roadway connection to Seventh Ave East and developing a bike and pedestrian trail instead.
11. Explore the possibility of converting East Meridian Road into a two-way street.
12. Proposed Major Street Network

These recommendations are from the October 1993 Carter & Burgess Kalispell Area Transportation Plan and identify the proposed major street network and classification systems. The characteristics of each functional classification are defined below. The arterial and collector designations identify how the street system functions. This designation itself is not intended to indicate a plan for road widening to accommodate more traffic. The definitions are presented with recommended traffic volume thresholds based on the results of travel demand projections for 2015. The classifications are listed in a hierarchy intended to identify function and the traffic-carrying capacities on all roads, relative to the others. Each segment of road listed by its functional classification.

- a. Major Arterials: A major road or highway with moderate to fast speeds and high traffic volumes. Major arterials provide access to the regional transportation network. They move traffic across the country, between cities and communities and/or from one major part of the Planning Jurisdiction to another. Throughout the Planning Jurisdiction individual private accesses onto arterials serving adjacent parcels should be discouraged. Traffic volumes would typically exceed 15,000 vehicles per day.
- b. Minor Arterials: A major road with moderate speeds designed to collect or move traffic from one major part of the city or planning jurisdiction to another or to move traffic to or from the major arterial system. Traffic volumes would generally range from 5,000 to 15,000 vehicles per day.
- c. Collectors: A secondary or intermediate street with moderate speeds and low to moderate volumes. Such streets would collect local traffic from neighborhoods and carry it to adjacent neighborhoods or transfer the traffic to the arterial system. Such streets would typically serve a neighborhood or area of 150 or more dwellings and carry 1,000 to 5,000 vehicles per day.

- d. Local: Minor streets intended to serve individual sites, building or lots. Local streets feed into collectors or provide destination access off of collectors.

## 11. Proposed Major Street Network

### Major Arterials:

- US 2 (including Idaho Street and LaSalle Road)
- US 93 (including Main Street and Sunset Boulevard)
- Alternate US 93 (new bypass road west of city)
- MT 35
- Reserve Drive, from US 93 to LaSalle Road

### Minor Arterials:

- Cemetery Road, from Airport Road to US 93
- Lower Valley Road, from US 93 to Willow Glen Drive
- 18th Street West, from 1st Avenue West to Airport Road
- Foy's Lake Road, from South Foy's Lake Road to Meridian Road
- Whalebone Drive, from West Springcreek Road to Foy's Lake Road
- 11th Street, from 5th Avenue West to 4th Avenue East
- 7th Street West, from Meridian to 5th Avenue West
- Conrad Drive, from Woodland Avenue to LaSalle Road
- Center Street, from Meridian Road to Woodland Avenue
- Three Mile Drive, from West Springcreek Road to Meridian Road
- Four Mile Drive, from West Springcreek Road to US 93
- Evergreen Drive, from US 93 to LaSalle Road
- Reserve Drive, from West Springcreek Road to US 93
- West Springcreek Road, from Whalebone Drive to Reserve Drive
- Meridian Road, from Foy's Lake Road to US 93 (Sunset Boulevard)
- 5th Avenue West, from 11th Street West to Idaho Street
- Airport Road, from Cemetery Road to 18th Street West
- 1st Avenue East, from Center Street to US 2 (Idaho Street)
- 3rd Avenue East, from 11th Street East to US 2 (Idaho Street)
- 4th Avenue East, from 11th Street East to US 2 (Idaho Street)
- Woodland Avenue, from Willow Glen Drive to Center Street
- Whitefish Stage Road, from Oregon Street to Reserve Drive
- Woodland Park Drive, from Conrad Drive to US 2
- Willow Glen Drive, from Lower Valley Road to Conrad Drive
- LaSalle Road, from Conrad Drive to MT 35
- Helena Flats Road, from MT 35 to Reserve Drive

### Collectors:

- Kelly Road, from US 93 to Willow Glen Drive
- 18th Street, from Alternate US 93 to 3rd Avenue East
- 14th Street East, from 3rd Avenue East to 4th Avenue East
- 11th Street West, from 7th Avenue West to 5th Avenue West
- 11th Street East, from 4th Avenue East to Woodland Avenue
- 6th Street, from 5th Avenue West to 4th Avenue East
- 4th Street, from 5th Avenue West to 1st Avenue East
- 2nd Street, from Meridian Road to Woodland Avenue

Conrad Drive, from LaSalle Road to Flathead River  
Appleway, from US 2 to Meridian  
Montana Street, from 5th Avenue West to 3rd Avenue East  
Oregon Street, from Main Street to 7th Avenue East  
Wyoming Street, from Meridian Road to US 93 (Sunset Boulevard)  
Two Mile Drive, from West Springcreek Road to Meridian Road  
Sunnyview Lane, from Sunset Boulevard to Grandview Drive  
Northridge Drive, from Sherry Lane to US 93  
Evergreen Drive, from LaSalle Road to Helena Flats Road  
Reserve Drive, from LaSalle Road to Helena Flats Road  
Northern Lights Blvd/Hilltop Avenue, from Three Mile Dr. to Northridge Dr.  
7th Avenue West, from Sunnyside Drive to Wyoming Street  
5th Avenue West, from Sunnyside Drive to 11th Street West  
5th Avenue West, from Idaho Street to Wyoming Street  
1st Avenue West, from 18th Street West to Center Street  
Airport Road, from 18th Street West to US 93  
New Road, from Sunnyview Lane to Reserve Drive  
Grandview Drive, from Sunnyview Lane to Evergreen Drive  
1st Avenue East, from US 93 to Center Street  
3rd Avenue East, from US 93 to 11th Street East  
3rd Avenue East, from US 2 (Idaho Street) to Oregon Street  
4th Avenue East, from 14th Street East to 11th Street East  
4th Avenue East, from US 2 (Idaho Street) to Oregon Street  
South Woodland Drive, from Kelly Road to Woodland Avenue  
Shady Lane, from Conrad Drive to MT 35  
Commons Way between Hwy 93 and Grandview Drive

**Recommendations:**

1. Review the Kalispell Area Transportation Plan for updates on a ten-year basis with an emphasis on identifying important components that should be updated rather than a comprehensive update.
2. Study and consider alternatives to using Third Avenue East and Fourth Avenue East as minor arterials north of 14<sup>th</sup> Street East to Second Street East in order to protect the integrity of the residential areas.
3. Explore alternative funding sources and methods for developing alternative modes of transportation.
4. Develop alternative funding sources and expanded programs for transportation upgrades.
5. Develop a comprehensive pedestrian / bike plan for the community.

## 6. Recommended Improvements:

Improvements included in the First Priority grouping would result in the greatest benefit to existing traffic system performance. Second Priority projects will primarily serve future development needs as urban development expands into the adjacent rural areas surrounding Kalispell. Improvements to these Second Priority roads will also increase safety for motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists. Other long-term improvement alternatives were considered but not recommended. A description of these considerations is also provided below.

### First Priority Projects:

- a. Kalispell Bypass between Hwy 93 South and West Reserve Drive. This project would generally follow the Burlington Northern Railroad alignment from Gardners Auction north to Foy's Lake Road, across US 2, then proceed north through the Two Mile and Three Mile area to Stillwater Road, then north and east to Reserve and US 93 generally along the transmission lines through Section 36. The bypass route would be a limited access roadway, signed as an Alternate Route to US 93, with speeds ranging from 40 to 55 miles per hour. Design has been completed and approved and the state is in the process of early acquisition of right-of-way.
- b. Meridian Road between Idaho Street and US 93 North. This segment of Meridian Road is currently intended to be improved to include three lanes from Idaho Street north to Three Mile Drive and two lanes north of Three Mile Drive to US 93 as an urban minor arterial with curb and gutter and pedestrian/bicycle accommodations, consistent with city plans to improve the quality of the North Meridian Road neighborhood and transportation movement in the area. .
- a. US Hwy 93 from Ashley Creek to Courthouse. MDOT has final plans for this project and are in the process of doing right-of-way appraisals and acquisition. The project has been separated into two elements: from Ashley Creek to Eleventh and from Eleventh to the Courthouse.
- b. Whitefish Stage Road between Oregon Street and Reserve Drive. Federal highway funds have been obtained from some improvements to Whitefish Stage Road, but there is no project identified for the long-term upgrade of this road to a minor arterial standards.
- c. West Reserve Drive between US Hwy 2 and Farm to Market Road. This two-lane major arterial is recommended to be widened to accommodate current and project levels of traffic.
- d. Willow Glen Drive from US 93 to Conrad Drive. This two-lane rural arterial road is recommended to be widened to accommodate anticipated increased traffic levels and should be considered in conjunction with the LaSalle Road extension between Conrad Drive and LaSalle Road.
- e. LaSalle Road Extension between Conrad Drive and LaSalle Road (Conrad Connection). La Salle Road is recommended to be extended south of the US Hwy 2 and MT Hwy 35 intersection to Conrad Drive to provide a more direct connection

between Second Street, Conrad Drive and Willow Glen Drive to LaSalle Road (US Hwy 2) to the north which would warrant an evaluation of impacts to Willow Glen Drive.

- f. 18th Street Extension. The extension of 18th Street is recommended to extend west to connect with Sunnyside Drive and Valley View Drive as a two-lane collector road to provide an additional east/west connection from US Hwy 93 to the proposed Kalispell Bypass route along the BNRR right-of-way.

#### Second Priority Projects:

- a. Existing Rural Minor Arterials. In the Kalispell Transportation Plan, Table 7-2 outlines existing rural minor arterial road segments in need of widening to include paved shoulders, improved recovery zone, and left-turn lanes at major intersecting streets or drives. These road segments include West Springcreek Road, Stillwater Road, Four Mile Drive, Whalebone Drive, Foy's Lake Road, Conrad Drive, Helena Flats, Reserve Drive west of US 93, Three Mile Drive and Evergreen Drive from Whitefish Stage Road to LaSalle Road.
- b. New Rural Minor Arterials. Two new segments of rural minor arterial road are also recommended to be added to the system to provide increased accessibility by completion of the mile grid network of roads. These new road segments are the extension of Four Mile Drive to the proposed Kalispell Bypass and the extension of Grandview Drive to West Evergreen Drive from US Hwy 93 east to Whitefish Stage Road. Both road segments cross difficult terrain and may require a curved alignment off the section line to negotiate the steep slopes. The segment of Evergreen extension will also require a new bridge over the Stillwater River and environmental impact mitigation considerations.
- c. Existing Rural Collectors. Several existing rural collector road segments are recommended for widening to include paved shoulders and left-turn lanes at major intersecting streets. These roads include Two Mile Drive, Evergreen and Reserve Drives east of LaSalle Road.
- d. Existing Urban Minor Arterials. Three existing urban minor arterial road segments are recommended for improvements including Grandview Drive, 7th Avenue East north of Idaho and Four Mile Drive west of US Hwy 93.
- e. At-Grade Railroad Crossings. At-grade railroad crossings may be affected by improvements or traffic diversions to Meridian Road north of Center Street, 3rd and 4th Avenues East and Reserve Drive west of LaSalle Road. Road improvement plans should address rail crossing safety by considering individual crossing geometrics, signalization, signing and pavement markings and MDT road design standards, policies and procedures.
- f. If the BNSF railroad right-of-way through the city is redeveloped through a mutually agreeable plan, conversion of the right-of-way to a new commercial area with the integration of a linear park and bike path running east-west through the city is encouraged.

- g. Woodland Avenue across the railroad tracks to Seventh Avenue E.N. be connected with bike and pedestrian trail to provide limited access through the area which is intended to maintain the integrity of the residential and pedestrian character of the area and avoid a future roadway extension.

## **11. INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC SERVICES**

Infrastructure and the provision of public services is one of the highest priority issues for service providers in the growth policy area. Adequate provision of services for new development in both the rural and urban areas are important considerations when considering planning for future land uses.

**STREETS AND ROADS:** There is a network of public and private roads in the growth policy area with most of the roads in the city limits being owned and maintained by the City of Kalispell. Most of the roads in the county are maintained by the County, some of the roads in them are owned and maintained by homeowners associations and road users associations.

### **Issues:**

1. There is insufficient funding for street maintenance and repair which are a major expense in the City and County budgets.
2. Roads that the City annexes from the County are usually substandard for urban traffic and there are no current funding mechanisms for upgrades.
3. Existing unpaved roads, alleys and parking lots in the urban areas contribute to air quality problems
4. Transportation, road construction and maintenance are a priority for residents but funding is a limiting factor.
5. Many streets lack safe pedestrian access.

### **GOALS:**

1. ALL ROADS, PARKING LOTS AND ALLEYS ARE PAVED.
2. WHEN ROADS ARE RECONSTRUCTED AND UPGRADED, THEY SHOULD BE UPGRADED TO URBAN STANDARDS.
3. AS THE CITY ANNEXES COUNTY ROADS PROVISIONS SHOULD BE MADE FOR UPGRADING TO CITY STANDARDS.
4. COORDINATE CONSISTENT DESIGN STANDARDS BETWEEN THE CITY AND THE COUNTY IN URBAN AREAS.

### **Policies:**

1. Require paving of roads, alleys and parking lots for new development.
2. Encourage paving of existing roads, alleys and parking lots.

3. Require all new subdivision roads in the city to be constructed to City standards and do not allow the creation of private, substandard roads.

**Recommendations:**

1. Develop a strategy and funding mechanism for needed road and street upgrades.
2. Develop a monitoring program to ensure the timely pavement of roads, alleys and parking lots.
3. Inventory and prioritize substandard roads to assess costs of upgrade and be scheduled for improvement.
4. Explore alternatives to develop funding sources for the upgrading of local roads that are not eligible for state or federal funding programs.

SEWER: There are several sewer districts in the growth policy area that utilize the Kalispell Sewer Treatment plant for sewage treatment through negotiated interlocal agreements with the City of Kalispell. Virtually all of the growth policy area outside the city limits and sewer district boundaries is served by the use of on-site sewage treatment systems.

**Issues:**

1. High groundwater infiltration and storm water runoff inflow are having a significantly negative impact on the City's waste water treatment plant.
2. New development may require upgrading existing collection systems because of additional impacts may require new sewage lift stations in order to avoid impact to existing sewage pumping facilities.
3. Throughout Kalispell there are neighborhoods that are utilizing on-site sewage treatment for sewage disposal.
4. Outside the city limits, Kalispell is ringed by areas of residential and commercial development using on-site sewage treatment systems.
5. By contract with the City of Kalispell, the ultimate capacities of the Evergreen Sewer District are constrained by the limits of their allocation under an interlocal agreement thereby limiting their potential service area.
6. Limitations to the Evergreen Sewer District service area create unintended consequences in the outlying area with the use of on-site sewage treatment systems.
7. Suburban area residential subdivisions that have been developed using on-site sewage treatment systems are difficult to convert to public sewer even when there is evidence of failing systems in the area.

