



**CITY OF
RONAN
GROWTH POLICY**



City of Ronan Growth Policy

**Adopted
May 27, 2008**

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I. Introduction

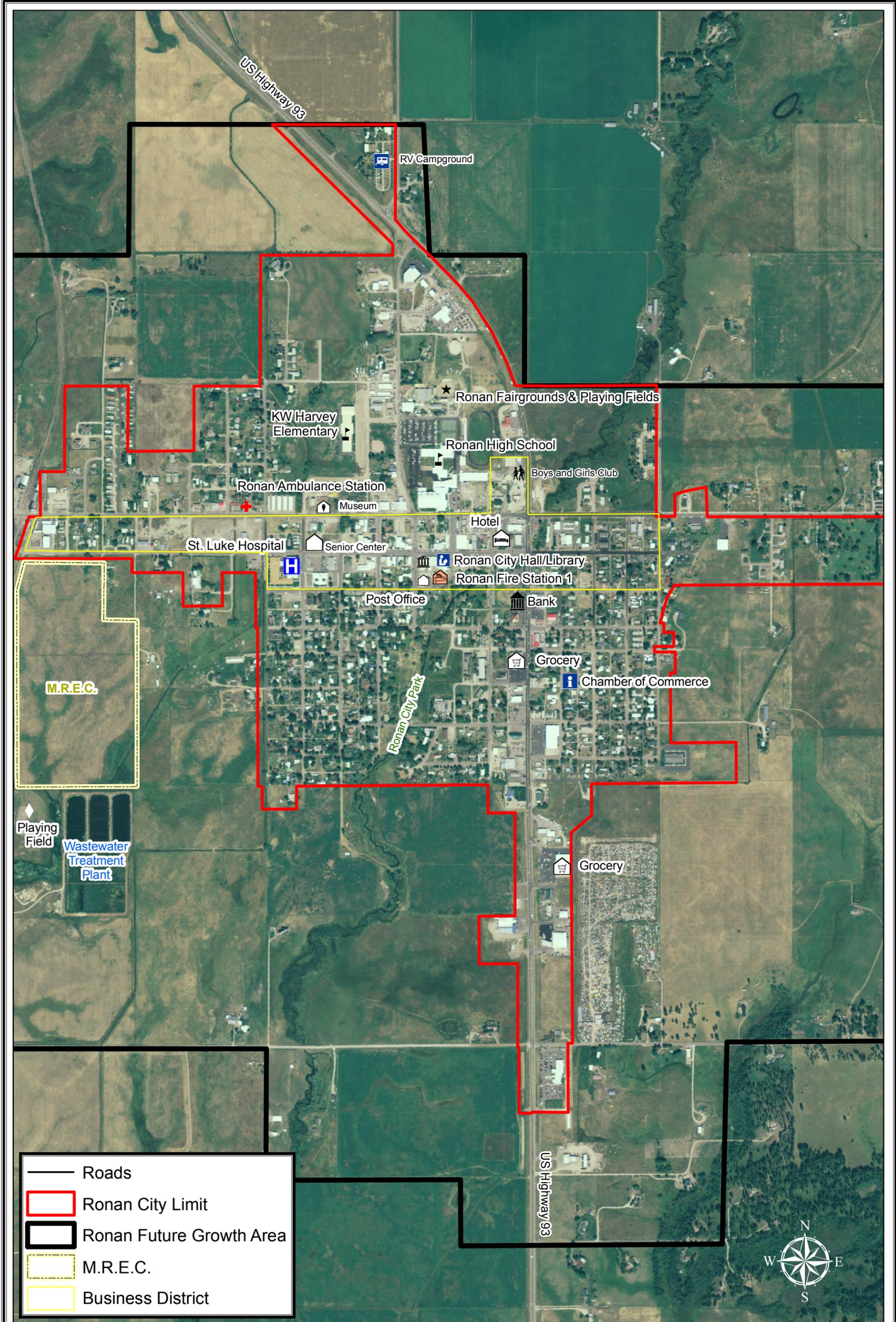
Ronan is a city of approximately 2,000 residents located in the Mission Valley in Lake County, Montana and on the Flathead Indian Reservation. According to *Where Buffalo Roamed* by Velma R. Kvale and Margaret Sterling Brooke (Mission Valley News, 1976) Ronan was originally called Spring Creek, named after the stream that flows through this community which seldom (if ever) freezes in winter. The name was changed to Ronan Springs in honor of Major Peter Ronan, who was the superintendent of the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation for 14 years from 1877 to 1893. The name of the town was eventually shortened to Ronan in 1894.

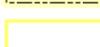
Ronan was platted in November of 1909. All regular blocks were 300 feet square and alleys were 20 feet wide. Lots were generally 50 x 140 feet and streets were generally 80 feet wide and ran in a north/south and east/west pattern. The town was incorporated in March of 1912 and the first water system was put into service in 1917.

Ronan lies at the center of a rich agricultural valley. It has been and continues to be a trade center for local farmers and ranchers as well as a service center for residents of the greater Ronan area. The soils are generally clayey and groundwater is relatively close to the surface. However, the views of the Mission Mountains are spectacular and wildlife and recreational opportunities are abundant.

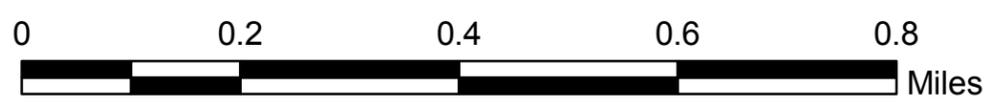
As with much of western Montana, growth and development have come to Ronan. Along with growth have come challenges keeping up with the demands of providing infrastructure, jobs and keeping the community's core—the downtown area—vibrant. This growth policy is intended to help guide future development as the City embraces its challenges. It contains a picture of current conditions, trends and projections, describes community goals and objectives, a description of how the City will coordinate with other government bodies and review development proposals, as well as how planned infrastructure improvements will be made and what the future land uses of the area are expected to be.

To orient the reader, the following page contains an overview of the general development pattern and community infrastructure of Ronan.



-  Roads
-  Ronan City Limit
-  Ronan Future Growth Area
-  M.R.E.C.
-  Business District

**City of Ronan
Community Infrastructure**



This map is intended to show some of the critical infrastructure elements. It is not necessarily all inclusive.

June 6, 2008

II. Population



Recent Growth

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that in July of 2005 there were 1,968 residents within the City of Ronan. This figure represents a 25% growth rate over 1990 figures or an average increase of approximately 1.66% per year. Lake County as a whole grew by 34% during that period.

Future population projections have to do with many factors including national population trends, the local, state and national economy and the availability of sewer, water and other infrastructure in both Ronan and other local communities. On a national level, the “baby boom” generation, with 76 million Americans born between 1946 and 1964, is nearing retirement age. Many are seeking to get back to a rural, small town lifestyle and are moving to communities like Ronan where their dollar goes farther than in larger urban areas. Many of the new residents are also former Montanans who left the state for education and employment but have returned to start businesses and raise their families in a small town atmosphere. Based on these trends, and barring some large scale catastrophe, it doesn’t appear the rate of population growth is likely to slow substantially in the near future.

Projections

If the recent growth rate continues, the City of Ronan will have over 759 more residents in 20 years. The following table shows projected population estimates based on a growth rate of 1.66% per year.

Table 1
Population Projections

Year	2007	2012	2017	2022	2027
Population Projection	2,031	2,199	2,381	2,578	2,790

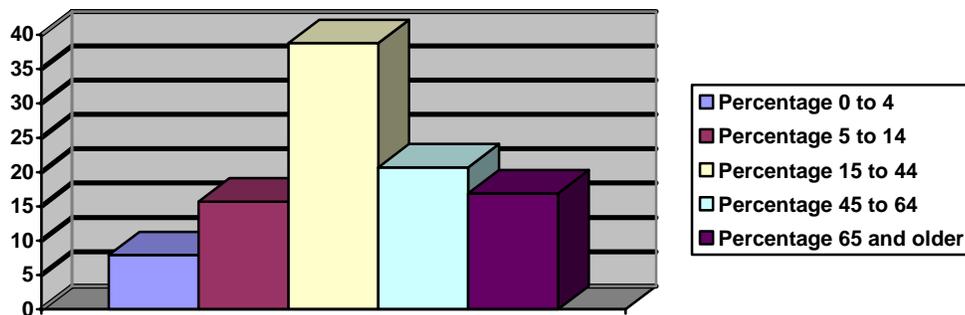
Age Groups

Different age groups require different types of services. For example, children need child care, recreation and after school programs. Seniors need medical care, transportation and often different types of housing. Examining the breakdown in current and expected age groups will allow the public, non-profit and private sectors to plan for community service need in the future.

2000 Census Bureau figures (the most thorough figures available) show age levels in Ronan are generally consistent with age levels across the state with two exceptions. The first exception is 35-54 year olds who make up 24.7% of the City's population as opposed to 30.7% of the state's population. A possible explanation for this fairly small discrepancy is those years typically make up the peak income earning years and people of that age group may have chosen to live in urban areas where incomes are higher while their skills are in greater demand.

The second exception is in the older segment of the population. Census Bureau data show that in 2000 the percentage of persons age 65 and older in Ronan was 16.8% while the percentage of persons age 65 and older in Montana is 13.4%. Census Bureau figures also indicate that in 1990 there were 420 persons within the City limits age 45-74. In 2000 there were 502 persons age 45-74, which represents a 20% increase. These figures point to current and future needs for services targeted toward senior citizens like health care, single-level housing located close to stores, transportation services and well constructed and maintained sidewalks and pathways. The following figure shows a percentage breakdown in population segments based on 2000 Census Bureau figures.

Figure 1
Age Breakdown by Percentage



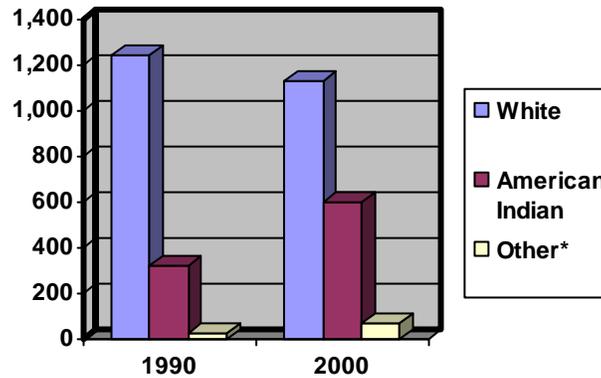
Racial Characteristics

In the 1990 Census, 1,249 persons or 79.3% of the Ronan population identified themselves as being White, 319 persons or 20.3% identified themselves as being American Indian, and 51 persons or 3.2% chose another category. In the 2000 Census, 1,131 persons or 62.4% identified themselves as White, while 599 persons or 33.1% identified themselves as American Indian and 69 persons or 4.5% chose another category, which includes choosing a combination of two or more races. The 9% decrease in those persons identifying themselves as White and the 88% increase in those identifying

themselves as American Indian over ten years is significant, particularly during a period when City experienced steady overall population growth.

This change in racial makeup could be due to efforts by the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes to supply housing in Ronan, the initiative of individual American Indians to move into town, a new or strengthened identification of American Indian heritage, the presence of the Tribal government offices and Salish Kootenai College nearby in Pablo, the moving out of town by persons of White heritage, or a combination of all of these. The following figure shows the change in racial makeup of Ronan according to 1990 and 2000 Census Bureau figures.

Figure 2
Racial Makeup, 1990 and 2000

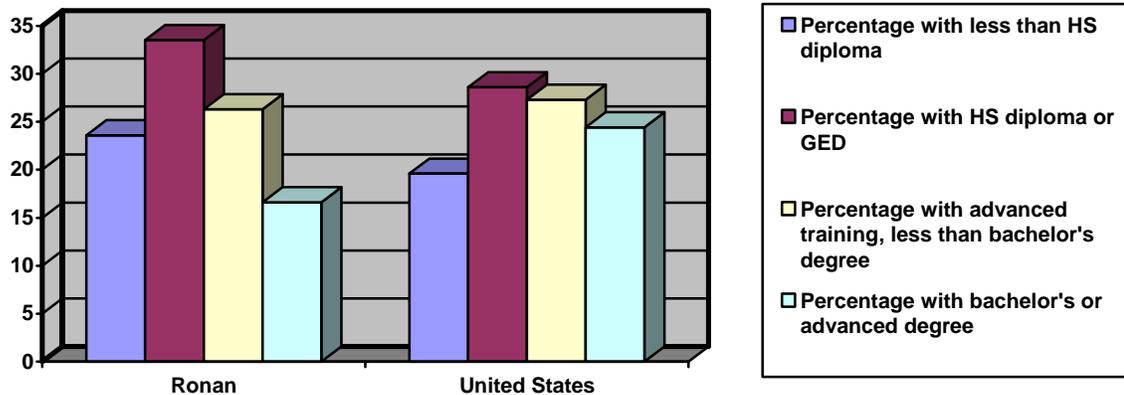


*Other includes people who identified themselves as being from two or more races.

Educational Attainment

According to *The Practice of Local Government Planning*, a person’s level of education largely determines employment opportunities, which in turn determines income. Completion of four years of college paves the way toward a professional or managerial occupation while completion of high school is necessary for many service and manufacturing jobs. The absence of a high school diploma often relegates workers to less skilled jobs. In economic development terms, it is difficult to attract good jobs when a workforce is limited by education and it is difficult for employers to find a qualified workforce when the population has low level educational attainment levels.

Figure 3
Educational Attainment Levels, Ronan and the United States



As Figure 3 indicates, Ronan has a higher percentage of its population with less than a high school diploma than the United States as a whole (23.6% vs. 19.6%). The Ronan population also is more likely to have finished formal education at the high school diploma or GED level than the national average (33.5% vs. 28.6%) and a lower percentage of the population has advanced training or a college degree than the national average (42.9% vs. 51.9%).

The above figures point to the conclusion that economic development in Ronan is likely to be slower than it could otherwise be due to relatively low educational attainment levels. It also shows a need for emphasis on education within the overall community. Fortunately, Salish Kootenai College in Pablo, Flathead Valley Community College in Kalispell and the University of Montana in Missoula all offer higher educational opportunities within driving distance of Ronan.

Overall, the economic health of the community and surrounding area is quite strong, which provides opportunities for employment and advancement in the current market. If population and economic growth continue there are likely to be greater opportunities for employment and advancement in the near future.

Identified Issues and Needs

Examining Census Bureau and other information for Ronan points to the following issues or needs:

- There is a growing population of all segments (+759 new residents by 2027). These residents will need housing, employment, goods and services, recreational opportunities, etc.
- There is a growing need for senior housing (one level, walking distance to stores), health care, good sidewalks and paths.
- The community should maintain a strong emphasis on educational attainment.

III. Economic Conditions



The St. Luke Health Care Network and Jore Corporation are two of the largest employers in the Ronan area.

Historically Ronan has been a hub of commercial activity for the central Mission Valley area, particularly in the agricultural sector. With cost effective goods and services now readily available throughout the region as well as over the internet, Ronan businesses face the challenge of providing exceptional value while evolving along with the changing national, regional and local economy.

Employment

While the majority of Ronan residents are employed, they have a higher unemployment rate than the citizens of Montana as a whole. As Table 2 (below) shows, 52% of Ronan residents were employed in 2000 compared with almost 61% of Montana residents. Part of this discrepancy can be explained by the higher percentage of Ronan residents who are in their retirement years than the state average as well as the slightly higher percentage of Ronan residents who are enrolled in grades K-12 than the state average.

Table 2, Labor and Occupation Data

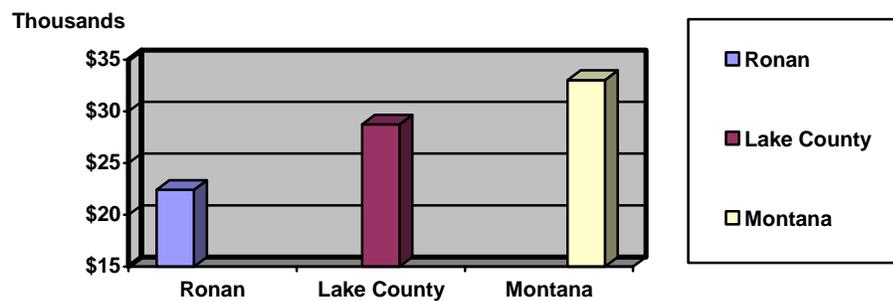
Labor force (16 years and older)	Ronan	Montana
Persons in labor force	789 (58%)	458,306 (65.4%)
Employed	52%	60.8%
Unemployed	6%	4.1%
Occupation	Ronan	Montana
Management and professional	22.1%	33.1%
Service	21.1%	17.2%
Sales and office	24%	25.5%
Construction, extraction and maintenance	12.6%	10.7%
Farming, fishing and forestry	2.8%	2.2%
Manufacturing, transportation, material moving	17.4%	11.2%

Table 2 also provides information on the types of occupations held by Ronan and Montana residents. Of particular interest is a higher percentage of Montanans are managerial and professional workers than Ronan residents while Ronan residents are more likely to be employed in the service and manufacturing sectors. Major employers in the Ronan area include School District 30, St. Luke Community Healthcare Network, Jore Corporation, the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribal government, Salish Kootenai College and local grocery stores.

Income

According to 2000 U.S. Census Bureau Figures (based on 1999 statistics), the income of Ronan households lags behind that of the Lake County and Montana households. The median household in Ronan earned \$22,422, while the median households in Lake County and the state of Montana earned \$28,740 and \$33,024 respectively. Figure 4 (below) shows this discrepancy in graphic terms.

Figure 4
1999 Household Income



U.S. Census Bureau figures also show that over 45% of the families in Ronan earned less than \$25,000 in 1999 while just over 26% of Montana families earned less than \$25,000. On the higher end of the wage scale, in 1999 just under 27% of Ronan families earned over \$50,000 compared with 37.5% of Montana families. There are also fewer entrepreneurial workers in Ronan, with 6.6% being self-employed compared with 11.8% of Montanans being self-employed.

Families in Ronan also had a higher rate of poverty than the state as a whole. 20% of the families in Ronan lived below the poverty line while 10.5% of Montana families did. Also, 7.4% of Ronan residents received public assistance dollars while only 3.3% of Montana residents did.

Economic Development

The Lake County Community Development Corporation (“LCCDC”) is a 501-C(3) not-for-profit organization based in Ronan. LCCDC brought together the leadership of the three local community development groups operating, without staff, in Polson, Ronan and St. Ignatius to provide leadership and staff for community development efforts and to address the critical growth issues as they affect residents, communities and quality of life throughout Lake County. LCCDC was instrumental in obtaining grant funding for the

development of this growth policy. LCCDC's economic development activities, according to information found on its website, consist of the following:

- ✓ Assisting in job creation by working with existing companies to develop and expand their businesses and to structure financial resources appropriate to their situation, as a primary goal; and by recruiting new companies which may locate in the area and provide additional and higher wage jobs.
- ✓ Assisting communities in developing their infrastructure by helping them analyze their needs and then structuring the financing necessary to complete improvement projects.
- ✓ Working with communities, organizations and individuals to develop and expand recreational opportunities that improve local quality of life.
- ✓ Assisting with community renewal and revitalization efforts.
- ✓ Developing tourism and tourism related industries.

Identified Issues and Needs

Examining Census Bureau figures and other information points to the following issues or needs:

- Ronan will and should continue to be a center of commercial activity for the central Mission Valley as the community grows. The downtown area is expected to stay vibrant as the City grows and more specialty shops and services are needed.
- The City Council should work with current employers to encourage them to stay and expand in the Ronan area as needed.
- The City should allow home occupations or other entrepreneurial businesses to develop in order to provide low impact commercial development and jobs. Working from home is a nationwide trend that is expected to continue.
- The City should encourage the development and re-development of the downtown/central business district area (also discussed in the Land Use section).
- The zoning regulations must be updated to accommodate the residential, commercial and industrial needs of a growing population.

IV. Housing



Housing Units

According to U.S. Census Bureau figures, the City of Ronan had 710 total housing units in 1990 and 762 in 2000. This recent construction represents a 7% increase in housing units over 10 years. The change in housing units can be broken down as follows:

- + 37 single-family structures
- + 21 multi-family structures
- - 6 mobile homes

Housing Types

Of the 762 total housing units counted in the 2000 Census, 700 were occupied at that time. The housing units can be broken down into the following types:

Table 3
Housing Type Comparison
City of Ronan and State of Montana

Type of Home	Ronan	Montana
Single-family residences	66.2%	69.7%
Multi-family residences	18.8%	15.7%
Mobile homes	15.0%	14.6%

The small discrepancies between housing types in Ronan and Montana shown in the table above is probably due to the availability of Ronan's municipal sewer and water capacity available to serve multi-family residences.