**GOALS:**

1. AREAS OF THE CITY CURRENTLY USING ON-SITE SEWAGE TREATMENT SYSTEMS WILL BE CONNECTED TO PUBLIC CITY SEWER.
2. MAKE PUBLIC SEWER AVAILABLE TO AREAS THAT ARE IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO SERVICES.
3. ALL USERS OF CITY SEWER ARE IN THE CITY.
4. EXPAND THE ABILITY OF THE CITY TO SERVE THOSE AREAS OUTSIDE OF THE EVERGREEN SEWER DISTRICT BOUNDARIES.
5. ELIMINATE INFILTRATION OF HIGH GROUND WATER INTO THE CITY'S SEWER COLLECTION SYSTEM.
6. HAVE ADEQUATE CAPACITY WITHIN THE WASTE WATER TREATMENT PLANT TO ACCOMMODATE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT.
7. URBAN AND SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE CONNECTED TO PUBLIC SEWER.

**Policies:**

1. New sewer services should be installed in a way that will accommodate the future extension of the mains and expansion of the sewer system.
2. Annexation to the city of Kalispell should be required when sewer services are extended to an unincorporated area to provide services for new development.
3. Impacts from new development that require upgrades to the sewer collection system such as the upsizing of mains and lift stations should be the responsibility of the developer rather than the taxpayers.
4. When new sewer mains are installed consideration should be given to the future needs of the area and the mains upsized accordingly.

**Recommendations:**

1. Complete a study and analysis of phased expansion of the wastewater treatment facilities
2. Develop and adopt a facilities plan that addresses sewer services in the urban area.
3. Identify and correct those areas where storm water infiltration occurs.
4. Adopt a capital improvements plan that identifies priority areas for sewer service.

5. Update the Kalispell extension of services plan.
6. Explore the use of the creation of annexation districts to provide additional flexibility in providing sewer services.
7. Areas within the unincorporated area of Kalispell that are receiving either water or sewer services should be annexed to the city as part of a comprehensive annexation plan for the area.
8. Renegotiate the interlocal agreement with the Evergreen Sewer District to provide a greater service area.

WATER: The City of Kalispell and Evergreen Water District are the primary providers of the water supply in the growth policy area, but there are also a number of smaller community water systems that are owned and operated by the homeowners associations in residential subdivisions. In addition there are many properties that are served by individual wells.

**Issues:**

1. Some existing water mains will not meet fire flow requirements without significant upgrades.
2. There are areas adjacent to the city of Kalispell that receive City sewer, but are on private water systems that would not be easily upgraded to meet fire flow requirements and are currently without hydrants.
3. There are some areas outside the city limits using substandard City water lines for their domestic water supply.
4. Some areas have water mains which are not looped which limits the fire protection potential.
5. There are some areas in the city whose residents use individual wells.

**GOALS:**

1. ALL USERS OF CITY WATER SERVICES BE IN THE CITY.
2. ALL WATER LINES BE LOOPED TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE FIRE FLOWS FOR HYDRANTS.
3. CONTINUE TO PROVIDE SAFE, POTABLE WATER TO MEET THE NEEDS OF ALL USERS.
4. WHEN NEW MAINS ARE INSTALLED CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE FUTURE NEEDS OF THE AREA.
5. PROVIDE ADEQUATE PRESSURE AND FLOWS TO MEET FIRE FIGHTING AND USER NEEDS.

**Policies:**

1. Dead-end lines should be avoided.
2. Annexation to the city of Kalispell should be required when water services are extended to an unincorporated area to provide services for new development.
3. Water mains should be looped when practical and feasible.
4. New water mains should be upsized to accommodate potential future users in the area.
5. Eliminate the use of individual wells within the city.

**Recommendations:**

1. Develop and adopt a capital improvements plan that addresses City water services.
2. Areas within the unincorporated area of Kalispell that are receiving water services should be annexed to the city as part of a comprehensive annexation plan for the area.
3. Update the Kalispell extension of services plan.
4. Explore the use of the creation of annexation districts to provide greater flexibility in providing services.

STORM WATER MANAGEMENT: There are several storm water systems in the city of Kalispell, but few in the unincorporated urban areas of the community. Most storm water is managed using on-site retention methods.

**Issues:**

1. There are no public storm drainage systems in most of the planning jurisdiction.
2. Storm water retention onsite in small developments is often overlooked, creating off site drainage problems.
3. Storm water infiltration into the City's sewer collection system creates problems during peak storm events.
4. Storm water management and treatment can be problematic for new development where no public facilities exist.
5. There are areas of the community that are especially prone to flooding and ponding because of inadequate storm water management facilities.

6. There is inadequate funding to address the storm water management issues in the community.

**GOALS:**

1. STORM WATER MANAGEMENT FACILITIES BE ADEQUATE FOR ALL OF THE URBAN AREAS.
2. IMPROVE THE DRAINAGE AND STORM WATER FACILITIES IN PROBLEM AREAS OF THE COMMUNITY.
3. ALL NEW DEVELOPMENT HAVE ADEQUATE STORM WATER MANAGEMENT FACILITIES PRIMARILY USING ON-SITE RETENTION
4. ADEQUATELY MAINTAIN AND MANAGE EXISTING STORM WATER MANAGEMENT FACILITIES TO MAXIMIZE THEIR USE.

**Policies:**

1. As new city streets are constructed, and as existing streets are improved, storm drainage infrastructure will be installed or improved.
2. The quantity and rate of runoff from a developed piece of property should not exceed that which would occur had the property remained undeveloped.
3. Encourage the use of landscape areas and green space to be used as part of an overall storm water management plan for new development rather than the use of parking lot drains or other facilities that require routine maintenance.
4. Avoid the use of parking lot drains that require specific maintenance in order to continue to function properly.

**Recommendations:**

1. As the City's street reconstruction program continues, storm drainage should be improved.
2. Develop a storm water management system for the northwest areas of Kalispell, the Spring Creek drainage and the southwest part of Kalispell.
3. Explore the expansion of existing storm water management facilities to accommodate new development.
4. Seek greater cooperation between public entities such as the City, County and State to recognize and address storm water management issues in the community.

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT: There are several contract haulers in the community in addition to the solid waste removal services supplied by the City of Kalispell. All of the solid waste in the area is taken to the Flathead County Landfill. All recycling is done through the private sector.

**Issues:**

1. There are limited opportunities for recycling for the general public through community-wide recycling programs.
2. Out of city residents often bring their garbage to be placed in City dumpsters overburdening their capacity.
3. Residents place large pieces of furniture, construction materials and other debris for solid waste pick-up rather than taking them directly to the landfill.

**GOALS:**

1. EXPAND RECYCLING EFFORTS IN A COST EFFECTIVE WAY TO REDUCE TONNAGE AT THE LANDFILL.
2. KEEP THE CITY'S STREETS AND ALLEYS CLEAN AND FREE OF DEBRIS.
3. MAINTAIN HIGH LEVELS OF SERVICE FOR SOLID WASTE PICK-UP.
4. REDUCE WASTE AT THE LANDFILL BY SEPARATING COMPOSTABLE MATERIALS FROM HOUSEHOLD GARBAGE.
5. MAINTAIN REASONABLE AND COMPETITIVE RATES FOR SOLID WASTE REMOVAL.

**Policies:**

1. Encourage citizens to recycle items that can be taken by the local recycling facilities.
2. Encourage citizens to remove large objects such as furniture and construction material from the alleys rather than pick-up and disposal by the City.
3. Residents should separate compostable materials from regular household garbage.

**Recommendations:**

1. Develop a proactive program that substantially expands recycling.

POLICE PROTECTION: Within city limits, police protection is provided by the Kalispell Police Department; outside of city limits, the Flathead County Sheriff's Office has jurisdiction. The city and county provide mutual aid upon request.

**Issues:**

1. The Flathead County Jail located in Kalispell serves both the city and county and is continually overcrowded.
2. The existing jail facility, located in Kalispell, was opened in 1987, was built to house up to 64 beds, and it currently has 85 beds and it is anticipated that up to 125 – 130 beds will be needed within the next five years.
3. Increasing problems with methamphetamine production in the community poses a threat to residents and public at large.
4. Limited space with the police department office creates problems with attempting to bring on additional staff.
5. There have been difficulties in negotiations between the police bargaining units and the City of Kalispell.

**GOALS:**

1. ENSURE THAT WE HAVE SAFE AND HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOODS.
2. ELIMINATE THE ABILITY OF MANUFACTURERS AND USERS OF METHAMPHETAMINE TO EXIST OR OPERATE IN THE COMMUNITY.
3. BUILD ON ESTABLISHED RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES TO ENHANCE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE DRUG TASK FORCE.
4. ENSURE THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF PUBLIC SAFETY WHILE PROTECTING THE RIGHTS AND DIGNITY OF THE CITIZENS OF THE COMMUNITY.
5. INCREASE COMMUNITY AWARENESS REGARDING THE PRODUCTION AND USE OF DRUGS.
6. STRIVE TO CONTINUALLY IMPROVE THE SKILLS, EQUIPMENT AND RESOURCES OF THE LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMUNITY.
7. COLLABORATE WITH THE PUBLIC TO IDENTIFY CAUSES OF CRIME AND TO REDUCE CRIME.
8. CONTINUE TO IMPROVE THE COMMUNITY POLICING MODES AND INCREASE THE NUMBER OF COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS.

**Policies:**

1. Adequately staff law enforcement agencies.
2. Officers and staff conduct themselves with honesty, integrity, professional competence, compassion and respect for the public.
3. Apply unbiased enforcement of the laws.
4. Conduct all negotiations between the City of Kalispell and bargaining units in good faith and fairness.

**Recommendations:**

1. Coordinate between law enforcement agencies to provide a seamless service of law enforcement in the community.
2. Continue to pursue grants to provide funds for staffing and equipment.
3. As the community grows, ensure that the law enforcement agencies have adequate staffing and resources.
4. Complete the transition to an enhanced 911 protocol.

FIRE AND AMBULANCE SERVICE: The Kalispell Fire Department and four rural fire districts adjacent to the city limits provide fire services to the community. The City of Kalispell operates an advanced life support transport ambulance service that is staffed by cross-trained firefighter / paramedics and responds to service calls in the rural parts of the community as well as within the city limits.

**Issues:**

1. Fire protection by the Kalispell Fire Department is currently provided to response areas within the city as far as 3.9 miles from the downtown station with response times of three to ten minutes for the first engine, eight to fifteen minutes for the ladder truck and twelve to fifteen minutes for the second fire engine when the maximum response area should be 1.5 miles.
2. A second fire department substation is needed in the northern portion of the city, but funding is not currently available.
3. Development on the northern and southern boundaries of Kalispell strain response times.
4. The Kalispell Fire Department and the surrounding volunteer fire departments have not been able to negotiate interlocal agreements to provide mutual aid upon request.'

5. There has been increasing friction between the Kalispell Fire Department and the surrounding rural fire districts, in part due to annexation of property in the rural districts.
6. Lack of coordination between fire districts has created an inefficient use of resources.

**GOALS:**

1. ADEQUATELY STAFF AND OPERATE FIRE STATIONS AND APPRATUS FOR THE COMMUNITY.
2. REDUCE THE CITY'S INSURANCE SERVICE OFFICES (ISO) RATING FROM A CLASS 5 TO A CLASS 3.
3. BUILD A NEW FIRE SUBSTATION IN THE NORTHERN PORTION OF THE CITY TO SERVE CURRENT AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT IN THE AREA.
4. ESTABLISH AND EXECUTE AUTOMATIC AID AGREEMENTS WITH THE FOUR SURROUNDING RURAL FIRE DISTRICTS.
5. ASSIST THE COMMUNITY IN REDUCING AND PREVENTING EMERGENCIES.
6. PROVIDE ADEQUATE HYDRANT LOCATIONS IN ALL AREAS OF THE CITY.

**Policies:**

1. As development and redevelopment occur, construction shall be required to comply with the Uniform Fire Code or International Fire Code.
2. All actions will be based on meeting community and firefighter safety needs.
3. Respond to all fire, rescue and hazardous materials emergency requests within the city of Kalispell and immediately begin to mitigate the emergency.
4. Respond to all requests for emergency medical services within the ambulance response areas.
5. Provide adequate training and resources to all fire department personnel.

**Recommendations:**

1. According to the ISO, a city the size of Kalispell with its present equipment and personnel should have a maximum response distance of 1.5 miles which would require a fire substation to serve the growing northern portion of the city.
2. A fire substation is needed to serve the growing western portion of the city and consideration should be given to funding this facility.

3. The City should recognize that a southern fire substation should be considered at some point in the not so distance future.
4. The Kalispell Fire Department should have a training facility that is equipped with multi-story commercial building simulator, a two story residential simulator, burn room and various fire hazard props.
5. Coordinate with the Flathead Valley Community College to satisfy some of the fire training and equipment needs.
6. In some instances small rural fire districts should be reassessed and merged with adjacent districts or the City when practical.
7. Foster stronger relationships between rural fire districts and the City of Kalispell in order to share resources and build on individual strenghts.

PUBLIC EDUCATION: There are several elementary schools both public and private, a junior high school and high school in the Kalispell community as well as a community college.

**Issues:**

1. There are seven public elementary school districts within the growth policy area, some of which are overcrowded and require busing to other schools.
2. Some of the school districts are at or near full enrollment while others are seeing declining enrollment.
3. Flathead High School in Kalispell had a 2001 enrollment of 2,552 students, far exceeding optimum school size.
4. Additional vocational education is needed to augment post high school students educational and training opportunities.

**GOALS:**

1. PROVIDE QUALITY EDUCATION AND A SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL STUDENTS.
2. SECURE LAND AND FUNDING FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A SECOND HIGH SCHOOL OR A LARGER SINGLE NEW CAMPUS.
3. EXPAND THE EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR POST HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS.

**Policies:**

1. Support the school resource officer program.
2. Use best practices in methods, materials, techniques, meeting or exceeding standards and benchmarks adopted by the State of Montana and the United States Department of Education.

**Recommendations:**

1. Pursue additional grant resources.
2. Consideration should be given to appropriately locating a second high school.
3. To accommodate increased college enrollment, a master plan was developed for an expansion of the campus. Support should be given to expansion that would include a new building on the campus.

KALISPELL CITY AIRPORT: The City of Kalispell has a 55-acre general aviation municipal airport that basically serves the independent, non-commercial pilots. An additional 10 acres to the southwest of the runway is intended to be developed with aviation-oriented uses. An urban renewal district was created in and around the City airport to provide revenues for upgrading the facility.

**Issues:**

1. Kalispell City Airport does not meet the minimum safety requirements established by the FAA.
2. The airport has been developed solely through City funding without any participation from the Federal Aviation Administration and does not meet federal airport standards.
3. The current airport has not been included in the National Plan of Integrated Airports Systems (NPIAS) airports because it does not comply with federal airport standards and therefore has never been eligible for federal funding.
4. In its current configuration there are penetrations of both approach surfaces, encroachments into the runway object free area and non-compatible use in the runway protection zones.
5. The general public has unrestricted access to the airport, including the active runway, due to the lack of complete perimeter fencing.
6. The airport has substandard runway lighting for night and low visibility operations.

7. Acquisition of additional acreage will be required for upgrading the airport to federal airport standards but the cost of financing airport improvements exceeds the resources of the local government.
8. Expansion and upgrade of the airport may require the City to condemn private property.
9. Kalispell City Airport is one of the busiest general aviation airports in the state but aircraft storage and parking is inadequate for the current level of use.
10. The airport provides financial and economic stimulus for the city and the area and its long-term viability is an important economic component.

**GOALS:**

1. AN AIRPORT THAT IMPROVES THE SAFETY AND EFFICIENCY OF AIRPORT FACILITIES FOR THE USERS AND NEIGHBORS.
2. DEVELOP AN AIRPORT THAT COMPLIES WITH FEDERAL STANDARDS, IS ELIGIBLE TO BE INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL PLAN OF INTEGRATED AIRPORT SYSTEMS (NPIAS), AND IS DESIGNED FOR AIRCRAFT MEETING B-II (APPROACH SPEEDS 91 KNOTS OR MORE BUT LESS THAN 121 KNOTS, WINGSPANS OF 49 FEET AND UP TO BUT NOT INCLUDING 70 FEET) IN ORDER TO OBTAIN FEDERAL FUNDING.
3. ADOPT ZONING THAT PROTECTS SURROUNDING PROPERTIES AND RECOGNIZES APPROACH AIR SPACE TO ASSURE THE LONG TERM SAFETY AND VIABILITY OF THE AIRPORT.
4. ELIMINATE THROUGH-THE-FENCE OPERATORS THAT DO NOT HAVE AGREEMENTS IN PLACE.
5. UTILIZE THE REVENUES GENERATED FROM THE AIRPORT URBAN RENEWAL DISTRICT TO ASSIST IN FUNDING AIRPORT IMPROVEMENTS.
6. HIRE AN AIRPORT MANAGER TO OVERSEE THE DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS AT THE AIRPORT AND TO MANAGE CITY LEASES.
7. CREATE AND OPERATE AN AIRPORT FACILITY THAT IS SELF-SUPPORTING AND THAT WILL GENERATE SUFFICIENT REVENUE TO COVER COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE AIRPORT OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE.
8. DEVELOP AVIATION RELATED BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY THAT SUPPORT AND COMPLEMENT AIRPORT ACTIVITIES.

**Policies:**

1. Revenue from the sales of City owned property adjacent to the airport should be used as part of the funding sources for the upgrade of the airport facilities.
2. Retain all existing acreage currently owned by the City that can be utilized as part of the airport upgrade and expansion including the development of property owned by the City to the southwest of the runway intended to be leased for hangars and other airport related uses
3. Ban any new structures within runway protection zone to reduce further intrusions and or penetrations, which would result from the expansion of the airport.
4. Require that all lease holders and through-the-fence operators compensate the City at the established rates.
5. Prevent penetrations into Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR) part 77 surfaces to protect the current layout of the airport as well as the anticipated future configuration.
6. Obtain agreements from current through-the-fence operators and refrain from entering into any agreements which grants further access to the public landing area by aircraft normally stored and serviced on adjacent property.

**Recommendations:**

1. Assess the costs associated with the upgrading the airport and identify funding sources.
2. Assess the financial, political and social impacts associated with additional land acquisition.
3. Formally adopt an Airport Layout Plan (ALP) and Environmental Assessment (EA).
4. Once the ALP is adopted, coordinate zoning with the County to eliminate penetrations in the runway protection zone.
5. Hire an airport manager to manage City leases and to oversee the day to day operations of the airport
6. Evaluate the current lease activity and through-the-fence operations to ensure that equitable agreements are in place.
7. Seek additional federal, state and other sources of funding for upgrading of the airport facilities to a B-II status.

8. Adopt an ordinance reflecting FAR Part 77 regulations in order to protect the current layout of the airport as well as the anticipated future configuration, and encourage the County to adopt the same regulations.

**CULTURAL FACILITIES:** The City of Kalispell has assisted in developing and coordinating the enhancement of cultural facilities in the community such as the Depot Park building, Hockaday Center for the Arts, Conrad Mansion and the Central School Museum.

**Issues:**

1. Kalispell would like to expand and develop additional cultural opportunities and facilities in the downtown area, but lacks adequate funding and facilities.
2. Excessive through traffic in the downtown area along Hwy 93 detracts from the pedestrian oriented atmosphere that would attract additional patronage to the existing cultural facilities that have been developed.
3. Cultural facilities and cultural events do not currently provide the economic stimulus and cultural identity that could be fully realized in the downtown area.
4. Lack of adequate funding and facilities to accommodate on-going cultural and historic education facilities impede the ability of the downtown area to realize its full potential.

**GOALS:**

1. EXPAND THE SCOPE OF EXISTING CULTURAL AND HISTORICALLY RELEVANT EVENTS TO INCLUDE A GREATER NUMBER AND VARIETY OF SCHEDULED EVENTS.
2. EXPLORE WAYS TO INCLUDE ADDITIONAL LAND AND ASSETS THAT WOULD EXPAND THE CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL FACILITIES.
3. ENCOURAGE THE EXPANSION OF THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM TO DIVERT THROUGH TRAFFIC FROM THE DOWNTOWN AREA TO MAKE IT MORE PEDESTRIAN ORIENTED.
4. EXPAND THE VISIBILITY AND FUNCTION OF THE CENTRAL SCHOOL MUSEUM SO THAT IT CAN REALIZE ITS FULL POTENTIAL.
5. WORK COOPERATIVELY WITH THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY, HOCKADAY CENTER FOR THE ARTS AND OTHER COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE THE NUMBER AND VARIETY OF CULTURAL EVENTS IN THE COMMUNITY.

**Policies:**

1. Encourage citizens to participate in the available social and cultural events that are sponsored and encouraged by the community.
2. Support the expansion of citizen-sponsored events such as First Night that bring the community together in a social and cultural sense.
3. Provide on-going support for the Central School Museum to assist the facility in realizing their full potential.
4. Work toward providing a pedestrian oriented downtown area that offers a variety of businesses and events on a year round basis.
5. Provide on-going support for the Hockaday Museum of Art to assist this facility in realizing its full potential.

**Recommendations:**

1. Assist the Central School Museum in their on-going efforts to expand the scope and interests of the facility.
2. Work with the community to recognize historically and culturally important buildings for preservation and restoration.
3. Continue to support the concept of a civic center / multi purpose facility to host expanded cultural activities and events.
4. Provide the necessary support to retain and maintain those historically significant buildings within the downtown and outlying areas such as the Conrad Mansion, Hockaday Museum of Art, Central School Museum and Depot Park building.

## **12. NEIGHBORHOOD PLANS**

There are several neighborhood plans that were adopted as an addendum to the Kalispell City Growth Policy that lie within the growth policy area and are considered viable. Neighborhood plans are typically plans that detail a more specific vision for development within a defined area or outline a specific development project or proposal in a defined neighborhood area. Neighborhood plans are incorporated by reference here into the Kalispell Growth Policy as Appendix B. The plans exist in a separate plan document or file that can be obtained from the planning office.

Neighborhood plans may be used as a tool to amend the growth policy and to coordinate and clarify the development within a neighborhood that has specific issues or areas of concern. A neighborhood plan focuses on an area in order to provide clarity and predictability for future development and serves to refine the goals and policies of the growth policy by providing guidance at the neighborhood level. A neighborhood plan when adopted will be an addendum to the Kalispell Growth Policy and part of Appendix B. An outline of the criteria for a neighborhood plan can be found in Chapter 13, Implementation under the Neighborhood Plans section.

The following is a list of the current neighborhood plans and a brief outline of their area and purpose.

### **Stillwater Destination Resort**

In July 1990 the Stillwater Destination Resort Neighborhood Plan was adopted as an addendum to both the Flathead County Master Plan and the Kalispell City-County Master Plan. This initially addressed an approximately 300 acre site lying between U.S. 93 North and Whitefish Stage Road north of the Stillwater River. The plan was revised in 1992 by adding approximately 40 acres adjoining this property for a total of 340 acres. Approximately 212 acres of this area is within the Kalispell planning jurisdiction.

The Stillwater Destination Resort plan calls for an 18 hole golf course and other recreational amenities covering 160 acres or approximately half of the area. Single family and townhouse residential development would occupy approximately 100 acres and hotel / convention facilities and associated commercial development is proposed on approximately 50 acres. Landscaping, buffering and the creation of an architectural scheme for all commercial and residential uses is outlined in the plan. The commercial element of the project would be developed to serve the golf course community and has been zoned B-6, Resort Business. The residential element is intended to utilize a cluster design and has been zoned RA-1, Low Density Residential Apartment. No development has taken place on this property since the plan adoption and subsequent rezoning. This development project requires the extension of City services.

## **West Valley**

A portion of the West Valley Neighborhood Plan boundary overlaps into the Kalispell planning jurisdiction to the west. Basically, the West Valley School District boundaries were used as a plan area. This plan was developed in response to long term development patterns which had occurred over the past 30 years under the previous West Valley zoning district and the proposal to establish a convenience store in the primarily rural and agricultural area. This plan was adopted in April of 1997 and was the result of nearly one and a half years of public meetings and committee consideration. Basic goals for the plan are to maintain the rural character of the area and to provide some flexibility for subdivision. An amendment to the plan has been made on approximately 112 acres directly adjoining Country Estates subdivision to the west, changing the land use designation from agricultural to suburban residential and removing it from West Valley plan area and wholly within the Kalispell planning jurisdiction.

## **2 Rivers RV Resort**

This plan was adopted in early 1999 with a plan area containing approximately 135 acres intended for development into a "Resort Commercial" project, the 2 Rivers RV Resort. The site is located on both sides of Conrad Dr. in the area of the Flathead and Stillwater Rivers. The plan includes four districts that would have a mix of commercial, recreational, residential and commercial a golf course. A great deal of land proposed for this development is in the 100 year floodplain and the floodway necessitating the connection to public sewer. Because this development is outside of the city of Kalispell and the Evergreen Water and Sewer District boundaries, issues relating to connection to these facilities are unresolved. This development project also assumes the construction of a roadway between Conrad Drive and Highway 2. No design plans have been developed nor have funds been allocated for its design and / or construction.

## **Spring Prairie (DNRC) Section 36**

This plan was adopted in April of 1999 to assist the State Department of Natural Resources with decisions on the future development of school trust land located in the northwest part of the planning jurisdiction. The State trust is responsible for managing the 640 acres that comprise "Section 36." DNRC offices are located on the property. In 1997 the City leased approximately 134 acres to be developed as a youth athletic complex in the southeast corner of the section. Subsequently the neighborhood plan was developed that designates development "pods" within the section. Along the highway the development pod is designated as Commercial / Retail, the northwest corner of the section is designed as a Mixed Professional Office area, the southwest corner is designated as Mixed Use Residential. The plan includes the extension of City water and sewer to the site to serve the development(s). The State intends to lease the sites for development rather than to sell the property so that the State School Trust will continue to receive revenue from the property. Build out is anticipated to take between 20 to 50 years.

### **13. Implementation Strategy**

Implementation of this document falls primarily with the City of Kalispell but will require a coordinated effort with Flathead County in order to be successful. Three primary tools will be used to implement the growth policy which are: adoption of appropriate zoning use classifications and associated text, subdivision regulations and the adoption of development standards. The following tools and programs will provide a framework for implementation of the growth policy.

#### **1. Zoning Regulations:**

The growth policy is a basis for assigning appropriate zoning when land uses change or development occurs. The policy document anticipates future development patterns, i.e. residential, commercial, and industrial. However, this is the official growth policy document, but is not a regulatory document. The zoning ordinance functions as an important tool in implementing the growth policy and is generally used to develop the long range development goals. Appropriate zoning is generally based upon the growth policy recommendations and policies. Zoning is intended to regulate the types of uses that may occur on a particular piece of property by establishing different types of zoning districts. In addition to the types of uses, zoning also regulates building height to avoid shadowing or blocking views. Zoning also sets standards regarding the density or minimum lot size requirements as well as where a structure is located on a piece of property by establishing setbacks and lot coverage limits.

Montana's Planning Statutes, Title 76, outlines the requirements for establishing zoning, zone amendments and public hearing requirements.

The City of Kalispell has zoning authority over land within the city through the Kalispell Zoning Ordinance. Flathead County, has adopted the Flathead County Zoning Regulations that are applied in all areas outside the city limits and enforced by the County. All of the property inside the growth policy area has been zoned.

#### **Zoning Regulations Implementation Strategy:**

- a. Development of the suburban and rural lands in the growth policy area should be coordinated with Flathead County and the appropriate assignment of zoning. The zoning should be substantially in compliance with the land use designations of the growth policy.
- b. There should be coordination and consistency between the Kalispell and County zoning regulations in areas just outside the city limits.
- c. There is a need to simplify the present Kalispell Zoning Ordinance so that similar zoning districts are combined and there are fewer use categories.
- d. Streamline the conditional use permit process and eliminate unnecessary uses from the process.
- e. Create development standards to address impacts related to conditionally permitted uses and incorporate them into the Kalispell Zoning Ordinance.

- f. Increase the use of the Planned Unit Development zoning overlay process for mixed-use development and other large or complex land projects.
- g. Inside the city of Kalispell, zoning should be based upon the land use designation of the growth policy map.
- h. Develop a use district to further define the uses anticipated in the Mixed Use Areas designated on the growth policy map so that the appropriate zoning can be applied.
- i. Develop highway entrance corridor development standards to address development in the entryways to the community.

## **2. Subdivision Regulations:**

The Montana Subdivision and Platting Act was adopted in 1973 and authorizes local governments to adopt subdivision regulations and outlines the public hearing and review process. The cities and counties must adopt subdivision regulations in accordance with state statutes. The City of Kalispell administers subdivision regulations for lands within the city limits and for all lands proposed to be annexed. Flathead County has jurisdiction for lands outside the city limits. The subdivision regulations govern the division of land into lots that can be individually conveyed. Standards are outlined in the subdivision regulations for road design; access, extension of water and sewer services, storm water management, parkland dedications, fire access and more.

The state statutes governing subdivision review also outline a notification and public hearing process for major subdivisions, subdivisions with six or more lots. Minor subdivisions, or subdivisions with five or fewer lots, fall under an expedited review process or a “summary review” process that does not require notification of property owners or a public hearing.

### Subdivision Implementation Strategy

- a. Include design standards for roads, water, sewer and other infrastructure that will be required for new development.
- b. Facilitate greater public interest and participation in the review process when major subdivisions are scheduled for public hearing by notifying property owners within 150 feet from the property, excluding any public right of way or waterways, to be subdivided via certified mail at least 14 days prior to the meeting.
- c. When subdivisions are anticipated to have high impacts to an area, a traffic analysis may be required to identify mitigation.
- d. Property that is anticipating receiving City services should be annexed prior to or concurrent with preliminary plat review.