Approximately 30% of the housing units in Ronan were built since 1980, which is consistent with the state average. Overall, almost 50% of Ronan's homes were built before 1960. Overcrowding does not appear to be a pressing issue and more than 95% of

the homes in Ronan have complete plumbing and kitchen facilities and telephone service. This rate is also consistent with the state average, according to 2000 Census data.

Household Types

Analyzing the types of existing and projected households in a community can help to address shifts in demand for housing, schools and other facilities and services. For example, families typically require services such as education and daycare that non-family households do not. Households with persons 65 years and older often need access to medical facilities and pedestrian friendly connections to grocery stores and restaurants. Single-parent households often require affordable housing and day-care services.

Table 4
Evaluation of Household Type in Ronan and Montana

Type of Household	Ronan	Montana
Female householder with no husband present with children under 18*	10.9%	5.9%
Households with children under 18	34.3%	31.2%
Households with persons 65 years and older	27.3%	23.4%
Family households	60.1%	66.2%
Non-family households	39.9%	33.8%
Average family size	3.18	2.99
Average household size	2.47	2.45

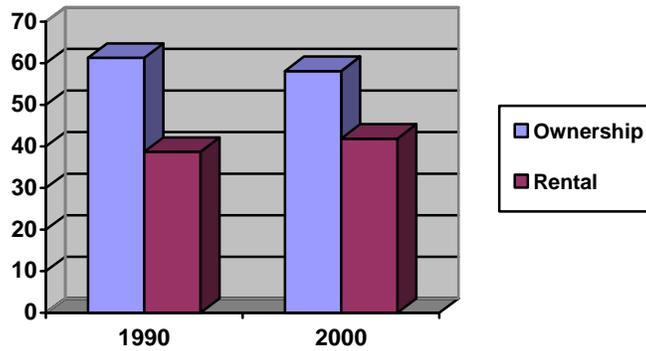
*2000 Census Bureau data did not include the number of male householders with children under 18 years of age.

As the above figures indicate, two of the most pressing housing demands are for single-parent housing and housing for seniors.

Home Ownership

A home is often the greatest single asset a person will own and homeownership can be considered a measure of prosperity. According to U.S. Census Bureau figures, of the 700 occupied housing units in the City of Ronan in 2000, 58.1% were owner occupied and 41.9% were renter occupied. This represents a 3% reduction in the homeownership rate over a 10-year period, as shown on the figure below.

**Figure 5,
Home Ownership and Rental Rates, 1990 and 2000**

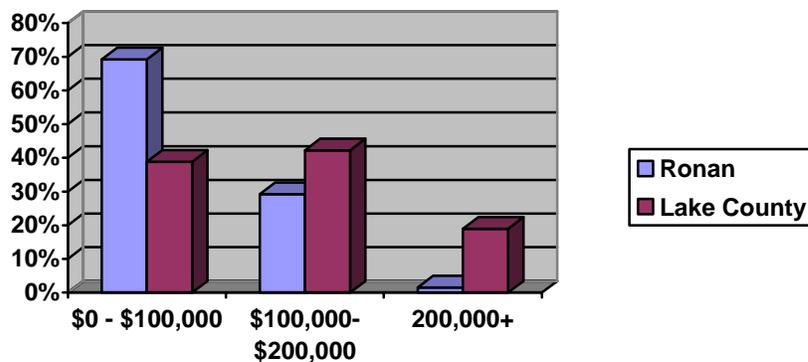


While the local home ownership rate in 2000 was 58.1%, the homeownership rate across the state of Montana was 69.1%. Part of the explanation for the lower ownership rate in Ronan is multi-family dwellings, which are normally occupied by renters, tend to require public sewer and water facilities. Another explanation is the higher rate of retirement age persons living in Ronan who often rent or live in retirement homes.

Home Values

Based on 2000 Census Bureau figures, home values in Ronan are generally lower than in Lake County as a whole. The median home value in Ronan in 2000 was \$83,100 while the median home value in Lake County during 2000 was \$117,200. There are a number of reasons for this including the small lot sizes in Ronan compared with large acreages elsewhere, in addition to high property values along Flathead Lake, Swan Lake and other areas of Lake County. Ronan also has a much higher percentage of lower priced homes than Lake County, as shown on the figure below.

**Figure 6,
Home Value Comparison, Ronan and Lake County**



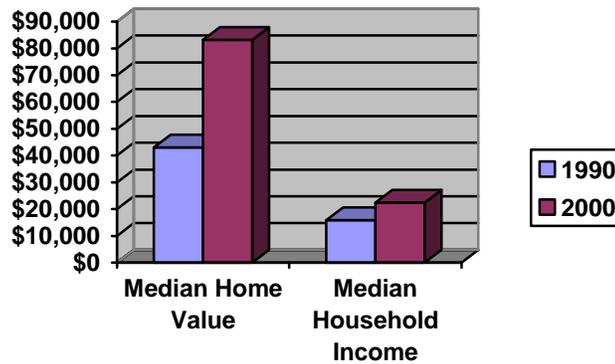
From looking at the age of structures in Ronan, the above home value comparison and by looking around the community, it is apparent there are few higher value homes within the

City boundaries that can help to support public sector programs and private commercial enterprises.

Affordability

During the 1990s the price of homes in Ronan jumped by 48%. New construction was fairly limited during this period so the increase mostly reflects value of the existing housing stock. During this period, household income only rose by 29%. The figure below shows the different rates of home value and income growth.

**Figure 7,
Rates of Growth, Median Home Value and Median Household Income**



Also during the 1990s, the median rent within the City of Ronan increased by almost 44% from \$249 in 1990 to \$447 in 2000.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development defines a cost burden as that level of income at which housing costs consume at least 30% of gross household income. Housing costs include monthly payments such as rent or mortgage, taxes, insurance and utilities. At this level it is possible to qualify for a loan but the buyer must have little other debt. When housing costs exceed 30% of income, it is often difficult for home buyers to qualify for a loan and is also difficult for renters to save a down payment to purchase a home in the future.

- In 1999 21.7% of home owners exceeded the 30% threshold.
- In 1999 46.4% of home renters exceeded the 30% threshold.

Housing Assistance

The Ronan Housing Authority and the Salish and Kootenai Housing Authority offer a number of assistance programs. These organizations work with families and banks to provide home ownership training workshops and help families establish a plan under which they can purchase a home after meeting certain qualifying requirements. Priorities identified by the housing agencies include the encouragement of housing development where public water and sewer systems are available; upgrading the current, aging housing stock to assure residents have access to safe, decent, and healthy living environments for

either rent or purchase; increasing the availability of rental assistance programs to assure the lowest income families have access to the decent housing, and increasing the availability and access to affordable single-homes for middle income families.

Rental Vacancy Rate

U.S. Census Bureau data indicate the rental vacancy rate in 2000 was 7.6%, which equaled the state average. However, since 2000 it appears that the vacancy rate dropped substantially.

- In 2001 the Lake County Community Development Corporation and Ronan Housing Authority commissioned The Danter Company to conduct an analysis of housing in the Polson and Ronan areas. The study reports that in October of 2001, the local apartment vacancy rate for market rate units was 2.7% and the market for subsidized units was 0.1%.
- In January of 2002 Property Dynamics conducted a market analysis for Sparrow Lane II, a 33-unit, tax-credit subsidized rental community in Pablo. This study estimated the vacancy rate to be approximately 3% - 4%.
- Most recently, in January of 2006 Property Dynamics conducted a market analysis for a 20-unit, tax-credit subsidized senior housing project in Ronan. This study estimated the vacancy rate to be 1% for market rate units and 2.6% for subsidized units. The study states, “It is very clear that there are very few, if any, rental units available in the area...”

Both the Ronan Housing Authority and the Salish and Kootenai Housing Authority have large waiting lists for subsidized housing units. During personal interviews local landlords and real estate agents have also said rental housing units are typically full, although they said vacancies were more prevalent in 2007 than only a couple of years before.



The photo on the left shows a multi-family structure recently under construction. The units were to be sold as condominiums.

Housing Needs Projections

From 1990 to 2005, the population of Ronan grew by approximately 1.6% per year. Population and housing projections are difficult to make because they depend on many factors including national and local economic and demographic trends, employment opportunities, interest rates and other factors. One major variable that could either encourage or stifle growth is the availability of municipal water and sewer services (discussed in the Public Facilities and Local Services section). However, Ronan is an attractive place to live for a variety of reasons including the generally low housing costs compared with the rest of Lake County and the spectacular views of the Mission Mountains. If Ronan plans for future growth by maintaining water and sewer capacity, population growth could continue steadily for the foreseeable future.

Assuming Ronan continues to grow at a rate of 1.6% from the estimated 2007 population of 2,031 to the year 2027, and the average household size of 2.47 persons stays consistent, the following changes will occur:

- By 2012 there will be 168 more residents who need 68 more housing units.
- By 2017 there will be 346 more residents who need 141 more housing units.
- By 2022 there will be 547 more residents who need 221 more housing units.
- By 2027 there will be 759 more residents who need 307 more housing units.

Based on the data described in this and other chapters, we know the following:

- The population is getting older and Ronan has a relatively high percentage of senior citizens.
- Household incomes are relatively low and rents and mortgages are relatively high.
- Home ownership rates have declined slightly.

- Ronan has a high percentage of single parents and children.
- Few rental properties are available.
- Ronan has little upper end housing.
- There is substantial room for redevelopment and expansion adjacent to the City's borders.

Identified Issues and Needs

The conditions, trends and projections discussed above call for a mixture of housing types and programs including:

- Entry level single-family and multi-family housing for families and single parents within close proximity to schools, stores, and other services.
- Housing for seniors within close proximity to medical facilities, recreational facilities and other services.
- The continuation and expansion of homeownership programs.
- The encouragement of higher end housing in order to have a healthy mixture and strengthen the tax base.

V. Public Facilities and Local Services



Fire Protection

The Ronan Volunteer Fire Department consists of 35-40 active volunteers in both urban and rural districts and one paid employee. There are two fire stations, one in downtown Ronan and one in Pablo, and the entire jurisdiction encompasses more than 200 square miles. Approximately 75% of the district's calls are in the rural area (outside of the City's boundaries) and 25% of the calls come from within the City's boundaries. The department is very active and morale is reportedly high. However, as the Fire District's population grows, there will be the need for additional paid personnel.

Fire fighting and rescue equipment consists of 3 water tenders, 3 Class A fire engines, 4 wildland/Type 4 engines, one light rescue vehicle used primarily for vehicle extrication, one heavy rescue vehicle with cascaded air packs and other support equipment.

During most fire seasons, fire district personnel will fight wildland fires under contract and use some of the district's equipment. The district receives payment for use of its equipment. In 2005, the district received approximately \$50,000 for such equipment use, which makes up a substantial portion of the district's budget.

While the potential for fire is always a concern, within the City limits, due to the topography, vegetation, limited area and available water supply, wildland fire is not a major threat. As such, and because the City has adopted building and fire codes, there is no need to delineate the wildland-urban interface and adopt rural defensible space, access and additional water supply requirements in this document.

However, the fire department will have needs for capital facility improvements within the next five years in order to serve growth. Also, due to the sizes of today's fire fighting vehicles and the relatively modest size of the fire station, a new station will be needed in the coming years.

Police Protection

Ronan normally employs four full-time police officers. Area law enforcement agencies, including the Lake County Sheriff's Office, the Montana Highway Patrol and the Tribal

Police Department, provide mutual assistance when called upon although they sometimes struggle with the current call volume. This call volume exceeds national standards for a four-officer department and within five years there will be a need for capital facility improvements.

Ambulance

Volunteer emergency medical responders answered approximately 650 calls in 2004 and 700 in 2005. Due to the heavy workload, the volunteers reported little time for work, maintaining certifications, family and other pursuits. In order to address the strain of volunteer burnout, the City of Ronan auctioned off its emergency medical equipment in 2006 and now contracts with a private ambulance service.

Medical Services

In addition to a general care physician clinic, the St. Luke Healthcare Network operates a 75-bed extended care facility and 24-bed acute care hospital along the western edge of the downtown area. St. Luke's employs over 300 people and provides a host of medical services including emergency care, general surgery, orthopedics, obstetrics and gynecology and urology. St. Luke's also provides for in-home health care and oxygen delivery service, among other services.

Currently St. Luke's is undergoing a \$25 million remodeling and expansion project that will close a portion of Main Street. The expansion will allow the healthcare provider to serve greater volumes of patients, expand its list of services and employ more personnel. St. Luke's expansion present an opportunity for related businesses, services and employee housing development while also posing challenges to community infrastructure such as sewer and water capacity and routing east/west traffic in a way that residential neighborhoods will not be significantly impacted.

Solid Waste

Solid waste in Lake County is managed by the Lake County Solid Waste District. Ronan residents may take household waste directly to the landfill or to the transfer station in Polson or to one of the many container sites scattered throughout the area. Residents and businesses may also contract with a private hauler to dispose of solid waste. Household and business solid waste is typically loaded at the transfer station and disposed of at a privately run regional landfill in Missoula.

Water Supply

The majority of the City of Ronan's water supply comes from Middle Crow Creek. A storage and settling basin collects the surface water from the stream. This basin has been identified as needing to be enclosed for security reasons and upgraded due to cracks which can result in water loss. From the settling basin water enters an ozone and chlorination treatment plant where Ronan Public Works Department staff monitors and treats the water. The treatment plant is older, small and new state water quality requirements that will soon take effect may require the plant to be rebuilt at tremendous cost. Another priority for the plant is installing a telemetry monitoring system, which would automatically alert Public Works Department staff when a problem arises.

Leaving the treatment plant, water flows west at a volume of approximately 250 to 400 gallons per minute, depending on the time of year. According to Public Works Department employee Dan Miller, this volume could become a bottleneck in the system and plans are being made to expand the capacity in the future. The water travels to a 750,000 gallon elevated tank where it is stored. However, due to system deficiencies, the tank only stores about 140,000 gallons, which is far short of the 970,000 gallons the state requires for a city of Ronan's size. The required storage volume will also increase as the population of Ronan continues to grow. Current priorities are to build another storage tank and to repair the existing one.

Two wells are also used to supply water. One well was recently rebuilt and fitted with new controls and now produces 550-600 gpm. The wells are mainly used as a backup water supply to the surface water and are used most frequently in the summer months. The City's water supply is out of compliance with state standards for volume in the event the major source of water is unavailable. The City is plans to drill one or more well to meet current requirements as well as to plan for growth.

Another area of concern is the volume of some of the distribution pipes. Some areas of the City, including portions of downtown, have 4-inch pipes, which are not sufficient to support fire flows. Replacing these pipes is a high priority for the City. In order to achieve some of the goals found later in this growth policy as well as to account for current and anticipated needs, the City recognizes that there will be a need within five years for capital facility improvements.

Wastewater Treatment

The City's wastewater treatment and sewage disposal system consists gravity and force main sewers, four lift stations, a grinder pump station, a wastewater treatment facility made up of cells and surface discharge into Crow Creek. In order to comply with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency discharge limits for fecal coliform, the City installed a disinfection system in 2007. Regulatory limits on ammonia now appear to be forcing the City to either discharge via spray irrigation or through a mechanical treatment plant. The City's contracted engineer is developing a report to identify, evaluate and help prioritize compliance and upgrade alternatives. Based on the data outlining growth over the past 15 years and projecting into the future, the available single family residential hookup capacity of the sanitary sewer system will likely be exhausted by 2013. In order to achieve the goals found later in this growth policy, the City recognizes that there will be a need within five years for capital facility improvements.

Stormwater Management

The City has limited stormwater management infrastructure that is maintained by Public Works Department staff. Improvements are made on a case-by-case basis as problems become apparent. An overall evaluation of water flows and system capacity would help to identify priorities and improvements that would help to keep road infrastructure in good condition over time. The lack of a sizeable storm sewer system makes street repair

all the more difficult and frequent. According to Mayor Aipperspach, voters have turned down such improvements in the past.

Upgrades along U.S. Highway 93 are planned by the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT). All new development is required to contain additional runoff on-site by the Montana Department of Environmental Quality.

Streets and Sidewalks

Within the City's jurisdiction are approximately 10 miles of public streets to maintain. Many of the streets lack suitable base material and potholes are prevalent. Due to financial constraints, most street repairs can be characterized as quick fixes. Major street upgrades would require installing base material and have sizeable costs. Priorities for upgrades include keeping Main Street in good condition, Second and Third Avenues Southwest, Eisenhower Street Southwest and Third Avenue Northwest.

Generally speaking, the preferred pattern for street expansion is a grid pattern that expands the existing street network and connects different areas of town.

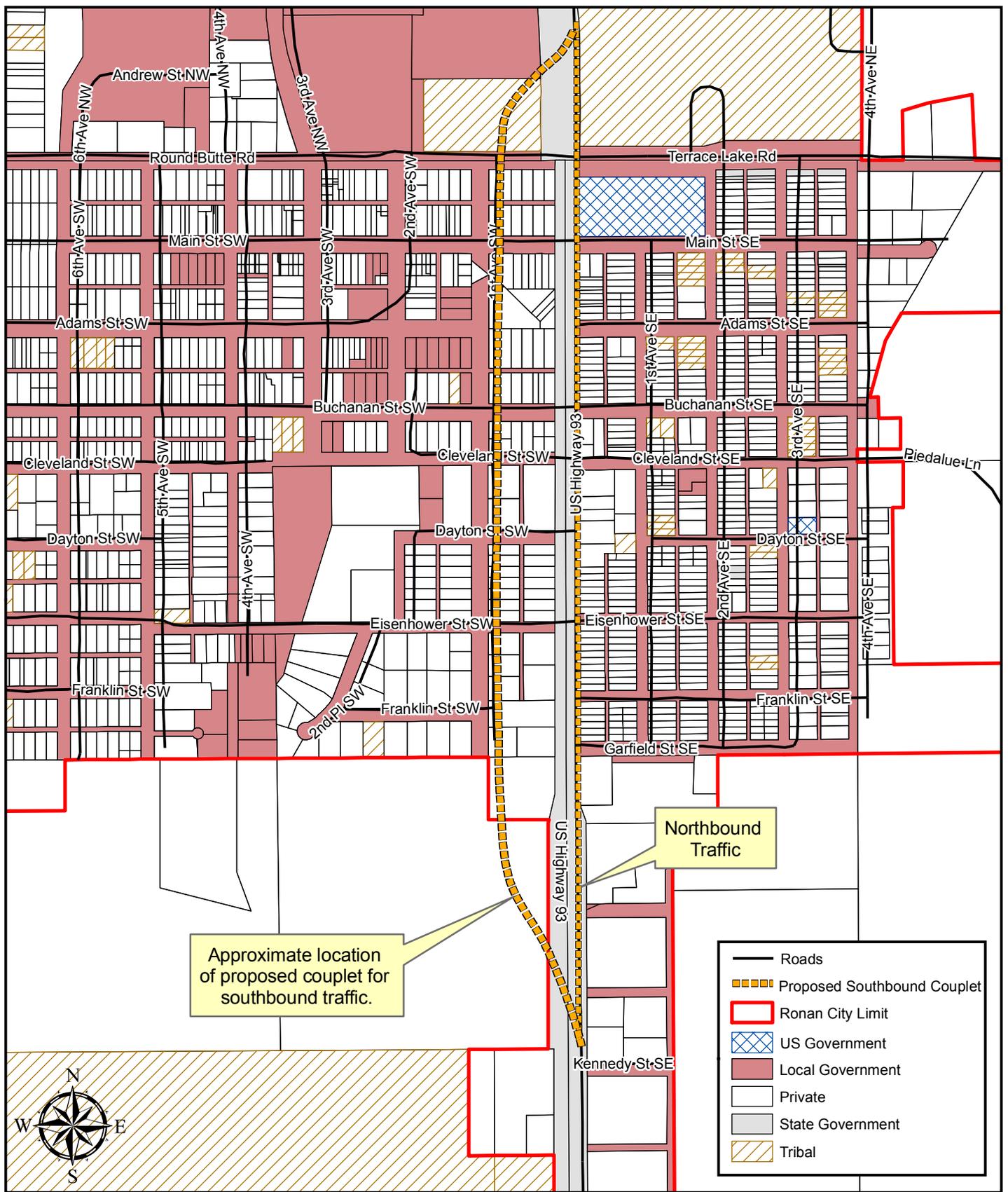
The city has partnered with some neighborhoods in the past to establish Street Improvement Districts which typically take 10 to 15 years to pay off and increase directly affected taxpayer costs by around \$25 per month. Sidewalks are present in the downtown area but not in the residential neighborhoods.