- e. Subdivision road designs should be based primarily on a grid street system with a provision for anticipated future roadway extension that should be indicated as a future roadway on the final plat.
- f. Subdivision design should strive to maintain the quality and integrity of the natural environment particularly in environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands and floodplain which should be integrated rather than eliminated.
- g. Consider revising the subdivision regulations to provide greater encouragement for locating new parks within reasonable distances of each other particularly areas with higher density development.
- h. Major subdivisions shall be reviewed in accordance with the public interest criteria outlined in the statutes and will be required to have an environmental assessment and public hearing before the planning board.
- i. Minor subdivisions shall be eligible for summary review provided they meet the criteria outlined in the Kalispell Subdivision Regulations and state statutes.
- j. Some minor subdivisions may be eligible for an exemption from review provided they meet the criteria outlined in the Kalispell Subdivision Regulations and state statutes.

### **3. Growth Policy Update Amendment:**

A growth policy document should be periodically examined for relevance under the current economic, social, cultural and market conditions of the community. The state statutes require that a growth policy be reviewed every five years for relevance to current conditions and consideration for revisions. An update of the growth policy whether it is general or based on one or several issues should be initiated by the Kalispell City Council and based on a recommendation from the Kalispell City Planning Board from their annual review..

#### Growth Policy Update Implementation Strategy

- a. Whenever there is a major change in the socio-economic conditions of the community such as a large increase or decrease in population, a new industry entering or exiting the market; consideration should be given to updating the growth policy.
- b. The planning board should schedule a formal work session in the fall of each year to conduct a review of the growth policy and evaluate it for relevancy. The planning board should prepare a report to the city council as to whether or not it should be amended with consideration being given to changes in the legal framework, factual errors or contradictions, significant changes in the community or new an relevant information that would effect specific policies and goals.

- c. Based on the planning board’s review, the council may conclude that an update or amendment to the growth policy is warranted. A report from the planning board should include a description of proposed changes and rationale, impacts of changes, necessary revisions to growth policy implementation strategies and resulting revisions to regulations if needed.
- d. Amendments should include a public hearing before the planning board with the level of public involvement depending on the scope of the proposed changes or amendments.
- e. Evaluation criteria should include consistency with the goals and policies of the growth policy, state law and other established policies adopted by the city council as well as a demonstration of the public need and support for the change; the proposed change is the most effective means of meeting the need and there is benefit to the public rather than benefiting one or a few property owners at the expense of others.
- f. Additional plans should be initiated as recommended by the planning board to address specific areas or needs in the community such as a bike and pedestrian plan or redevelopment plan for certain areas.

**4. Neighborhood Plan Amendment:**

Neighborhood plans may be used as a tool to provide greater clarity for future development within a specific neighborhood. The area for a neighborhood plan would generally be anticipated to be 20 acres or more in size. The plan should be evaluated within the framework of the growth policy and follow the same review and approval process. It should be adopted as an addendum to the Kalispell Growth Policy in Appendix B. A neighborhood plan should serve to expand on the goals and policies of growth policy and provide guidance at the neighborhood or project-level. Typically a group of property owners would initiate a neighborhood plan in order to address unique situations or specific neighborhood concerns. Kalispell and Flathead County have both used neighborhood plans within the growth policy area and found them to be useful tools when special neighborhood issues arise. The state growth policy statutes specifically recognize neighborhood plans, and require them to be in compliance with the goals and policies of the growth policy document as a whole.

Neighborhood Plan Amendment Implementation Strategy

- a. The governing bodies within the growth policy area shall coordinate public hearings when neighborhood plans cross-jurisdictional boundaries.
- b. New and existing neighborhood plans should be consistent with the growth policy document.
- c. Neighborhood plans should be reviewed every three years to determine whether the document is still relevant and whether or not changes should be made or the plan should sunset. The plan would be rescinded by a resolution passed by the city council.

- d. A neighborhood plan will become the policy for the area it addresses and any land use ordinances or regulations, such as zoning or subdivision review, should be based on this plan. The plan is conceptual in nature and not an engineering or construction document.
- e. An application for a neighborhood plan amendment should be developed to include required information and public hearing process. The information should include a plan identifying significant issues, goals, and policies associated with the area
- f. If there is a zone change that can be anticipated as part of the neighborhood plan, the neighborhood plan amendment shall be acted on by the city council to accept, revise or reject prior to the initiation of change in zoning.

**5. General Growth Policy Amendment:**

An application to amend the growth policy can be made to provide a basis for evaluating a development proposal including large or complex development projects or projects that have not been anticipated under the growth policy. The amendment proposal should provide clear and detailed information regarding a project for the purposes of evaluation and basis for future development. The proposal should be evaluated within the framework of the growth policy and should be adopted as an addendum to the Kalispell Growth Policy in Appendix B. The amendment proposal should serve to expand on the goals and policies of growth policy and provide guidance at project level. The amendment proposal should be required to further the goals and policies of the growth policy document as a whole and would not preclude the changing of the anticipated uses on the future land use map.

General Growth Policy Amendment Implementation Strategy

- a. The governing bodies within the growth policy area shall coordinate public hearings when growth policy amendments cross-jurisdictional boundaries.
- b. Amendment should be consistent with the growth policy document.
- c. Amendment proposals involving a specific development should be reviewed every three years to determine whether the document is still relevant and whether or not changes should be made or the plan should sunset.
- d. The amendment to the growth policy will become the policy for the area it addresses and any land use ordinances or regulations, such as zoning or subdivision review, should be based on this plan. The amendment proposal would be conceptual in nature and not an engineering or construction document.
- e. An application for an amendment should be developed to include required information and public hearing process. The information should include a plan identifying significant issues, goals, and policies associated with proposed development. It should address the feasibility of the development; phasing; conformance with the growth policy overall; a convincing showing

of need; neighborhood compatibility; transportation impacts; environmental impacts; site hazards; adequate provision of local services and the appropriateness of the proposed location of the project.

- f. If the amendment is associated with a specific development and the proposed project is abandoned, the land use designation shall revert back to its prior land use designation and the development proposal would sunset. Abandonment shall be deemed to have occurred when no substantial improvements or substantial progress has been made on the development for a period of three years and the planning board has made a recommendation to the city council for rescission. The plan would be rescinded by a resolution passed by the city council.
- g. If there is a zone change that can be anticipated as part of the development proposal, the amendment shall be acted on by the city council to accept, revise or reject prior to the initiation of change in zoning.

## **6. Building and Fire Codes:**

Building codes apply to all construction (e.g., new construction, additions, alterations, conversions, improvements, remodels, repairs), except that which is specifically exempted by the code or state law. Building codes set minimum standards for plumbing, electrical and mechanical installations, construction techniques and materials, etc. Building codes are not developed at the local level. Instead, the State adopts nationally recognized codes, which are developed and updated by national code committees. Cities and counties administer the state adopted codes.

Kalispell has a building jurisdiction that extends outside the city limits approximately one and a half miles. Within that building jurisdiction the Kalispell Building Department administers the Uniform Building Code, the Code of American Building Officials (CABO), One and Two Family Dwelling Code, the Uniform Mechanical Code and the Uniform Plumbing Code. Beyond the City building jurisdiction the Montana Department of Commerce has responsibility.

Within its resource capabilities the State permits and inspects five-plex or larger residential construction and all commercial construction; however, single-family through four-plex residential construction, which is the bulk of rural construction, is exempt. All electrical wiring requires an electrical permit from the State whether inside or outside of the Kalispell Building Jurisdiction.

### Building and Fire Code Implementation

- a. Building codes administered by the City of Kalispell and the State of Montana should strive to be consistent.
- b. Coordination and cooperation between the City, County and rural fire districts should be sought to share resources and building on individual strengths.

- c. Access and fire code requirements should be part of a preliminary development review process.
- d. Paving driveways, alleys and parking lots should be required to be completed prior to an occupancy permit being issued.
- e. A building code enforcement program should be coordinated between the City and the County.
- f. Building code jurisdiction boundary should be maintained and managed by the City of Kalispell Building Department.

## **7. Extension of Services Plan:**

The City of Kalispell adopted an Extension of Services Plan in November of 1995 as required by Montana annexation statutes, for the extension of City services to areas of the city not currently served and to lands to be annexed. The Extension of Services Plan addresses policies regarding the extension and construction of new City infrastructure including streets, water, sewer and storm drainage. It also addresses the provision of fire, police and other emergency services. The plan establishes a potential utility service area beyond the city limits, which is mapped. The plan establishes various policy requirements for extension of services within that boundary including an important policy statement that developers shall be responsible for constructing all infrastructure to serve proposed development in accordance with City design standards.

The current extension of services plan from November of 1995 is dated with the new information provided from the City of Kalispell Water, Sewer and Storm Drainage Systems Facility Plan of July 2002 hereinafter referred to as the Kalispell Facility Plan. This information assesses the current capacities of the City's infrastructure as well as projects future needs and upgrades.

### Extension of Services Plan Implementation Strategy:

- a. Developers be responsible for the installation and cost of utilities needed to serve their development and any upsizing or extra extension should be reimbursed.
- b. Update the City's extension of services plan based on the new information from the Kalispell Facility Plan.
- c. Use the Kalispell Extension of Services Plan to clearly articulate annexation policies and the extension of new City utilities.
- d. Provide adequate information to Flathead County regarding the extension of service plan so that they can assist in facilitating policies.
- e. Review the extension of services plan periodically for specific updates that might be needed as a result of changes.

- f. Explore the use of development agreements for the reimbursement of utility extension costs to encourage the extension of utilities to areas without services.

## **8. Capital Improvement Plan.**

Part of the Kalispell Facility Plan of July 2002 included recommendations for creating and adopting a capital improvement plan for the City. The plan would prioritize needed improvements to existing infrastructure and identify priorities for upgrades, new construction and location of utilities.

### Capital Improvement Plan Implementation Strategy

- a. Utilize the information from the Kalispell Facilities Plan to identify needed improvements to existing infrastructure.
- b. Maintain a capital improvement fund to pay for replacement and extension of utilities.
- c. Development equitable user rates and fees to adequately fund and maintain existing infrastructure.

## **9. Urban Renewal Districts:**

The City of Kalispell has established three urban renewal districts in the city limits to eliminate blight and assist in upgrading infrastructure to encourage new development and redevelopment. Also sometimes referred to as a “tax increment finance district” (TIF), urban renewal districts allow local governments to capture additional tax revenue from new development to be reinvested into the district. The state statutes clearly outline the purposes for which the funding may be used as well as the specific activities that must be identified in a redevelopment plan. The City of Kalispell has several programs that have been in use to assist in development in the urban renewal districts including a three percent interest commercial loan program for renovation work on existing structures, off site infrastructure improvements which benefit the majority of residents and compliment or assist new development projects. Developers may also, in some instances, seek a low interest loan for certain on-site infrastructure activities.

The Kalispell Downtown Redevelopment Plan was originally created in 1979 that was essentially the core area of Kalispell recently expired after many of the targeted projects had been completed including off-site infrastructure improvements for the Kalispell Center Mall, the Tidyman’s project as well as the renovation and restoration of Central School Museum and the First Avenues Streetscape project. This district was the first urban renewal district in the state to sunset. Several other communities in the state will soon be facing this same issue and are looking at Kalispell to see how the district can be kept alive and viable despite the fact that it no longer generates revenue.

Two other districts are still in effect which are the Airport Urban Renewal District, intended to make improvements to the City Airport, and the West Side Urban Renewal District, intended to revitalize the west side of Kalispell's commercial area.

#### Urban Renewal District Implementation Strategy

- a. Commit tax increment funding to the ongoing needs of the Kalispell City Airport Improvements
- b. Continue to support and operate the Community Development Department and the various economic development programs it either administers or has access to.
- c. Explore the creation of additional urban renewal district in other areas of the city to encourage redevelopment.

### **10. Intergovernmental Cooperation:**

A spirit of cooperation and understanding between the City of Kalispell and Flathead County is critical to reinforcing an orderly development pattern, including coordinating public facilities and services, and addressing the numerous issues that cross over city-county boundaries. Relations between the City and County have been strained and there has been a lack of joint planning between these government entities.

#### Intergovernmental Cooperation Implementation Strategy

- a. Develop a cooperative relationship between the elected officials, government agencies, service and utility providers that results in consistent development standards, efficient use of public infrastructure and resources, and quality development.
- b. Coordination between the City and the County is needed to create consistency in development standards for both zoning and subdivision design standards at the urban / rural interface.
- c. Encourage the County to recognize the land use designations for property within the potential utility service area and adopt zoning consistent with the land use designation.
- d. Coordinate a public review process that involves both the city and the county residents when there are major projects that have impacts in both jurisdictions.
- e. Encourage the re-establishment of joint planning and the regional planning office.
- f. The city council and the county commissioners should continue to meet on a regular basis (quarterly) to provide a forum to discuss issues of joint concern.

- g. Schedule meetings or work sessions between the city and county planning boards to facilitate understanding and consistency in goals and policies.

### **11. Interlocal Agreement:**

Interlocal agreements have been used by the cities and county and also between the cities, county and rural fire districts. These agreements are recognized under the Montana Planning Statutes as a tool for the creation of joint planning boards, mutual aid agreements and agreements between the sewer districts and the City of Kalispell. These agreements spell out the responsibilities and expectations as well as limits of the parties.

#### Interlocal Agreement Implementation Strategy

- a. An interlocal agreement should be sought between the City of Kalispell and the rural fire districts for automatic aid agreement to further reinforce the commitment between the parties to provide life and safety assistance to all citizens of the community regardless of boundaries.
- b. Explore a renegotiated interlocal agreement with the Evergreen Sewer District to expand their service area.
- c. An interlocal agreement be signed between the City and the County that agrees on a joint planning jurisdiction and the reestablishment of a city-county planning board for Kalispell.

### **12. Memorandum of Understanding:**

A memorandum of understanding can be used as a tool to spell out specific obligations, agreements and cooperative efforts between parties, either public or private. They have been used between government and private entities to clearly articulate responsibilities and expectations of the parties involved.

#### Memorandum of Understanding Implementation Strategy

- a. In lieu of or as an interim measure, a memorandum of understanding should be sought between the City of Kalispell and Flathead County to recognize certain goals and policies outlined in the Kalispell Growth Policy for land use decisions on the urban fringes.
- b. In order to better coordinate and address the fringe area impacts associated with development, a memorandum of understanding between Kalispell and Flathead County should be entered into that describes the relationships and responsibilities for each party relative to development on the fringes of the City.

- c. The following policies should be incorporated in such an agreement:
- Urban and rural development standards.
  - Subdivision plat review processes.
  - Annexation policies including transfer of County roads to the City.
  - Extension of municipal services including sewer, water.
  - Public safety and emergency services and facilities.
  - Coordination of geographic information systems, building codes and health department resources.

### **13. Floodplain Development Permits:**

The City of Kalispell and Flathead County participate in the national flood insurance program developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and administered by the local governing bodies in accordance with federal laws. The 100 year and 500 year floodplain has been mapped in all of the growth policy area which has significant floodplain. The Flathead River to the east along with the Whitefish River and Stillwater River create a significant amount of area that is restricted to development because it lies in the 100 year floodplain. Whenever any type of fill is proposed in the 100 year floodplain, a floodplain development permit is required to be obtained in accordance with the federal program. Both the City and the County have personnel designated as the floodplain administrator for the respective jurisdictions.