Highway 93

The most prominent streets are Highway 93 and Round Butte Road, which are both maintained by the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT). U.S. Highway 93 is currently a two-lane north-south road that splits the City of Ronan into eastern and western segments. MDT, the Federal Highway Administration and the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribal Government are in the process of deciding how to upgrade the highway due to safety issues and road capacity constraints. The February 2008 Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement states the preferred alternative is a couplet that would include two northbound travel lanes where the highway is currently located and two southbound travel lanes to the west where 1st Avenue Southwest is presently located. A separated bicycle and pedestrian path is also included. The earliest possible construction date is anticipated to be 2009, depending upon funding availability.

If the couplet alternative is constructed, it would change the character of the blocks in between the north and southbound highways significantly, offering expanded commercial opportunities but displacing some of the homeowners and likely encouraging other land use changes along the route. Mixed use buildings, with commercial establishments on the bottom floor and apartment or condominium style living on a second floor, would help to contribute to the vitality of the central business district. However, this presents parking issues that will have to be evaluated as development takes place.

The main facility of the Boys and Girls Club of the Flathead Indian Reservation and Lake County is currently located at the intersection of Highway 93 and Round Butte Road on



Ronan Area Proposed US Highway 93 Couplet



1 inch equals 0.114886 miles

June 6, 2008

land provided by the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes. This facility provides important summertime and after school services to local youth and a new home is likely to be needed due to the highway improvements. A possible location for a new home is on the land owned jointly by the City of Ronan, Lake County and the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes (shown as the Mission Range Event Center area on growth policy maps).

The new highway alignment also has the potential to create an additional barrier for pedestrians and bicyclists traveling from the eastern residential areas to schools, the downtown area and services. However, the preliminary highway design includes a pedestrian/bicycle path linking Bockman Park to Highway 93 as well as two new stop lights and presumably crosswalks for non-motorized transportation. At this time a construction date is not certain although it is likely to begin around 2010.

Identified Issues and Needs

Fire and Police Protection

- At some point in the future there will be the need for additional paid Fire Department personnel in order to take some of the burden off of volunteers.
- At some point in the future there will be the need for an expanded fire station.
- At some point in the future there will be the need for additional police officers.

Water

- The water storage and settling basin should be enclosed for security reasons and upgraded due to cracking.
- The ozone and chlorination treatment plant should be expanded if possible or rebuilt to meet regulatory requirements.
- A continuous monitoring telemetry system should be installed in order to alert City staff when a problem arises.
- The City must find a way to store more water while reducing water pressure where necessary. This will probably result in a new water tank and repairs to the existing one.
- One or more municipal wells will be needed in the near future.
- Sub-standard pipe will have to be replaced in the near future to meet fire flow requirements.
- Other priorities identified in the most current preliminary engineering report.

Wastewater Treatment

- The May 2006 Preliminary Engineering Report for Municipal Sewer System Improvements lays out specific improvements that will be necessary to implement over time. Some of these improvements and potentially others should be regularly evaluated in order to encourage continued growth in desired locations. Identified improvements and priorities include:
 - Modifying Cell 3 and installing aeration,
 - Disinfection of the wastewater wetlands effluent,
 - Auxiliary power for lift stations,

General aerated lagoon capacity,
Sewer main capacity upgrades, and
Pump station capacity for the lift station.

- Develop a spray irrigation or mechanical treatment plant to meet regulatory requirements.

Stormwater

- An overall evaluation of water flows and stormwater system capacity would help to identify priority areas and improvements.

Transportation

- Priorities for City street upgrades include Main Street, Second and Third Avenues Southwest, Eisenhower Street Southwest and Third Avenue Northwest.
- One or more east/west travel corridors should be created that link the undeveloped land west of town with the central business district and Highway 93. Buchanan has been identified as a candidate. Ideally these travel corridors would not significantly impact the existing residential neighborhoods.
- Highway 93 improvements will present a great opportunity for upgrading public infrastructure when disruptions in service can be minimized.
- Sidewalks and pathways should be created and maintained to link existing and future neighborhoods with commercial, employment and recreational facilities.

VI. Land Use



The City of Ronan is laid out in a grid pattern made up of lots and blocks. The central business district surrounds Main Street and commercial development also extends from the downtown to the north along Third Avenue Southwest. U.S. Highway 93 contains highway commercial type development. It also separates the western portion of town, where educational and medical facilities and the business core are located, from the largely residential areas on the east side of the highway. Residential development is also located on the west side of Highway 93 in a traditional grid pattern.

Downtown

Like most downtown areas in small communities, the central business district has undergone a transition from general retail (clothing, pharmacy, etc.) to specialized retail (electronics, flower shop) and services (barber shops, bars, insurance and law offices, an internet service provider, etc.). A number of the downtown buildings are in disrepair and there are often vacant storefronts. There is also no common visual theme or architectural design to the downtown buildings. Instead, the look of downtown storefronts has been “organic” with individual building owners deciding how they want their property to look.

Despite the fact that some buildings are in disrepair and vacancies are common, the central business district remains vibrant and contains a number of apartments above storefronts, a sidewalk network, a movie theatre, a bowling alley, bars, a nearby grocery store, a small hotel, medical facilities and other attractions. Ronan’s Bockman Park is also located about one block from Main Street. Parking spaces can be difficult to find along Main Street during busy periods but can usually be found on side streets in the downtown area.

The downtown area has also seen re-use of Lake County Community Development Corporation/Ronan Housing Authority offices and refurbishment of City Hall with apartments above. At the same time, due to the limited area for commercial activity in the downtown, relatively inexpensive land outside of the central business district and the visibility of businesses along U.S. Highway 93, some businesses have moved to the highway corridor instead of in the downtown area. It must be noted that some types of businesses, such as car dealerships that need lots of space and fast food restaurants that

generate significant traffic, are appropriately located along the highway corridor instead of the downtown area.

Zoning

The existing zoning ordinance breaks the City into four distinct areas or districts: A Residential, B Residential, Commercial and Industrial. A Residential is the most restrictive and generally allows for one and two-family dwellings, schools, parks and churches. The majority of the residential areas of Ronan are zoned A Residential. B Residential is somewhat more expansive, allowing for single and multiple family dwellings, hotels, hospitals, mobile homes and daycare facilities. The B Residential districts can be found to the north and west of the central business district.

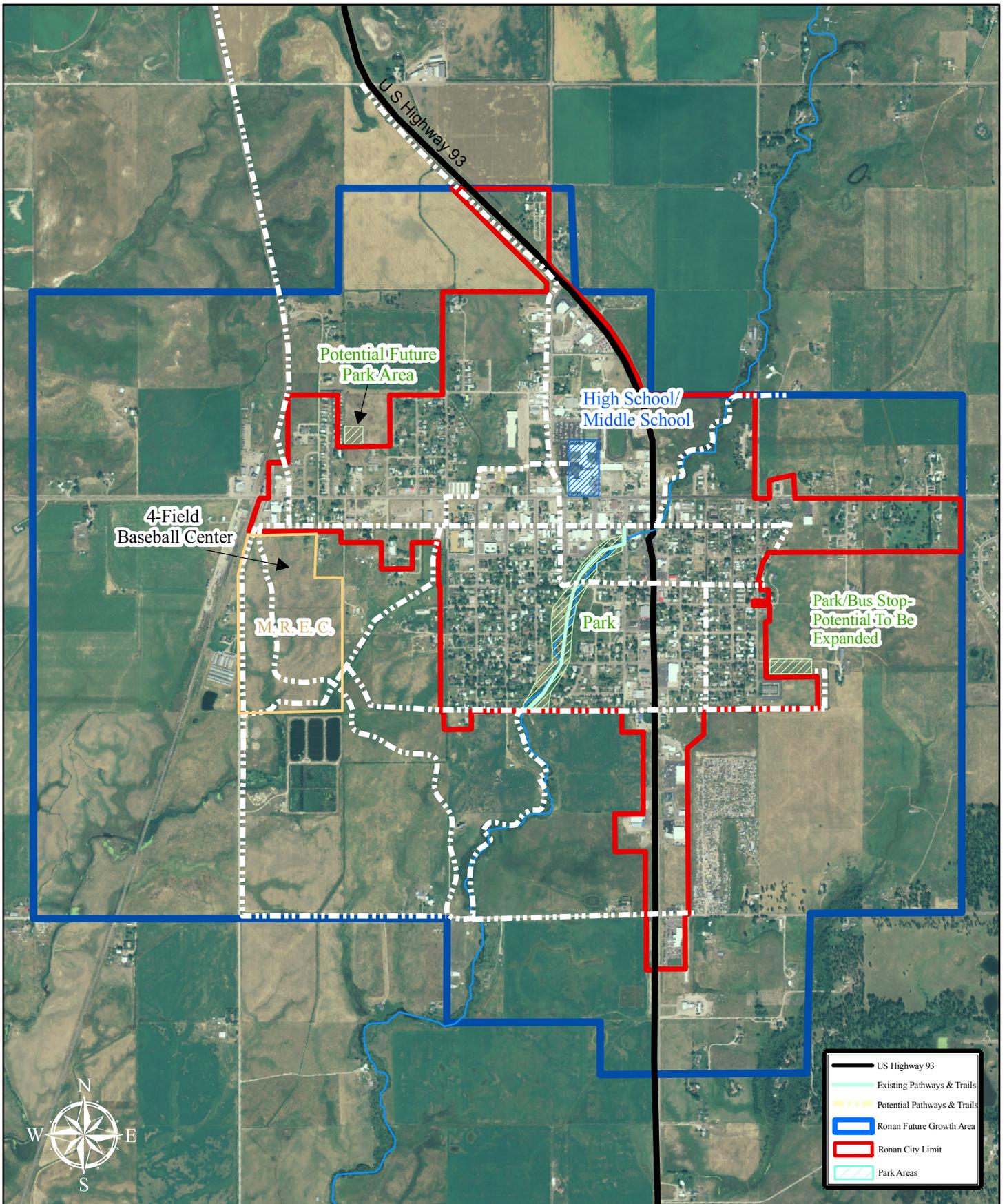
The commercial zoning district lines Highway 93, the downtown area to the western City limits on Round Butte Road and to the north along Old Highway 93. The industrial zoning district is very small and is located near the rail line near the western City limits.

The zoning ordinance was adopted decades ago and generally separates incompatible land uses. Although it is an important tool to regulate land use, the existing code lacks flexibility and is outdated. This growth policy contains a future land use map that shows the preferred types of development within the City limits as well as a future growth area that is currently outside of the City limits. While providing a preferred alternative for future growth at this time, the future land use map is based on the information and assumptions forming the basis of this policy and the City does not intend to be bound by it as it is expected that the predicate conditions will change over time as more data becomes available.

Parks and Recreation



The City of Ronan maintains a beautiful and extensive downtown park that runs along Spring Creek. The City Park has playground equipment, picnic tables, shade trees, a pavilion and parking areas. It is used extensively by children and families, particularly during the warmer months. The City's Public Works Department, which maintains the park, has recently expanded the walking trails extending from the park to the walkway along Round Butte Road heading west to the Mission Mountain Country Club, which operates an 18-hole golf course.



City of Ronan Parks & Recreation

The Ronan School District has indoor and outdoor basketball courts, tennis courts, baseball and softball fields and a track used by runners and walkers. The Boys and Girls Club of the Flathead Indian Reservation and Lake County offers after school and summer recreational and learning programs that include two swimming pools that are heavily used in the summer. When Highway 93 expansion takes place, the Boys and Girls Club will have to move its facility and the Mission Range Event Center facility has been identified as a possible location. Identified park needs include a +/-5-acre park on the east side of town when new residential development is created as well as a park area on the northern edge of town. Bockman Park trails system should also be expanded along Spring Creek. Please see the map titled Parks & Recreation for current and potential future parks and trails.

Land Development



The photo above on the left shows land adjacent to the City limits at the north end of 7th and 8th Avenue. The photo above on the right shows land and views of the Mission Mountains from the eastern edge of 4th Avenue SE.

According to Building Inspector Dan Miller, there are rarely more than 10 available lots within the City limits to build on at a time. The area surrounding the City limits in all directions is relatively flat and developable and the City Council and Planning Board have identified areas for future municipal growth to serve the commercial, industrial and recreational needs of current and future residents. Some high groundwater issues reportedly exist in the vicinity of Spring Creek. As discussed in the public facilities section, immediate sewer capacity exists along the southern edge of the City.

Land Development activity in Ronan has been fairly limited in recent years, in part because sewer capacity along the northern and western edge of the City is limited and would require substantial pipeline upgrades. There are currently two residential development projects in the entitlement stage. An 11-lot subdivision was granted preliminary approval in 2005 along the City's eastern boundary. A 20-unit senior citizen, low income housing project is also being proposed at the western end of Main Street near the Senior Citizen's Center and St. Luke's Hospital. Other residential projects have been discussed to the northeast and northwest and are at varying stages of subdivision review.

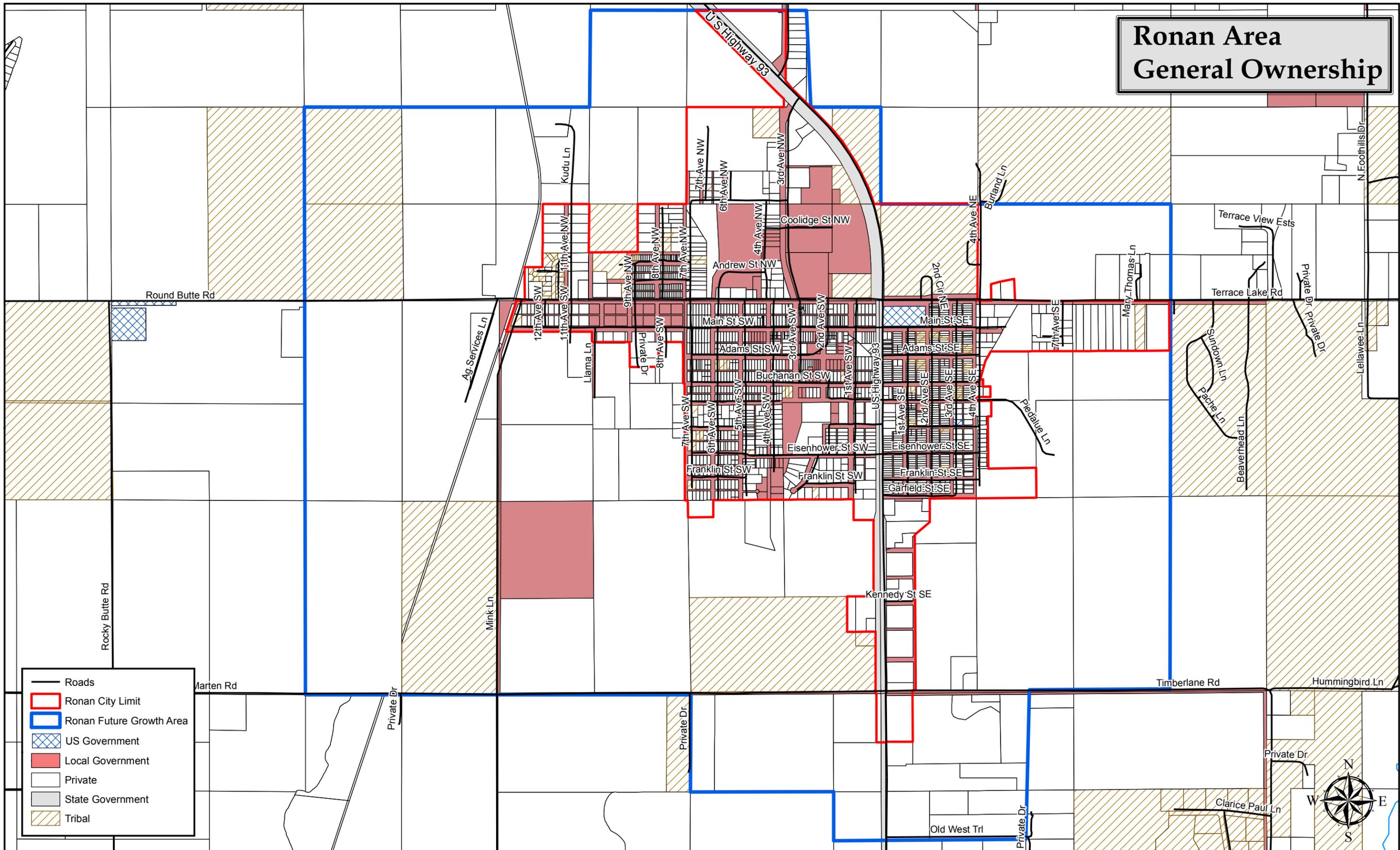
An 80-acre parcel of land located west of Highway 93 along the City's southern boundary is reported to have contaminated groundwater and soil beneath it from petroleum releases that were discovered during the mid 1990s. According to the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), contaminants include MTBE, a fuel additive, and typical chemicals associated with petroleum. There have been approximately 4,000 gallons of contaminants removed and over \$1 million invested in the clean up effort. A DEQ representative has stated the contamination plume is no more than 200 feet wide and runs from Hwy 93 to Spring Creek. Apparently no MTBE has been detected in Spring Creek. This would be a good location for development if it can be determined that contamination is not a threat to public health and safety.

One issue that hasn't been addressed in detail is the condition of Spring Creek and its floodplain. Spring Creek flows from the northeast to the southwest under Highway 93 and Community Bank and emerges in Bockman Park. The stream appears to have been straightened and does not include many natural stream features that support fish and wildlife including meanders, substantial riparian vegetation and fallen woody debris. The floodplain also has not been mapped and could pose danger to life and property if a large scale flood were to occur.

Identified Issues and Needs

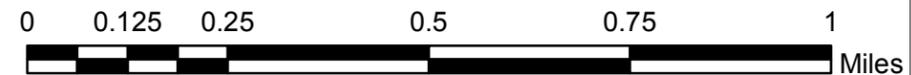
- The Boys and Girls Club of the Flathead Indian Reservation and Lake County will have to find a new home due to expected Highway 93 improvements.
- The downtown area should continue to be a commercial center even as it becomes more of a service center than a retail one.
- The street network is in a general state of disrepair.
- The zoning ordinance will have to be updated to provide flexibility and better reflect existing and desired land uses. Some highway commercial development is seen as a necessity but a fairly compact development pattern is also desirable.
- There are few developable lots within the City limits and more will have to be created through subdivision and the annexation of adjacent territory in order to provide opportunities for residential and business development. Development is generally welcomed in accordance with the future land use map and other rules and regulations.
- The generally preferred development pattern is extension of the City's grid system.
- A hotel is needed in order to accommodate visitors.
- Mixed use development between the Highway 93 couplet lanes would be appropriate, with commercial services and retail on the ground floor and residences above.
- New parks on the eastern and northern edges of town will be needed as new neighborhoods are created.
- An expanded system of walking trails will help to provide for recreation and connection between neighborhoods and commercial services.
- Restoration of Spring Creek would help to support its wildlife and water quality.
- Delineation and mapping of the 100-year floodplain would limit the potential for loss of life and property.

Ronan Area General Ownership



- Roads
- ▭ Ronan City Limit
- ▭ Ronan Future Growth Area
- ▨ US Government
- ▭ Local Government
- ▭ Private
- ▭ State Government
- ▨ Tribal

1 inch equals 0.227613 miles
29 June 6, 2008



VII. Goals and Objectives

Overview: Solicitation of Public Comment

Comments were solicited from individuals living, working, or actively involved in the community of Ronan in the following ways:

- **Individual interviews with 30 community members.** Individuals interviewed included educators, businesspeople, Tribal and City government staff from various departments, housing and economic development staff, realtors, a youth service provider, a real estate attorney, chief officers from the St. Luke's Community Healthcare Network, the Fire Department Chief, and an active community member. They were asked to identify the most significant problems in Ronan, solutions to these problems, success stories, and opportunities to build on successful efforts.
- **Two public meetings.** (March 22 and 23, 2006) The meetings were attended by 19 individuals, aside from reporters.¹ Participants were provided with information about the growth policy and the conditions and trends identified from the data collected to date. They were then asked to consider the topics covered in the growth policy and to answer the following questions in respect to Ronan:
 - What are specific problems or concerns that you have?
 - What are some solutions or opportunities that you believe should be pursued?