#### Floodplain Development Permit Implementation Strategy

- a. Continue to participate in the national flood insurance program to keep flood insurance rates low for all the residents of the community.
- b. Discourage fill in the 100 year floodplain when other viable options are available for development.
- c. Do not allow the creation of new subdivision lots in the 100 year floodplain when fill would be required to establish a building site.

### **14. Conservation Easements:**

Conservation easements are a voluntary tool for conserving and setting certain development standards on a piece of private property for the benefit of the public, environment and future use of the property. The Montana statutes have specific criteria for conservation easements and the entity for which an easement may be given. There are several non-profit organizations in the community that manage conservation easements such as the Flathead Land Trust, the Montana Land Reliance, the Nature Conservancy as well as public agencies.

### Conservation Easement Implementation Strategy

- a. Encourage the use of conservation easements to protect environmentally sensitive areas or areas that have unique characteristics or qualities that are worthy of conservation and / or preservation.
- b. Provide broader education of the public and private sectors of the community regarding the use and value of conservation easements as a land management tool.

### **15. City, Federal and State Grant Programs:**

The City of Kalispell's Community Development Department currently administers and monitors numerous state and federal grant programs as well as City program income funds. These have been used for affordable housing activities such as rehabilitation and/or new construction and down payment and closing cost assistance for first-time homebuyers as well as housing for groups or individuals with special needs. Additionally these funding sources provide low-interest commercial loans for rehabilitation or renovation of commercial/retail structures within our urban renewal districts as well as support economic development through business retention and/or expansion. The City also provides funding for surveys and studies identifying growth and planning needs.

### Grant Program Implementation Strategy

- a. Continue to support the programs and staffing of the Community Development Department to ensure the City's high rating and ranking in the grant arena is maintained and enhanced.
- b. Continue to utilize program income from previous grant funded projects as well as urban renewal projects as matching funds as various grants require.
- c. Continue to promote public/private partnerships wherever possible.

### **16. Public Participation and Public Hearing Process:**

A process for notice and scheduling of public hearings for land development proposals such as zone changes and subdivisions is outlined in the Montana Annexation and Planning Statutes. The City of Kalispell is required, at a minimum, to meet those notice requirements, but has actually adopted additional notice requirements that are part of the Kalispell Zoning Ordinance and the Kalispell Subdivision Regulations. The extent and degree of public involvement should depend on the scale of the project or proposed changes. A general growth policy amendment, neighborhood plan amendment or update of the growth policy involving a large area, major policy changes or major changes to land use designations may include collecting opinions, assessing community needs, an inventory of services and resources and providing the opportunity for meaningful public involvement.

## Public Participation and Public Hearing Process Implementation Strategy

- a. Notice requirements for items that are subject to public hearings before the planning board or board of adjustment should be consistent for all types of project applications such as major subdivisions, conditional use permits, zone changes and variances.
- b. Adequate facilities need to be available to accommodate public seating and participation when specific issues or projects draw a large audience.
- c. Public notification requirements for annexations and initial zoning should be handles the same as a zone change when there is substantial acreage, a significant increase in density or significant increases in traffic anticipated.
- d. When a public hearing is required for subdivision, zone changes, conditional use permits or variances; property owners within 150 feet of the subject site will be notified by mail 15 days prior to the scheduled hearing.
- e. When there is a proposed change in land use, the property should be posted for 30 days prior to consideration of the proposed land use change.
- f. Information regarding public hearings, development proposals and staff recommendations should be available with adequate time for review and consideration.
- g. Information regarding development proposals, zone changes or other projects should be available on the internet for easy access by the public.
- h. Develop information systems that allow easier access to planning, zoning and subdivision information.
- i. Major subdivisions shall be reviewed in accordance with the public interest criteria outlined in the statutes and will be required to have an environmental assessment and a public hearing before the planning board.
- j. Minor subdivisions shall be eligible for summary review provided they meet the criteria outlined in the Kalispell Subdivision Regulations and state statutes.
- k. Some minor subdivisions may be eligible for an exemption from review provided they meet the criteria outlined in the Kalispell Subdivision Regulations and state statutes.
- l. Work with homeowners associations and neighborhoods with areas are intended to be annexed by the City to identify issues and explain the process.
- m. Meet with water and sewer boards, school districts or other agencies to facilitate a better understanding of mutual concerns and needs.

- n. Conduct public opinion surveys to solicit a better understanding of the community's desires and concerns.
- o. Work with the media to provide accurate information for the public and to provide additional exposure to land use issues.

### **17. Other Plans, Studies and Reports:**

Additional plans, studies or reports can be performed to provide additional information, guidance or support for the growth policies. These plans would typically be designed, funded and performed by the City of Kalispell or other government entity to provide additional guidance or information regarding a particular issue. These additional plans, studies or reports would not typically be considered if they are in conjunction with a development project or performed by or on behalf of a developer or special interest group. For example additional drainage studies, bike and pedestrian plan, capital improvements plan, transportation plan updates and urban renewal plans can all be used as an implementation tool for the growth policy. Appendix A, the Resource and Analysis Section, of the growth policy should be updated as new information becomes available on the economy, population, housing trends or other information from the State, US Census Bureau or other reliable sources.

#### Plans Studies and Reports Implementation Strategy

- Rely on unbiased reports, studies and information as an additional tool in the decision making process.
- Plans, studies and reports used for decision-making purposes should provide unbiased, objective, quantifiable information rather than being sponsored in connection with a specific development project or by a special interest group or organization.
- Update Appendix A, the Resources and Analysis Section; as additional information becomes available.

## HIGHWAY 93 NORTH GROWTH POLICY AMENDMENT

This amendment to the Kalispell Growth Policy 2020 adopted February 18, 2003 would be in addition to the existing goals, policies, text and maps.

The area included in the Highway 93 North Growth Policy Amendment includes all lands bounded by the Stillwater River as the western boundary, Church and Birch Grove Drives as the northern boundary, LaSalle to Rose Crossing over to the Flathead River as the eastern boundary, and Reserve Drive as the southern boundary, and generally includes Sections 13, 24 and 25 in Township 29 North, Range 22 West, and Sections 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 27, 28, 29 and 30 in Township 29 North, Range 21 West, P.M.M., Flathead County, Montana.

**GOAL - 1:** Gateway entrances to Kalispell that enhance the community through improved design.

### **Policies:**

1. Gateway Entrance Corridors (areas of special concern) would extend up to 150 feet of either side of the existing R/W for primary highways and up to 50 feet for secondary highways.
2. The following roadway corridors are identified as gateway entrances to Kalispell.
  - a. Highway 93 North corridor north of Four Mile to the County Landfill.
  - b. US Highway 2 (LaSalle) from Reserve Drive to Birch Grove
  - c. Whitefish Stage from Reserve Drive to Birch Grove. (minor entrance way)
3. The following design standards are intended to enhance the gateway entrances to Kalispell
  - a. Access control is important along the gateway entrance roads.
  - b. Access should be coordinated so as to allow only collector or arterial streets to intersect. The judicious use of right-in right-out approaches, frontage roads and good internal development street design should be the rule to reduce or eliminate the need for direct access onto major gateway roads.
  - c. With the construction of the Church Drive overpass on US 93, every effort must be taken to fully utilize this interchange and conversely limit direct access onto US 93 for at least  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile along areas north and south of this facility to avoid congestion points and the need for future traffic signals. The judicious use of right-in right-out approaches, frontage roads and good internal development street design will mitigate the need for direct access out.

- d. Extra setbacks, buffering and landscaping along US Highway 93 North and US Highway 2 and to a lesser degree along Whitefish Stage Road are the norm.
- e. In those areas planned for general commercial development on a gateway entrance, it should occur as an integrated development utilizing and enhancing the property back from the gateway as opposed to occurring as a shallow linear strip. Significant individual business highway exposure, individual access points, and pole signage would not be the norm. Out parcels of commercial businesses would be anticipated within the improved design of a PUD along the corridors.
- f. Additional design standards should be developed to ensure that signage enhances development, not detracts from it. Wall signage integrated into the overall building design is preferred over free standing signage. Monument signs are preferred over other types of free standing signage. Where development entrance signage or monument signage is proposed, it should be done so as part of a unified planned unit development concept.
- g. Where the adjacent gateway road speed is posted at 35 mph or lower:
  - i. A minimum 20 foot landscape buffer should be provided abutting the gateway road.
  - ii. Street trees should be incorporated into the landscape buffer.
  - iii. A pedestrian trail or sidewalk should be incorporated into the landscaped buffer area.
  - iv. Four sided architecture would be the norm adjacent to gateway entrances.
- h. Where the adjacent gateway road speed is posted from 36 – 45 mph:
  - i. A minimum of 40 feet of landscaped buffer area should be provided.
  - ii. Street trees and berming should be incorporated into the landscaping.
  - iii. A pedestrian trail or sidewalk should be incorporated into the landscaped buffer area.
  - iv. Four sided architecture would be the norm adjacent to gateway entrances
- i. Where the adjacent gateway road speed is posted above 45 mph:
  - i. A minimum 100 – 150 foot impact area should be provided for major entrances and a 50 foot entrance for minor entrances.
  - ii. Within this impact area, a combination of berming, landscaping using live materials and trees as well as grass, a pedestrian trail system, limited parking and frontage roads should be incorporated.
  - iii. Primary buildings should not be located in this impact area, unless specifically approved in a PUD.
  - iv. Four sided architecture should be the norm for development adjacent to the impacted area.

- v. Monument signs would be anticipated to occur in the rear portion of the impacted area, other free standing signs would not.
  - vi. Whenever parking or signage is proposed in the impact area, it shall only be done under a PUD process where the impacts of these actions are anticipated and provided for.
- j. Where smaller parcels can not meet the setback areas, a PUD will be utilized.
4. Neighborhood commercial should be used as a means to buffer key intersections and to meet immediate local needs, not to serve as a destination shopping area.
  5. Neighborhood commercial areas would in turn be buffered from lower density and intensity residential areas through the use of higher density residential uses and office uses.
  6. Pedestrian and trail systems should be incorporated into berming, landscaping, greenbelts, park areas and setback standards along gateway entrances to enhance or maintain the scenic value of the entrance corridor from public facilities, neighborhoods, schools and commercial services.

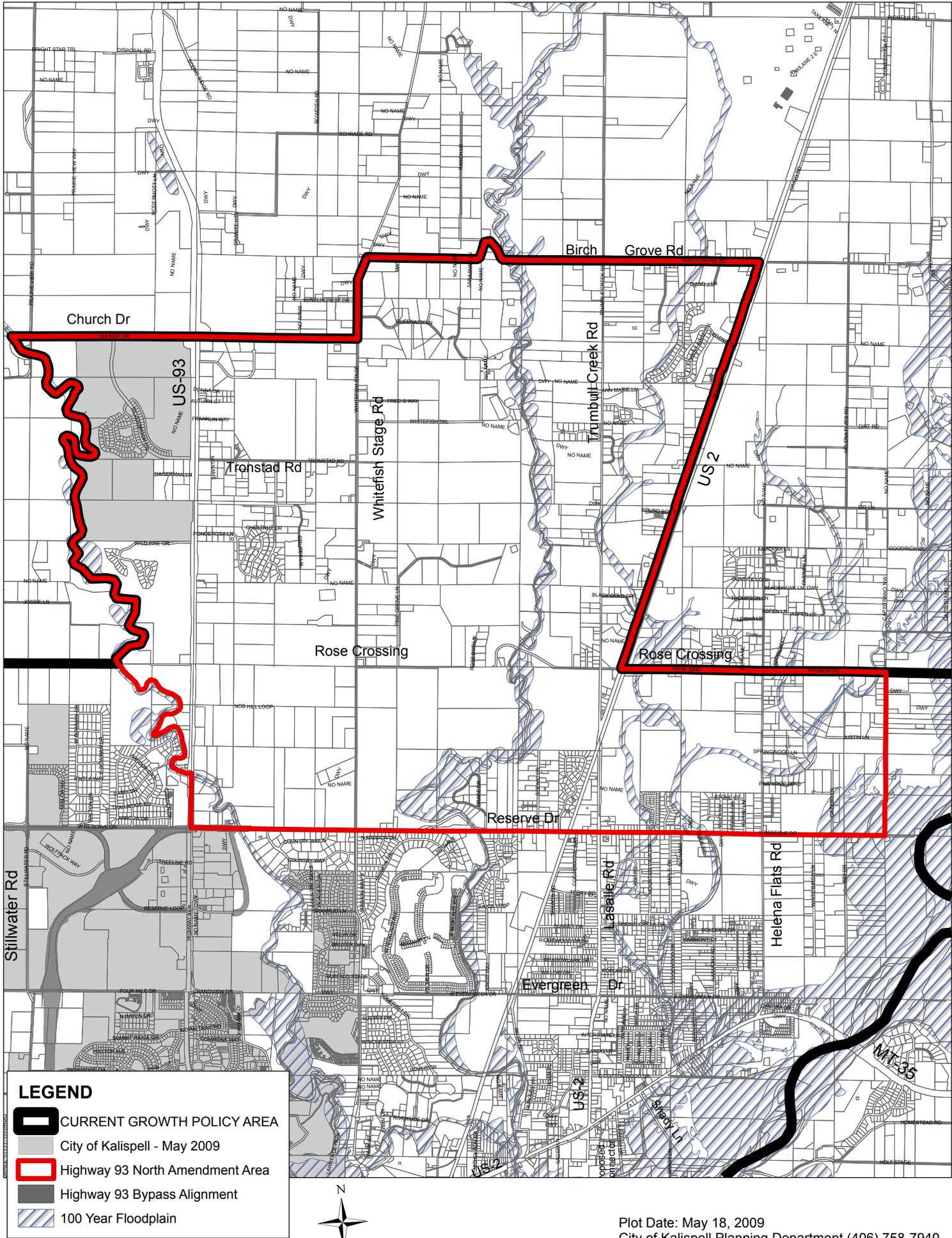
**GOAL - 2:** The development of an integrated residential/commercial neighborhood (Designated KN-1 on Growth Policy Map) between US 93-Reserve Drive and Whitefish Stage.

**Policies:**

1. Development will be mixed use in nature creating an overall integrated neighborhood as opposed to linear strip commercial development fronting the Gateway entrances.
2. Access onto the major Gateway roads would be limited.
3. Development in this 600 acre site would typically be:
  - a. Up to 45% general commercial,
  - b. Up to 25% urban mixed use area.
  - c. Up to 20% in various residential configurations.
  - d. 10% open space uses
4. Commercial activity would be generally distributed throughout the development designed to serve both the adjacent neighborhood as well as the greater community.
5. Development within the KN-1 area will be required to be presented to the Planning Board and the City Council in the form of a Planned Unit Development so that the impacts of this development can be planned for and if necessary mitigated through improved design.

**GOAL – 3:** Cooperate with Flathead County in the development of a transfer of development rights (TDR) program. The emphasis should be to provide opportunities to conserve and protect important farmlands, sensitive lands (high ground water, flood plain, wetlands, and critical wildlife habitat) and rural open space.

# Highway 93 North Growth Policy Amendment Area



## LEGEND

-  CURRENT GROWTH POLICY AREA
-  City of Kalispell - May 2009
-  Highway 93 North Amendment Area
-  Highway 93 Bypass Alignment
-  100 Year Floodplain



## **Highway 93 South Corridor Growth Policy Amendment**

This amendment to the Kalispell Growth Policy 2020 adopted February 18, 2003 would be in addition to the existing goals, policies, text and maps.

The Highway 93 South Corridor is recognized as a major arterial within the larger Kalispell area and as such its integrity in moving traffic is a primary goal. It is recognized that development will occur along this corridor that will contribute to a local economy in commercial, industrial and residential aspects. The area in the Highway 93 South Corridor Growth Policy Amendment includes from Highway 93 west on Cemetery Road to Ashley Creek and following Ashley Creek south to the point where Ashley Creek is in the vicinity of Rocky Cliff Drive. At this point the boundary continues east on Rocky Cliff Drive to Highway 93 with the boundary line continuing east of Highway 93 along the southern boundary of Old School Station subdivision to a point just east of the subdivision to the 100 year floodplain line of the Flathead River. From the floodplain line the boundary continues north along the floodplain until the floodplain intersects with Demersville Road. The boundary then continues north along Demersville Road until its intersection with Lower Valley Road. The boundary then continues west on Lower Valley Road to its intersection with Highway 93. This area includes portions of sections 28, 29, 32, and 33 of Township 28 North, Range 21 West.

### **Issues:**

1. Development along the Highway 93 South corridor has the potential to compromise the primary objective of the roadway to move traffic because of additional accesses associated with new development.
2. Highway 93 and the Highway 93 Bypass serve as entrance corridors to Kalispell and the viability and scenic nature of these corridors need to be protected and enhanced.
3. The Highway 93 corridor generates considerable traffic noise which will negatively impact any development along the roadways.
4. Corridor development can oftentimes lack quality landscaping, parking, lighting and architectural design.
5. Municipal water and sewer have recently been extended south from Kalispell along Highway 93. Adequate capacity is available to serve all lands within the Highway 93 South Corridor Growth Policy Amendment area.
6. Lack of an existing grid street system contributes to the potential problems associated with additional accesses being created along Highway 93 as new development occurs.
7. Lack of any pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the Highway 93 South neighborhood.

8. Topography and other natural features in this area such as the 100 year floodplain adjacent to the Flathead River on the east side and Ashley Creek on the west limit where development can occur.
9. Lineal development along highway corridors generally contributes to traffic problems and conflicts associated with single accesses, visual clutter and a diminished quality of life.
10. The city airport impacts properties immediately south of the future runway in the area south of Cemetery Road. Impacts include limitation on building heights, need to plan for appropriate uses, noise, and air traffic.
11. Proposed airport expansion plans may cause the re-alignment of Cemetery Road.
12. The proposed Highway 93 Bypass will serve as a barrier to local north-south traffic flow for properties on the west side of Highway 93. There is a need to maintain a north-south connection so as to provide an alternate to Highway 93.
13. There is an apparent remnant strip of former railroad right-of-way owned by MDT which extends from the future Highway 93 Bypass south to the existing Highway 93 right-of-way. Use/re-use of this land needs to be planned for.
14. The city's 40 acre biosolids land application site located on the south side of Cemetery Road is an important part of the Kalispell sewer treatment facility. It is important to provide long term protection of this site from the intrusion of incompatible land uses.
15. There appears to be a future need for a school site serving the north end of the Somers/Lakeside School district to accommodate new development in the area.
16. As commercial and industrial development occurs along the Highway 93 South corridor there will be impacts with proposed future residential property immediately behind and adjacent to this development pattern.
17. Noise impacts associated with Industrial uses, Highway 93 and the future Highway 93 Bypass on adjacent residential development negatively impact the quality of life for these residents.
18. Fire and EMS services to this area exceed the minimum response times the Fire Department holds itself to because the closest fire station is located over 1 ½ miles north of the Highway 93 South Neighborhood.
19. There are no neighborhood or regional parks to serve the immediate needs of existing or future residents.

**GOALS:**

1. A CONCENTRATED COMMERCIAL CENTER BISECTED BY HIGHWAY 93 TO SERVE THE IMMEDIATE COMMERCIAL NEEDS OF THOSE PEOPLE LIVING AND WORKING IN THE GENERAL AREA OF THE SOUTH 93 CORRIDOR.
2. EXPANSION OF COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT SOUTH OF CEMETERY ROAD/LOWER VALLEY ROAD NEEDS TO BE ADDRESSED UNDER A PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT IN ORDER TO ADEQUATELY ADDRESS VEHICULAR AND PEDESTRIAN ACCESS, SIGNAGE, SETBACKS, AND OTHER ISSUES RELATING TO PROTECTING AND PRESERVING THE COMMUNITY ENTRANCE WAY TO KALISPELL.
3. PRESERVING THE FUNCTIONALITY OF THE INTERSECTION OF HIGHWAY 93 AND THE HIGHWAY 93 BYPASS SHOULD BE A PRIORITY.
4. DEVELOPMENT ALONG THE HIGHWAY 93 SOUTH CORRIDOR SHOULD OCCUR IN AREAS WHERE PUBLIC SERVICES, UTILITIES AND FACILITIES ARE AVAILABLE OR CAN BE PROVIDED.
5. NEW DEVELOPMENT WHETHER COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL OR RESIDENTIAL SHOULD BE OF HIGH QUALITY IN DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURAL QUALITY.
6. FREE FLOWING TRAFFIC ON HIGHWAY 93 SHOULD BE MAINTAINED AND NEW DEVELOPMENT SHOULD INCORPORATE DESIGN AND TRAFFIC FEATURES THAT WILL ELIMINATE THE NEED FOR PRESENT OR FUTURE TRAFFIC SIGNALS BETWEEN FOUR CORNERS AND HIGHWAY 82.
7. A GRID STREET SYSTEM SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED AS NEW DEVELOPMENT OCCURS.
8. DEVELOPMENT SHOULD INCORPORATE DESIGN FEATURES AND LAND USES APPROPRIATE TO ADJACENT AIRPORT TRAFFIC.
9. MDT OWNED EXCESS OR SURPLUS RAILROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY NOT NEEDED FOR THE HIGHWAY 93 BYPASS SHOULD BE INCORPORATED INTO THE OVERALL DEVELOPMENT PATTERN OF THE AREA.
10. THE FUTURE VIABILITY OF THE CITY OWNED BIOSOLIDS LAND APPLICATION SITE IMMEDIATELY SOUTH OF CEMETERY ROAD NEEDS TO BE PROTECTED. APPROPRIATE DESIGN, SETBACKS AND MITIGATION FEATURES SHOULD BE INCORPORATED INTO ANY DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED ADJACENT TO THIS SITE.
11. WORK WITH THE SOMERS/LAKESIDE SCHOOL DISTRICT TO LOCATE A FUTURE SCHOOL SITE IN THIS AREA.
12. THE HIGHWAY 93 BYPASS, THE INTERSECTION OF HIGHWAY 93 AND THE BYPASS AND HIGHWAY 93 ARE GATEWAY ENTRANCES AND SCENIC

CORRIDOR ENTRANCES TO OUR COMMUNITY AND AS SUCH NEED SPECIAL TREATMENT AND PROTECTION.

13. PRESERVE THE TRANQUILITY OF RESIDENTIAL AREAS BY MINIMIZING POTENTIAL CONFLICTS BETWEEN NOISE ASSOCIATED WITH THE HIGHWAY AND INDUSTRIAL USES.
14. BUILD A NEW FIRE STATION TO SERVE CURRENT AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT IN THE AREA.
15. PROVIDE FOR THE ONGOING ACQUISITION, CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE OF PARKS, BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN TRAILS AND OTHER RECREATIONAL FACILITIES.
16. PEDESTRIAN AND BIKE TRAILS SHOULD BE INCORPORATED INTO NEIGHBORHOODS AND CONNECT WITH OR PROVIDE FOR FUTURE CONNECTION WITH EXISTING OR FUTURE TRAILS.

**Policies:**

1. Recognize the need within the community for high paying, high quality industrial based jobs and business. Promote and encourage those businesses in this area.
2. Create incentives for development of industrial based businesses, including e-commerce based businesses, along the Highway 93 South Corridor.
3. Avoid a pattern of one lot deep linear commercial and industrial development along the Highway 93 South Corridor; instead encourage development patterns that extend horizontally back from the highway creating commercial or industrial centers and parks.
4. Require high quality development as it relates to the provision of services, utilities, facilities and amenities.
5. Additional accesses onto Highway 93 shall be limited and a grid street system shall be developed when possible.
6. Frontage roads shall be developed as part of a grid street system to avoid additional accesses onto Highway 93.
7. Provide alternative north/south roadways parallel to Highway 93 on both the east and west sides of the highway.
8. Environmentally sensitive areas shall be avoided and protected when possible.
9. High quality design standards shall be applied to new development along the corridor related to architecture, parking lot layout, lighting, landscaping, setbacks and signage.

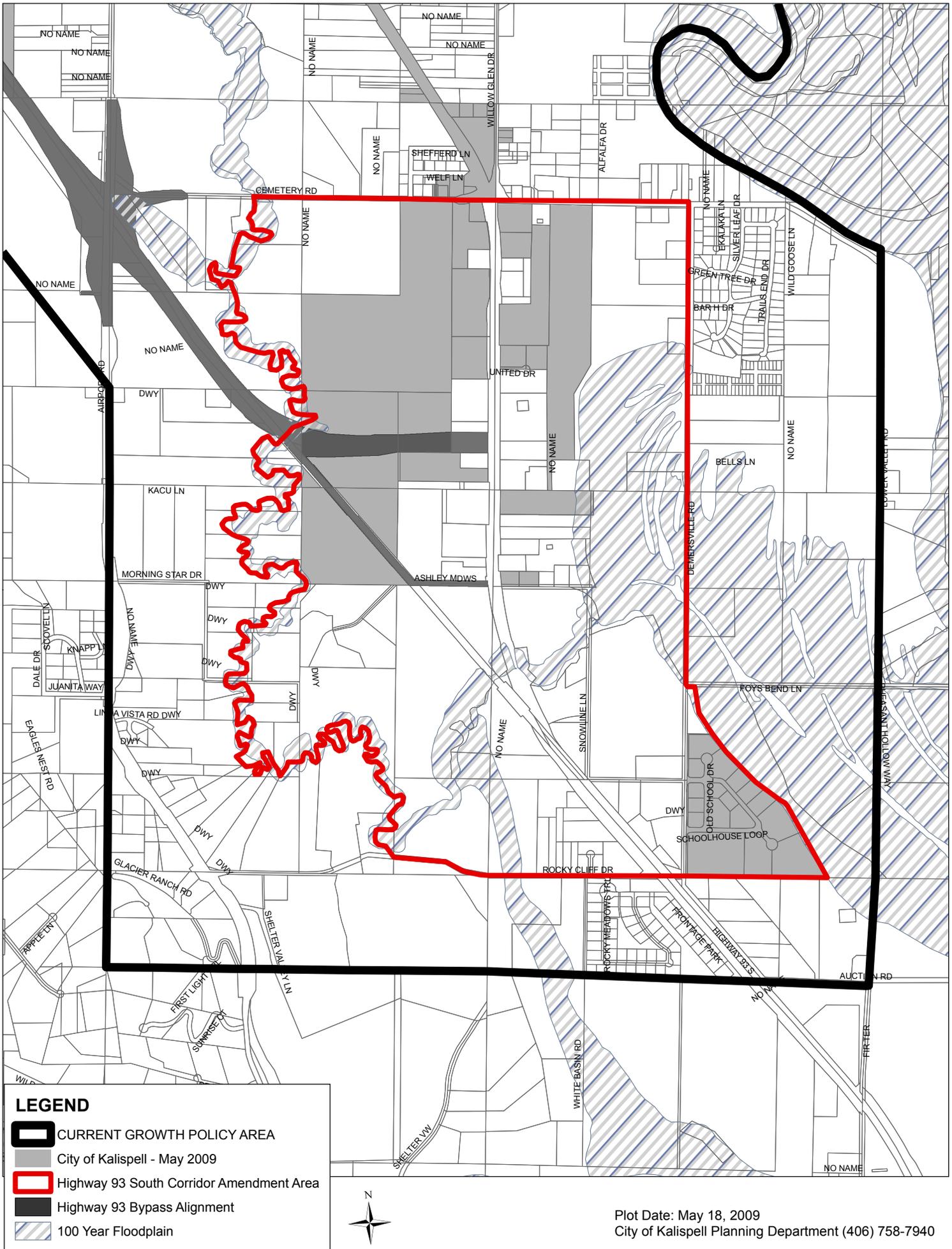
10. All parking lots shall be paved and landscaped.
11. Recognize the need for the provision of fire and police services to the Highway 93 South Corridor area.
12. Ensure that there is a well informed public and property owners along the corridor regarding the implications of the extension of public services to that area.
13. Avigation easements should be required for all new development or redevelopment in the Highway 93 South Corridor area.
14. Whenever a property develops or changes ownership the developer/owner should be alerted that the property is in the airport affected area.
15. Because of the presence of the municipal airport, residential uses are not deemed to be appropriate within  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile of the easterly  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile of Cemetery Road (the south end of the proposed runway).
16. Height of personal, commercial or public communication towers or antennas should be restricted to reduce conflicts with the existing and proposed Kalispell Airport expansion.
17. Development around the city's 40 acre biosolids land application site located on the south side of Cemetery Road should take into consideration mitigating measures such as fencing, extra setbacks and an acknowledgement that they abut a sludge injection site. In addition, in the event that this site becomes surplus to the city, some provision should be made to provide for access to the site from the east, south and west to provide access for future development at that time.
18. The following design standards are intended to enhance the gateway entrances to Kalispell:
  - a. Access control should be the norm along the 93 corridors.
  - b. Access should be coordinated so as to allow only collector or arterial streets to intersect Highway 93. The judicious use of right-in right-out approaches, frontage roads and good internal development street design should be the rule to reduce or eliminate the need for direct access onto major gateway roads.
  - c. Areas planned for commercial development along Highway 93 should occur as an integrated development utilizing and enhancing the property back from the highway as opposed to occurring as a shallow linear strip. Significant individual business highway exposure, individual access points, and pole signage would not be the norm.
  - d. Monument signs are preferred over pole signs.