Each person was given an opportunity to share their ideas, which were recorded on large flip charts where everyone could see them. After all ideas were recorded, participants were given the same number of sticky dots, which they used to show their priorities by placing them next to the ideas that were most important to them. After the ideas were ranked at the second meeting, participants focused on the top three issues, brainstorming specific actions that could be taken to accomplish their goals.

- **Joint meeting of the City Council and Planning Board.** (March 20, 2006) This meeting was an abbreviated version of the public meetings, with the attention focused on generating ideas. Some city employees also attended.
- **Brainstorming session with the Ronan High School Student Council.** Student Council members were provided with information about the growth policy and planning in general and were asked to brainstorm their ideas in response to the same questions posed at the public meetings. Ideas were recorded on flip charts. Students were encouraged to continue to participate in the process for developing the growth policy.

¹ Several people attended both meetings; they were only counted once.

- **Stakeholder review.** The draft Growth Policy was reviewed by Planning Board and City Council members, Chamber of Commerce representatives, the Tribal Resource Planner and representatives of the Lake County Planning Department. Modifications were made based on their comments.

Using the thoughts and suggestions of citizens and stakeholders, a series of issues have been identified that should be addressed. Goals and objectives have been developed to address the issues in a positive manner. The goals listed below represent a desirable outcome or future state the community should work toward. The objectives represent steps that can be taken to help to achieve the goals.

Economic Conditions

Issue 1:	Ronan lacks an adequate number of places to stay and eat.
Goal 1:	Increase the number of Ronan’s lodging facilities and places to eat by working with the state, private sector, and the Lake County Community Development Corporation (LCCDC).

Discussion: During the public meetings, participants listed this issue as the second highest priority to be addressed in the Growth Policy. Currently, Ronan only has one motel (the Starlite), and no camping facilities. While there are a number of restaurants in town, more restaurants offering a variety of dining experiences are needed to attract people from out of town. In addition, some restaurants are only open a limited number of hours, perhaps partly due to a shortage of available workers.

One constraint limiting new facilities is insufficient vacant space in town. A significant implication of not having more lodging and restaurants is that most visitors attending school athletic tournaments, for example, must stay somewhere other than Ronan, reducing the positive economic impact these and other events might have. A number of people mentioned the possibility that the new 62-acre Mission Valley Event Complex might include a campground.

Objective 1-A: Remove regulatory barriers that may inhibit new restaurants and lodging (e.g., outdated zoning).

Objective 1-B: Ensure the necessary infrastructure is available and/or partner with the private sector to provide infrastructure where it is lacking in areas suitable for lodging and restaurants.

Objective 1-C: License and promote food vendors (e.g., for special events).

Issue 2: Downtown Ronan is missing a clear identity.

Goal 2: Develop a coherent identity for downtown Ronan. Undertake a comprehensive revitalization effort that is consistent with this identity.

Discussion: During the public meetings and work sessions with the Planning Board and City Council, the belief that downtown Ronan lacks an identifiable identity or theme was cited as a very high priority. It was also noted that some travelers and residents have a poor perception of Ronan. Meeting participants expressed concern that there is a lack of vision for the City’s future. These and related points were also mentioned by a number of community leaders during interviews. The absence of a clear identity is closely related to a number of other issues that were mentioned, including empty storefronts downtown, substandard infrastructure, and a lack of long-term vision of what the community could become. Part of the challenge could be to attract a critical mass of specialty stores (e.g., shops selling western goods) so that the downtown becomes a known destination, a place visitors seek out for certain types of goods and services.

Objective 2-A: Convene a local task force of business owners and interested participants to review the assets of downtown Ronan and consider how they might best be enhanced and packaged in a coherent theme. Consider bringing in an outside design team to evaluate the City’s strengths and weaknesses and make recommendations. Architecture or landscape architecture students from a college or university might be available to work on this as a class project. Another source of assistance may be available through the Montana Department of Commerce’s Montana Main Street Program. A visual preference survey could also be conducted to identify the types of design features residents prefer. Based on public input, a “natural” identity could be most appropriate downtown, perhaps one that carries over the rustic log and rock appearance of the entrance arch. Western, historic looking storefronts with building facades, agricultural, or American Indian themes and the use of native stone and log work are encouraged. Also, a “plastic” or contrived look should be avoided.

Objective 2-B: Investigate whether there might be local support for establishing design standards for building exteriors and sign controls, which could help implement a more appealing and coherent look.

Objective 2-C: Investigate whether tax increment financing, tax incentives, a revolving loan fund or other measures could be provided to business owners to upgrade their storefronts. Also, consider cooperative projects to make the area more appealing for residents and visitors (e.g., historic street lights, flower pots, sidewalk benches, drinking fountains, etc.). Ronan School District representatives and students might be willing to participate in certain projects.

Objective 2-D: Market successes, so local residents take more pride and interest in downtown.

Objective 2-E: Consider what role the arts and galleries might play as a catalyst for establishing a more coherent identity and helping to revitalize downtown. Having a venue for musical and theatrical performances could attract more people downtown.

Objective 2-F: Work with the Tribes to enhance opportunities to offer goods, services, and information from the Indian culture of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes that visitors wouldn't find elsewhere.

Objective 2-G: The City of Ronan should work with the Tribes, the LCCDC, business owners, chamber of commerce, residents and other partners to compile an economic development plan for the downtown area. The DOC, local colleges and universities, and other institutions may have resources that can assist with this. Because of the jurisdictional complexity, close cooperation between the involved parties should be a major focus of the effort.

Objective 2-H: Work with landowners to clean up and improve rundown properties in downtown Ronan. Establish a neighborhood clean up day or similar annual program.

Objective 2-I: Inventory historic structures downtown. Assess what role Ronan's history and cultural diversity might play in helping to develop a downtown theme, and making the area an attractive destination for both tourists and Mission Valley residents.

Issue 3: Ronan's retail base is declining.

Goal 3: Improve the amount and variety of retail stores in Ronan.

Discussion: This issue mirrors a trend seen in hundreds of towns across the United States: Retail businesses leaving the historic downtown core for highways on the periphery of town. The concern is also reflected in public comments about the potential impacts an expanded Wal-Mart in Polson may have on Ronan businesses. The most visible manifestations of this issue are empty storefronts downtown. The long-term template for running successful businesses downtown may be different than out on Highway 93.

Objective 3-A: In conjunction with goal 2 above, undertake an economic development planning effort designed to enhance Ronan's retail base.

Objective 3-B: Work with the private sector to create viable incentives for new retail businesses (e.g., reduced property taxes).

Objective 3-C: Remove or amend regulatory barriers (e.g., zoning) that may inhibit new retail establishments.

Objective 3-D: Install necessary infrastructure in high priority areas for retail. Work to obtain cooperative public—private funding to pay for new facilities.

Objective 3-E: Work to ensure that retail businesses are concentrated to make shopping easier and preserve a small town atmosphere.

Objective 3-F: In and around downtown Ronan, in particular, allow opportunities for mixing retail and residential uses, to the benefit of both.

Issue 4:	Ronan has an insufficient tax base to meet its needs.
Goal 4:	Encourage compatible growth and development in Ronan in a relatively compact form, while allowing highway commercial development, in an effort to expand the City’s tax base to meet current and future needs.

Discussion: A substantial portion of the growth in the Ronan area—especially more up-scale development—has occurred outside the City limits. The housing stock within Ronan tends to be comparatively modest, and the City is home to a significant number of low-income families. Many of the people who live on the outskirts of Ronan drive on City streets and use other services that they don’t help pay for. Additionally, businesses may locate outside the municipal boundaries, where they don’t contribute to the City’s property tax base. The net result is insufficient tax revenue to meet Ronan’s needs. Some local residents framed the issue as a “chicken or egg” conundrum: Adequate infrastructure is needed to attract tax paying residents and businesses, but a healthy tax base is required to pay for the infrastructure.

Objective 4-A: Ensure that Ronan has adequate infrastructure to attract future development inside the city boundaries, as well as in areas proposed for annexation.

Objective 4-B: Work with the private sector and the Tribal government to attract a diversity of development to Ronan that will have a beneficial impact to the tax base; not all development may have a net positive impact on City revenues.

Objective 4-C: Revise the zoning ordinance to provide for desirable development that will increase Ronan’s tax base.

Issue 5:	Ronan isn’t fully capitalizing on the economic benefits of tourism.
Goal 5:	Enhance Ronan’s ability to benefit economically from tourism.

Discussion: Ronan is located in a spectacular setting, along a major tourist route. Yet community members believe that Ronan isn’t adequately taking advantage of its tourism

potential, both as a place for Highway 93 travelers to stop while driving through, or as a destination in its own right.

Being in a position to more fully benefit from tourism depends in large measure on successfully carrying out many of the other goals in the growth policy. For example, without a unique and vibrant downtown, there is little reason for visitors to get off the highway to shop, eat or stay. Similarly, if visitors are unaware of the many recreational attractions in and around town, they are unlikely to make the area a destination.

Ultimately, the viability of this goal depends on the support of local residents in making tourism an important part of their economy. Increased tourism usually has both benefits and disadvantages to the affected community, and these need to be weighed by the local residents.

Objective 5-A: Utilize the Department of Commerce (DOC) Community Tourism Assessment Program for developing a tourism plan, in addition to resources available through the LCCDC. A tourism plan will help determine what types of dining and lodging establishments are most needed, in addition to identifying any needs for other facilities.

Objective 5-B: Produce a map of downtown businesses and attractions for visitors. Install better directional signs along the highway so visitors can more easily locate destinations they are interested in. Tourists traveling along Highway 93 represent a significant source of underutilized potential business.

Objective 5-C: Improve coordination between Mission Valley towns in promoting the area. Work to produce a comprehensive directory on everything there is to do in the Mission Valley. Ensure that there is adequate emphasis on promoting Ronan and its many nearby attractions.

Objective 5-D: Work with the Tribes to enhance opportunities to offer goods, services, and information from the Indian culture of the Salish and Kootenai Tribes that visitors wouldn't find elsewhere.

Objective 5-E: Ensure that other recommendations in this growth policy are closely integrated with the goal of increasing tourism. Among the most important are increasing the vitality of the downtown business district, expanding the number of places to stay and eat and successfully completing the Mission Range Event Complex.