- e. Four sided architecture should be the norm for all properties abutting the gateway entrances.
  - f. Billboards should be prohibited in the commercial and residential zones. Existing billboards in these zones should be considered a primary use. Such existing billboards should be phased out in these zones under the following schedule: at the end of their current lease or when another primary use is proposed on the same parcel or tract of land.
  - g. The scale of any commercial development should be sized to serve the immediate neighborhood (i.e. Somers, South Kalispell) as opposed to regional in scale.
19. Development in the commercial areas should be mixed use in nature creating an overall integrated neighborhood as opposed to linear strip commercial development fronting the gateway entrances.
  20. Additional setbacks along with fencing, berming and landscaping should be used to buffer new residential and school development adjacent to existing land zoned for industrial uses.
  21. A vehicular/pedestrian connection should be provided connecting properties to the north and south of the proposed Highway 93 Bypass to provide the following:
    - a. Offer a parallel route to Highway 93
    - b. Reduce traffic on Highway 93
    - c. Provide options for internal travel within developments to the north and south of the Highway 93 Bypass
    - d. Reduce the need for additional access points on Highway 93
  22. Advocate the design and site layout of new residential development adjacent to industrial zoned property, Highway 93 and the future bypass to incorporate noise reduction techniques so that the new development will not be affected by noise that exceeds 60 dBA at the property line.
  23. Encourage the use of setbacks and earth berms as noise reduction techniques in residential development to mitigate noise impacts and discourage the use of sound walls.
  24. A future fire station site should be provided in the area. The site should include an area no less than 2 ½ acres.
  25. Park and trail locations should be located and developed in accordance with the parks and recreation comprehensive master plan.

**Recommendations:**

1. New development along the Highway 93 South Corridor shall be required to connect to public services and utilities.
2. The City of Kalispell shall explore incentives to encourage appropriate industrial development and expansion of existing businesses in this area.
3. Architectural design standards should be adopted that require high quality design in architecture including four sided architecture, landscaping, lighting, signage and parking lot design.
4. Coordinate an overall access plan with the Montana Department of Transportation to avoid the haphazard placement and approval of new access onto Highway 93 South.
5. Ensure that large scale developments adequately mitigate impacts associated with traffic and the provision of services to the area.
6. Avoid inappropriate development of general commercial type uses along the highway corridor south of the Four Corners commercial POD and favor the development of light industrial and e-commerce based businesses instead.
7. Continue to coordinate land use policies with Flathead County and Lakeside Sewer District to insure that new development along the Highway 93 South Corridor is served by public water and sewer.
8. Plan for the future provision of fire and police services and facilities for the Highway 93 South Corridor area.
9. Continue to review, revise and update standards, policies and regulations that will insure high quality development that meets the needs of the local and regional economies and communities.
10. Continue working on a phased approach to the expansion of the potential utility service area with the Lakeside/Somers inter-governmental bodies as well as the local community.

# Highway 93 South Corridor Growth Policy Amendment Area



## **KALISPELL WEST GROWTH POLICY AMENDMENT**

This amendment to the Kalispell Growth Policy 2020 adopted February 18, 2003 would be in addition to the existing goals, policies, text and maps.

### **GENERAL NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING BOUNDARY**

The Kalispell West neighborhood is described as an area generally whose south boundary is Two Mile Drive extended westerly to West Valley Drive, then north on West Valley drive 1/2 mile to Three Mile drive, then west ¼ mile on 3 Mile Drive, then north one mile to Farm to Market Road. At this point the boundary follows westerly and northerly along Farm to Market Road to Church Drive, then following Church Drive easterly over to the Stillwater River, then extending south along the Stillwater River to US 93, then south to Reserve Drive, then west on West Reserve Drive to Stillwater Road, then on a line along Stillwater Road south to Two Mile Road. The site is primarily in the West Valley School District.

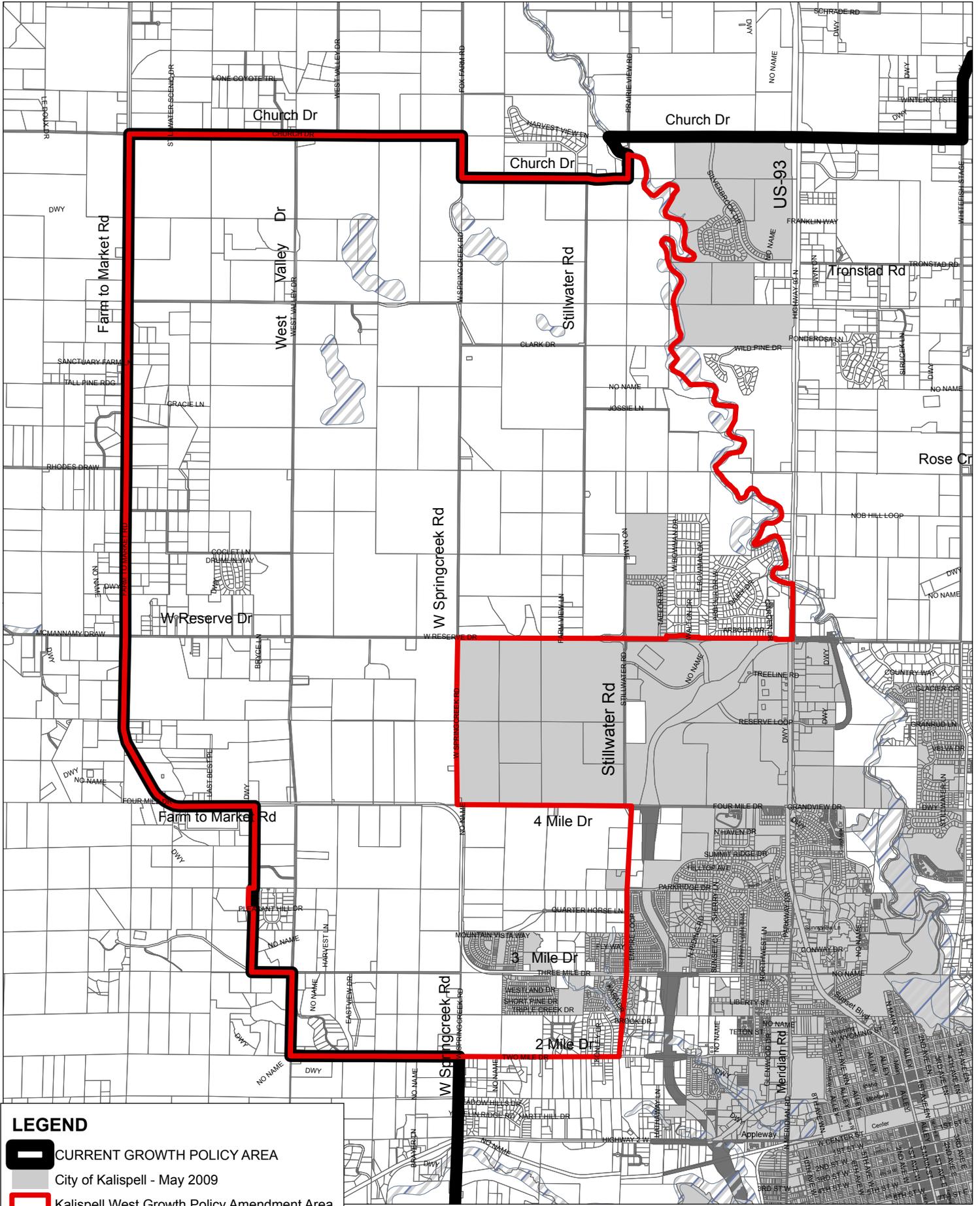
**GOAL:** The orderly westward expansion of the City of Kalispell.

#### **Policies:**

- 1) Provide for a three-tiered system of long range planning around the City of Kalispell.
  - a) Provide for the immediate or short term development plans in the areas adjacent to the city by providing reasonable uses and densities to accommodate growth for the next 15 – 20 years. This would be graphically reflected by a future land use map
  - b) Provide a second tier area around the city which is beyond the immediate (15 – 20 year window) development trends or needs of the city or desire of the city to extend services at this time. This area would be anticipated to see urban development in the 20 – 40 year window. Because this area anticipates development so far in the future, a development area boundary is shown as a faint line on the future land use map but individual land uses and densities are not called out at this time.
  - c) Provide an overall planning boundary around the city which encompasses the initial and secondary area as well as some lands beyond for the purpose of gathering data such as development trends, land use changes, traffic trends and volumes, etc., to use as a baseline to determine the rate and type of development in and adjacent to the City of Kalispell.
- 2) Provide for traffic corridors (east-west and north- south) to carry traffic through the future neighborhoods using the existing and proposed arterial system. This would include Stillwater Road north from Reserve Drive to Church Drive.
- 3) Provide for the orderly expansion of future neighborhood and regional parks as residential development expands into the West Valley area.

- 4) Protect the immediate Stillwater River corridor because of its unique scenic, wildlife and environmentally sensitive characteristics. Note that the Stillwater River has been designated as one of four “impaired streams” in the Flathead by the Montana Department of Environmental Quality.
  - a) Development should be set back from the river and particularly the steep slopes adjacent to the river due to unstable soils, deep sloughing and slumping, and the need to provide vegetative separation for treatment for storm water runoff.
  - b) Attention should be given to protecting the unique wildlife habitat and floodplain corridor.
  - c) Appropriate uses would include parks, linear trails and natural areas.
- 5) Provide for neighborhood convenience shopping centers.
  - a) Neighborhood commercial centers should be sized to serve the immediate neighbors within a one mile radius.
  - b) Discourage any attempt to expand commercial development beyond the immediate neighborhood service level.
  - c) Buffer the neighborhood shopping centers with higher density housing, offices, etc., to transition away from commercial to areas of lower impact such as moderate and low density residential.
- 6) Provide for the suitable location of new satellite fire stations as the city grows and the boundaries are expanded.
- 7) Protect the existing gravel industry sites in the West Valley and allow for their future expansion
  - a) Define the existing developed gravel extraction and processing locations in the West Valley area.
  - b) Provide for the future expansion and development of the existing sites.
  - c) Provide buffers around existing developed sites accommodating their future expansion so as to avoid a conflict between incompatible land uses such as gravel extraction and residential development.
  - d) Plan for the re-use of gravel extraction areas once the gravel resource has been depleted.
  - e) Identify future gravel resource areas.
- 8) Anticipate that when residential development or other low intensity uses are proposed adjacent to an active or proposed gravel site, good design techniques should be incorporated to mitigate the associated impacts.
  - a) The level of mitigation should be based on the actual and anticipated impacts of the particular property.
  - b) Mitigation could include fencing, berming or landscaping to limit noise or views, strategic placement of open space or parkland, location of frontage roads or use of alleys to move development further away from the gravel extraction site, the employment of transitional uses such as well screened boat and recreational vehicle storage or residential mini-storage.

# Kalispell West Growth Policy Amendment Area



**LEGEND**

-  CURRENT GROWTH POLICY AREA
-  City of Kalispell - May 2009
-  Kalispell West Growth Policy Amendment Area
-  Highway 93 Bypass Alignment
-  100 Year Floodplain



## **KALISPELL ANNEXATION POLICY**

The Kalispell Annexation Policy is uniquely crafted to address and balance the competing demands of developments proposed in those areas adjacent to the city with the timing and provision of municipal services that accompany any development that occurs in the greater Kalispell Growth Policy area. The Annexation policy consists of a map and text. The map graphically portrays those areas adjacent to the city where requests for annexation would be routinely embraced and conversely those areas further out where requests for annexation or municipal service may be provided using alternative measures. The associated policy text provides further guidance in interpreting the map and providing suggested procedures to follow. The focus of the annexation policy is threefold:

1. To provide for the most efficient pattern of growth in and adjacent to the city.
2. To provide for the most efficient extension of municipal services to lands proposed for annexation either now or in the future.
3. To provide for the viable future growth of the city of Kalispell unhindered by the encroachment of substandard rural development.

### **I. ANNEXATION POLICY MAP**

The Annexation Policy Map (attachment 1) provides a graphic policy statement showing a boundary around the city where direct annexation upon request by a property owner would be supported. Those areas beyond the annexation boundary would require additional scrutiny and possibly be subject to various alternative methods both in terms of the method of annexation as well as the timing and provision of municipal services.

The annexation boundary map was intended to be a general policy statement not a fixed regulatory document. The boundary was intended to address the impacts of logical development patterns and growth within the city that would occur over the next 5 – 10 years. It was noted that the city has experienced an historical boom during the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century in which both our population and boundaries grew 50%. At the same time the end of this decade brought upon us one of the greatest recessionary periods experienced by our residents that literally brought development in the city to a standstill. While neither should be used to predict the future of our community, the ramifications of both must be factored into our planning considerations.

In developing the annexation boundary map, a series of factors were melded together to create a unified policy. The boundary was intended to reflect growth that would occur in the next 10 years. Many factors were considered in developing this map. First, obvious topographic boundaries were used: Flathead and Stillwater Rivers and Ashley Creek and Lone Pine State Park. Where geographic boundaries were not evident, a boundary that generally extended ¼ mile beyond the current city limits was incorporated to allow for efficient annexation adjacent to the city without a hard and fast policy that new growth had to touch the city. In addition, the availability of city services including the 5-minute fire response service area and presence of municipal water and sewer lines were factored into the process.

The annexation policy map needs to be reviewed at least every 5 years to keep it relevant as the city grows.

## **II. ANNEXATION POLICY FRAMEWORK:**

The policy statements below must be used to interpret the annexation policy map. This policy is intended to apply to all annexations of land as well as requests for municipal services for lands outside the city. This would include both obvious annexations as shown within the annexation policy boundary map, lands outside the annexation boundary area and wholly surrounded lands inside the city limits proposed for annexation. This framework describes various options for annexation (direct annexation, the use of waiver of protest to annexation and the creation of annexation districts) and when it is appropriate to consider each.

### **A. Annexation Options**

1. Properties inside the Kalispell Annexation Boundary Area when an owner petitions for annexation:
  - a. The property owner submits a written petition for annexation to the Planning Department.
  - b. City would follow the “Direct Annexation” process.
2. Properties outside of the Kalispell Annexation Boundary Area when an owner petitions for annexation:
  - a. The property owner submits a written petition for annexation to the Planning Department.
  - b. The Planning Board would review the merits of the annexation and make one of the following recommendations based on promoting a logical and efficient development pattern for the city:
    - 1) Direct Annexation:
      - i. Available if the property meets two or more of the following criteria:
        1. The property lies in the immediate path of additional annexations which will form a logical extension of the city.
        2. The property lies within the existing service area of the Fire Department.
        3. The annexation achieves one or more key goals of the growth policy or provides a necessary community connection, facility or infrastructure component.
    - 2) Petition to Waive Right to Protest Annexation
      - i. Available if the property meets a majority of the following criteria:
        1. The property is outside of the city’s annexation boundary.

2. The property lies in the immediate path of additional annexations.
3. The property is in an area that may possibly be adjacent to existing city infrastructure (sewer, water, fire service area) in the next 10 – 20 years.
4. The property is within the service area of the Kalispell fire department and is serviceable by existing or proposed extensions to municipal water or sewer services.
5. Services within the property can be provided in the near term by other than municipal means (private road user's agreements, private homeowner's association maintenance of parks and open space, contracting with rural fire districts, etc.) until the time that the city actually annexes the property.
6. Development of the property achieves one or more key goals of the growth policy or provides a necessary community connection, facility, infrastructure component or community benefit.

3) The Creation of an Annexation District.

i. Available if the property meets the following criteria:

1. The property meets a significant number of criteria as listed in number 2) Petition to Waive Right to Protest Annexation above and;
2. The property would be adjacent to or inside the city's annexation boundary area in the next 5 - 10 years.

**B. Annexation Processes**

**1. Direct Annexation Process (Property owner petitions):**

- a. The property owner submits a petition for annexation to the Planning Department.
- b. Staff would prepare a cost of services plan.
- c. The Planning Board determines that direct annexation is appropriate.
- d. The Planning Board holds a hearing for the purpose of recommending the most appropriate zoning.
- e. Planning Board recommendations on annexation and zoning are forwarded to the City Council.
- f. The City Council would act on the annexation request and if appropriate approve the appropriate zoning.

**2. Petition of Waiver of Right to Protest Annexation: (Property Owner Petitions)**

- a. The property owner submits a petition for annexation to the Planning Department.
- b. Staff would prepare a cost of services plan.

- c. The Planning Board makes a recommendation on the most appropriate process to follow – in this case waiver of protest to annexation - to the City Council.
- d. The City Council acts on the Planning Board recommendation. If the Council concurs that a waiver of annexation is most appropriate the following procedures occur:
  - 1) The property owner enters into an inter-local agreement with the city and the county stating that the city will provide specified services (typically water and/or sewer) extended at the property owner’s expense and that in exchange:
    - i. The property owner will agree to submit a waiver of protest of annexation to the city.
    - ii. The property owner ensures that the development will be built to Kalispell Urban Standards and allow city inspection of the improvements as they are installed to ensure that all future public infrastructure is built to proper standards.
    - iii. Finally the property owner agrees to require that all structures will be built in accordance to the building codes adopted by the city of Kalispell at the time of construction and that they will provide for proper inspections.
    - iv. At such time as the property owner requests connection to the municipal water or sewer utility, all applicable connection fees, including impact fees, shall be paid in full to the City of Kalispell. Upon such payment, and within a reasonable time, the necessary taps shall be made only by authorized personnel of the City or utility into which the tap is to be made.
  - 2) Kalispell Site Review Committee will review the development proposal to ensure that the development is built to Kalispell Urban Standards.
  - 3) Kalispell Site Review Committee passes these recommendations on to the Flathead County Planning Board to incorporate into their staff review.
  - 4) If infrastructure is not built to Kalispell Urban Standards, the requested municipal public services will be withheld.
  - 5) Under this policy, the city will annex this property at its own discretion, without protest from the property owners, after giving due notice to the property owners of the intent to annex.
- e. The city staff would then monitor the development over time and make a recommendation to the City Council when actual annexation would appear to be appropriate. As a justification for annexation an updated “Cost of Services Plan” would be prepared by staff .

### **3. The Creation of an Annexation District: (Properties Owner's Petition)**

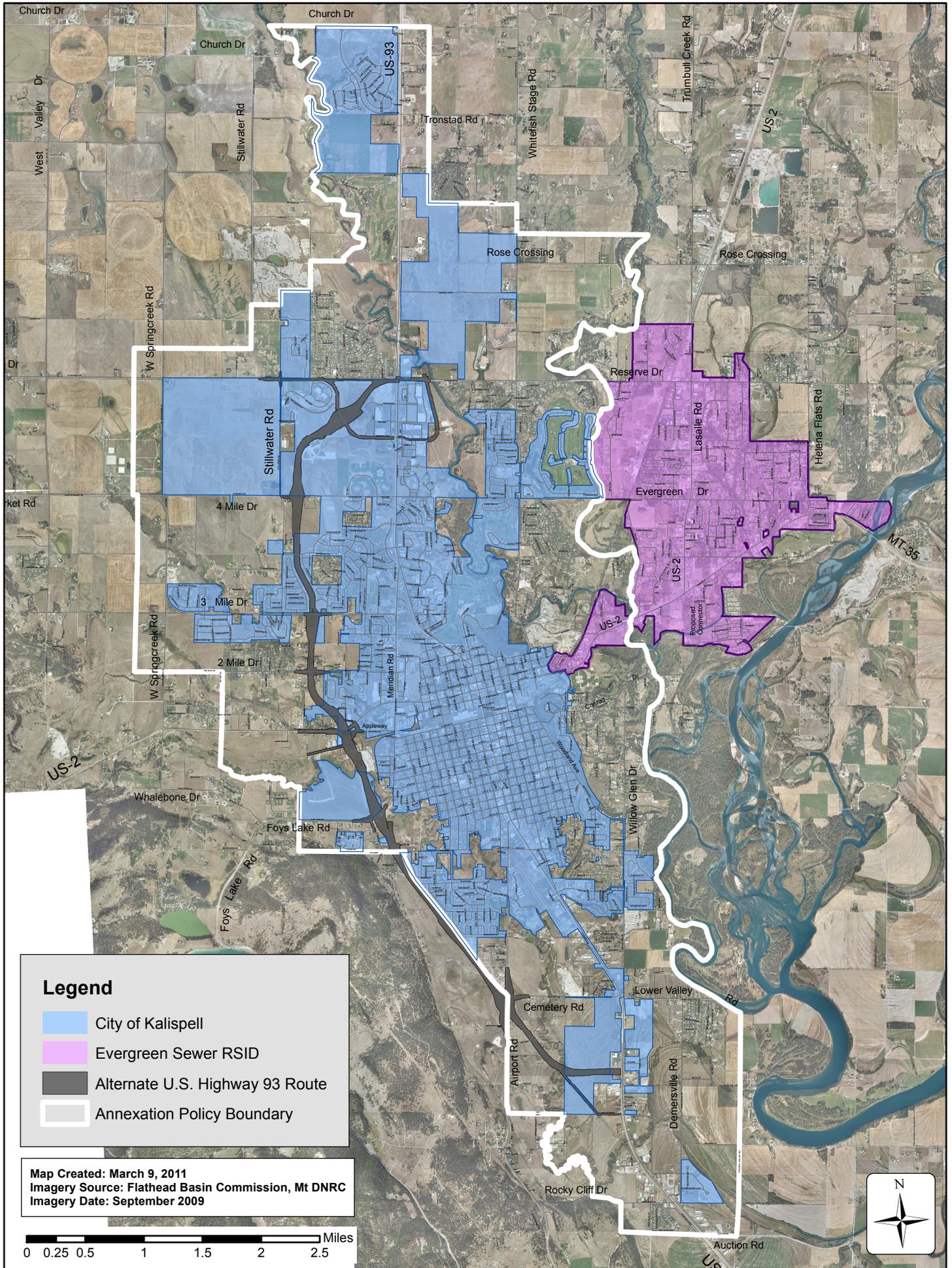
- a. The property owner submits a petition for annexation to the Planning Department.
- b. Staff would prepare a cost of services plan.
- c. The Planning Board makes a recommendation on the most appropriate process to follow – in this case creation of an annexation district - to the City Council.
- d. The City Council acts on the Planning Board recommendation. If the council concurs that the creation of an annexation district is most appropriate the following procedures occur:
  - 1) The property owner enters into an inter-local agreement with the city and the county stating:
    - i. The city will be creating an annexation district.
    - ii. The city and its boards and staff will be responsible for review and approval of any development proposal on the site.
    - iii. The city will utilize its zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations and be guided by its growth policy in the review of any project or development plan.
    - iv. Any development will be built to Kalispell Urban Standards.
    - v. All public infrastructure will be inspected by the city.
    - vi. The agreement will list a timetable and responsibility for the provision of each of the basic urban services.
      1. Urban services include sewer, water, storm water, street construction and maintenance, street tree maintenance, police and fire services, building inspection, parks development and maintenance and garbage collection.
      2. Where services are initially to be provided by an entity other than the city such as a private contractor, home owners association, local government district or the county, provisions shall be made by the property owner to compensate those entities.
      3. Where any services are provided directly by the city, assessments or payments in lieu of taxes shall be assessed and collected by the city to adequately compensate for the services rendered
  - vii. At the time of building permit, all city impact fees shall be collected and placed in an escrow account until the property is actually annexed.
  - viii. The agreement shall have a 10 year maximum life. At the end of the specified agreement the city shall either provide for an extension (if provided for in law) or annex the property.

#### **4. Annexation Of Wholly Surrounded Areas (City Council directed annexation)**

Part 7-2-45 MCA provides a process for the city to annex wholly surrounded land. The law provides that the city shall pass a resolution of intent, give notice to the affected property owners and precede with annexation without a petition or request from the affected surrounded property owners. The basis of this law is that properties, because of their location within the boundaries of a city are in effect already receiving some municipal services without paying their fair share in support. The residents drive city streets, have access to city parks, have city police patrolling in and around their neighborhoods, have access to fire protection in case of a major incident, etc. In addition such annexations simplify the provision of emergency services creating a clear line of agency primary responsibility when an emergency does arise.

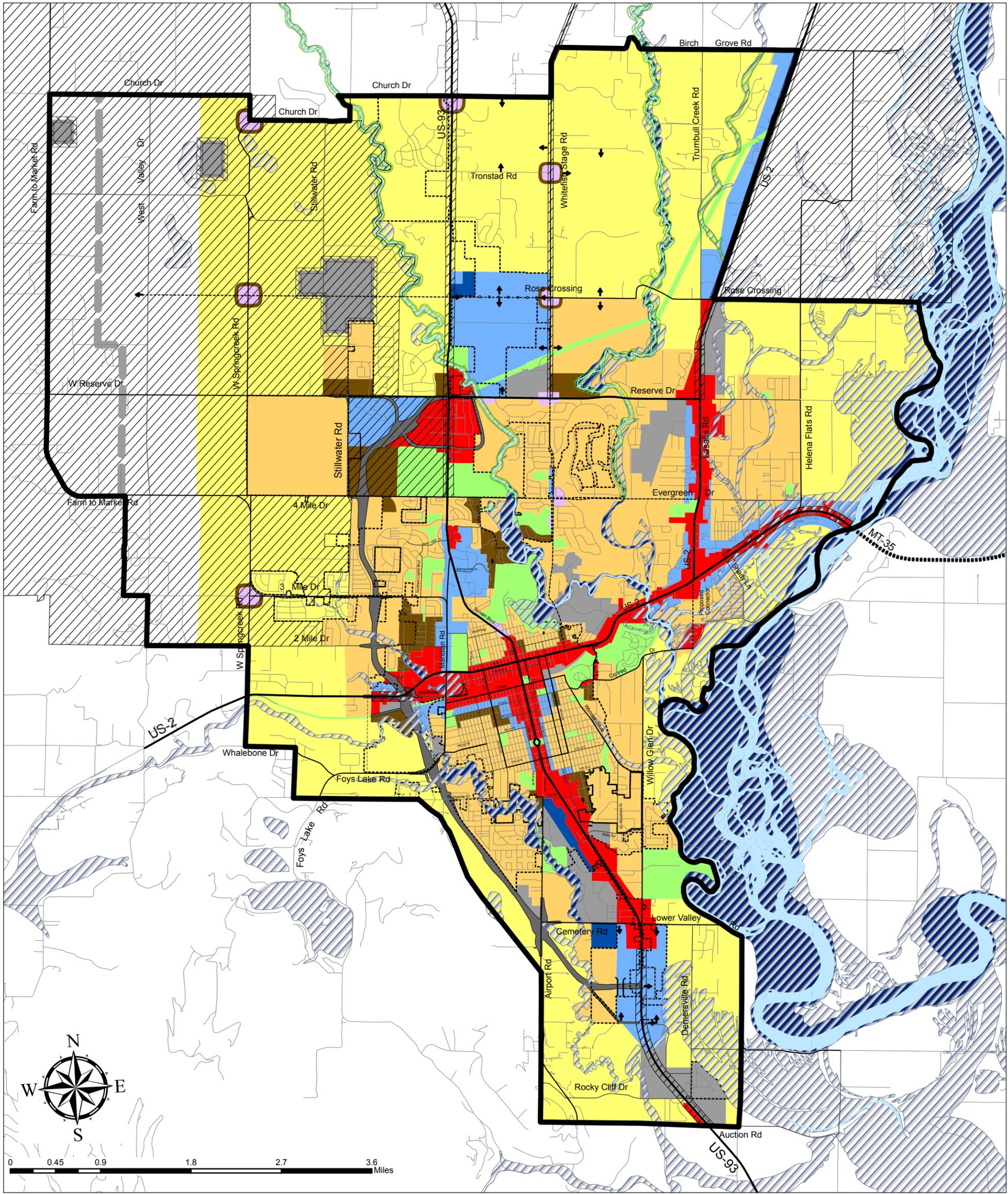
- a. The City Council directs the Planning Board to proceed with the annexation of properties wholly surrounded per 7-2-(4501-4511) MCA.
- b. The planning staff notifies the affected property owners within the wholly surrounded area to be annexed.
- c. Staff would prepare an extension of services plan showing how all municipal services can be provided to the properties, either immediately in the case of fire, police, road maintenance, park maintenance or where major utilities or facilities are missing such as water mains, fire hydrants or sewer mains, financing options that would be available.
- d. Informational materials are made available to the property owners explaining the process, the type of zoning proposed and the impacts this annexation would have on their property.
- e. The Planning Board holds a public hearing for the purpose of recommending the most appropriate zoning.
- f. Planning Board recommendation is forwarded to the City Council.
- g. The City Council would act on the Planning Board recommendation for annexation and approve the appropriate zoning classification or classifications.

# City of Kalispell Annexation Policy Map Resolution 5484A - March 7, 2011



# Kalispell Growth Policy Future Land Use Map

## May 6, 2009



**Legend:**

- Current Growth Policy Area
- City Limits of Kalispell
- Future West Growth Boundary - 15 Years
- Neighborhood Plan Area

**ROAD CLASSIFICATION**

- PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL
- FUTURE PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL
- MINOR ARTERIAL
- FUTURE MINOR ARTERIAL
- COLLECTOR
- FUTURE COLLECTOR
- Planned Bypass Route

**GROWTH POLICY - FUTURE LAND USE**

- COMMERCIAL
- NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL
- INDUSTRIAL
- URBAN MIXED USE
- HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- URBAN RESIDENTIAL
- SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL
- CITY AIRPORT; GOVERNMENT FACILITY
- PUBLIC OR OPENSOURCE
- FLOODWAY
- Gravel Pit Buffer
- 100 YEAR FLOODPLAIN

**\* Future land use designations indicated on this map are only applicable when property is proposed for annexation, and do not have any effect on lands under county jurisdiction with regard to zoning, density, subdivision or other land use decisions.**

**AMENDMENTS**

Res. 5073	Nov. 7, 2005	Highway 93 South Growth Policy Amendment
Res. 5121A	June 19, 2006	Eisinger Motors Growth Policy Amendment
Res. 5129B	Aug. 7, 2006	Highway 93 North Growth Policy Amendment
Res. 5215A	July 16, 2007	Starling Growth Policy Amendment
Res. 5247A	Nov. 5, 2007	Foys Lake Road Growth Policy Amendment
Res. 5329A	Dec. 1, 2008	Highway 93 South/Siderius Commons Growth Policy Amendment
Res. 5362A	May 4, 2009	Kalispell West Growth Policy Amendment