Issue 6:	Ronan needs more businesses, particularly businesses that provide higher-paying jobs.
Goal 6:	Improve the overall economy by retaining and attracting businesses, especially those that provide higher-paying jobs. Solicit businesses that are consistent with the goals of this growth policy and that enhance Ronan's quality of life.

Discussion: Ronan has a relatively high unemployment rate. Furthermore, the median income of Ronan households is lower than the average for both Lake County and Montana. Job retention and creation are major goals of the LCCDC. Efforts must be targeted toward desirable businesses so that all growth policy goals may be achieved.

Objective 6-A: Work with the existing business owners and operators in Ronan to ensure they have the ability to remain inside the City and expand as needed in a manner consistent with this growth policy.

Objective 6-B: Work with existing institutions (e.g., SKC, Job Corps) to ensure that an adequate number of qualified workers are available to meet the needs of local businesses. Investigate training needs of employees to ensure excellent service. Take advantage of the DOC Superhost program, or utilize services related training elsewhere (e.g., SKC).

Objective 6-C: Market Ronan’s strengths and competitive advantage as a business center to prospective businesses. For example, the excellent hospital could draw retirement-related businesses and additional medical facilities.

Objective 6-D: Revise the zoning ordinance as appropriate to provide for location of new businesses in identified areas and to meet the needs of businesses that are consistent with the growth policy.

Housing Needs

Issue 7: There is limited housing available in Ronan.

Goal 7: Increase the availability of various types of housing in Ronan, including housing that is suitable for a range of income levels.

Discussion: The lack of affordable housing, in particular, was identified as a significant issue by several people interviewed. Specific issues identified include: an extreme shortage of housing in the \$100,000-\$150,000 price range; lack of affordable rental property; and a shortage of “for profit” affordable housing. There are two housing authorities that provide subsidized housing; both have large waiting lists.

Factors potentially contributing to the affordable housing shortage include the following: absence of lots to build on; the price of housing is increasing significantly and the gap between incomes and housing prices is widening; and zoning regulations are a barrier to smaller mobile homes and trailer parks.

There are also few higher-value homes within the boundaries of Ronan. The most expensive housing is located out of town. Issues raised in relation to this fact include: lack of revenue from taxes to pay for facilities and services; an inadequate housing mix; a

scarcity of people with disposable income to contribute to the local economy; and new or prospective hospital and school district employees don't move to Ronan. Meeting participants generally felt that Ronan needs to offer more amenities to attract higher-income residents and higher-value housing.

Some participants pointed to a need for senior citizen housing that is located close to stores and health care, and accessible to these locations via wheelchair-accessible sidewalks or paths or transit service. Downtown near the hospital is a good location. Finally, some participants suggested that different types of housing should be integrated and downtown, apartment style housing can help to provide business owners with customers living nearby.

Objective 7-A: Allow for singlewide mobile homes and trailer courts in specific locations, apartments and/or condominiums in or near the downtown area, homes above stores in the downtown area and larger lots and/or amenity filled subdivisions for higher end homes.

Objective 7-B: Work with the Salish Kootenai Housing Authority, the Ronan Housing Authority, and major employers to maximize the acquisition of financial assistance from state, federal, and other sources for subsidizing housing costs and improving the stock of affordable housing.

Objective 7-C: Make more lots available for the development of all types of housing through annexation.

Objective 7-D: Remove barriers to subdivision so more lots are available for the development of housing.

Objective 7-E: Work with developers to plan for senior friendly housing with suitable residential units that are accessible to services.

Public Facilities

Issue 8: Ronan's streets and related infrastructure are generally in poor repair.

Goal 8: Improve the condition of Ronan's streets, in addition to adjacent parking, storm drains, gutters and sidewalks.

Discussion: Meeting participants identified the condition of the Ronan's street-related infrastructure as a problem. Some residents focused on the condition of the roads, while others felt improvements to sidewalks and storm drainage were important as well. In fact, this combination of infrastructure concerns was the highest priority issue at the two public meetings.

One of the problems with the roads is that there is a high water table in Ronan and the soil contains an abundance of clay. Compounding matters, many of the streets have inadequate base layers. The result is that the streets have potholes, and are frequently muddy, dusty, or both. Street maintenance will be an ongoing problem unless a costly base layer is established.

During the public involvement process, participants recognized that obtaining funding for anything more than a “Band-Aid” approach to street improvements will be a challenge, but is worth pursuing. While some special improvement districts (SIDs) have been established, other proposed districts have failed. Reasons residents suggested for the previous failure of SIDs include: 1) A small group of property owners are committed to paying for improvements that actually benefit many people; and, 2) The benefits of improving the roads haven’t been promoted enough.

Objective 8-A: Focus on long-term road fixes, rather than temporary repairs. With this in mind, prioritize the City-wide need for street-related improvements. Lay out a schedule for improvements, with a minimum of one street fixed annually.

Objective 8-B: Divide Ronan into sections based on road improvement needs. Relying on neighborhood leadership, conduct meetings on sector-specific road improvements. If sufficient public support exists, consider establishing SIDs.

Objective 8-C: Evaluate funding mechanisms that are broader than SIDs to finance street improvements. Consider options such as impact fees, mill levies, spreading the cost of improvements among more people who benefit, rather than just those who own property on the street. Investigate cooperative funding mechanisms with the private sector and Tribal and County governments.

Objective 8-D: Ensure that road, utility, and sidewalk work is coordinated, to avoid multiple disruptions and additional expense.

Objective 8-E: Work with the Montana Department of Transportation to coordinate work on the new Highway 93 with selected improvements to Ronan’s streets and other infrastructure. By “piggybacking” projects, better rates may be available for materials and contractors, with less disruption to the community.

Objective 8-F: Require that new development include sidewalks and/or other pedestrian facilities as well as adequate storm drainage and high quality, paved roads.

Issue 9: Existing and future parks and recreation facilities in and around Ronan represent an important resource and a potential catalyst for economic development.

Goal 9: Maximize the potential of the Ronan area’s park and recreation system—along with nearby recreational lands and spectacular scenery—as important components of the city’s quality of life and economic vitality.

Discussion: Spring Creek Park is an important amenity for Ronan, one with remaining underutilized potential as a recreation facility. In addition, the new Mission Range Event Complex was frequently mentioned during the public meetings and interviews as a promising development. In particular, it was cited as an example of good cooperation between the Tribes, City of Ronan, Lake County and other parties. Because of its proximity to downtown, it was seen as having substantial potential for making a long-term contribution to the economic vitality of that area, with the possibility of hosting powwows, fairs, and other special events.

A more diverse array of recreational facilities for Ronan’s young people was also mentioned as an important issue by students and community leaders, and could be a vital tool for keeping kids out of trouble. Additionally, Ronan’s children need safe options to move in and around town: A good system of pathways meets a combination of transportation, recreational, and health needs. Portions of the adult population lack access to their own vehicles due to age, poverty, or other factors, making it difficult for them to shop, get to jobs, and carry out other tasks without good sidewalks or walkways.

Finally, there a wide range of recreational opportunities near Ronan that many potential visitors may not be aware of, including the golf course and conservation lands; marketing the whole range of options in and around town may help draw more tourists to the area.

Objective 9-A: Continue cooperative planning for the new Mission Range Event Complex, involving all potentially affected parties, including the Tribal Council, City of Ronan, Lake County, Ronan School District, fairgrounds, rodeo and Pioneer Days organizers, Boys and Girls Club, fitness facility advocates, students and others.

Objective 9-B: Investigate the viability of including a public campground as part of the new event complex, as this would help address the lack of places for visitors to stay in Ronan, particularly during tournaments, powwows, and other special events.

Objective 9-C: Consider additional recreational facilities to better meet the needs of Ronan’s youth. Some ideas for future recreational facilities include more biking/walking paths, a swimming pool, ice skating rink, additional athletic facilities, skate board park, water slide, youth activity center for older kids, arcade, etc.

Objective 9-D: Develop a non-motorized transportation network. The school system and hospital are integral parts of the community, and need to be closely involved

in alternative transportation discussions. A growing population of senior citizens will require special mobility needs (e.g., wheel chair accessibility). The trail along Round Butte Road is popular, but is an isolated segment that needs to be integrated into a wide-

Objective 9-E: Require that new subdivisions provide sidewalks or paved pathways that are adequately sized and linked to the existing and planned sidewalk and trail system.

Objective 9-F: Ensure that Ronan’s existing and planned recreational facilities are adequately and comprehensively marketed, in combination with the many tourism opportunities surrounding Ronan (e.g., Mission Mountains Wilderness, Ninepipe National Wildlife Refuge, National Bison Range, the Owl Research Institute, etc.). Many potential visitors are unaware of all there is to do and see in and around Ronan (e.g., bird watching, fishing, mountain climbing, etc.). Work with Tribal and federal agencies in providing information to prospective visitors about lands that are open to the public, the process for getting required permits, etc. Some tourists may not understand what they need to do to recreate on Tribal lands.

Objective 9-G: Maximize use of Ronan’s recreation facilities for hosting special events that will attract both visitors and local residents, increasing economic benefits and local pride. Special events hold potential for having a positive impact on Ronan’s young people.

Objective 9-H: Work to ensure the long-term viability and ongoing improvement of both the museum and Mission Mountain Country Club/golf course as important amenities for residents, as well as attractions for visitors.

Issue 10:	The location and design of the new section of Highway 93 through Ronan will have a significant impact on the City’s quality of life.
Goal 10:	Ensure close coordination between the Montana Department of Transportation, the City of Ronan, the Tribal Government, and other parties on planning and constructing the new Highway 93 route through town.

Discussion: If done well, the Highway 93 project could result in a net improvement to Ronan; if not, the opposite could occur. The project offers the opportunity to coordinate the highway work with other, related infrastructure projects, perhaps reducing costs and construction-related impacts.

Objective 10-A: Ensure that alternative transportation needs—including those of bicyclists and pedestrians—are incorporated into the planning and design of the new Highway 93 and new development projects, rather than being an afterthought. The needs of children and the elderly are especially critical. It is important that the new highway not become an unsafe barrier for pedestrians, dividing the City into two pieces.

Objective 10-B: As the Highway 93 project moves forward, maintain regular channels of communication between the Montana Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Lake County, and the Tribal Council.

Objective 10-C: Ensure that it is easy and safe for travelers on the new Highway 93 to identify and access destinations they wish to visit in Ronan.

Objective 10-D: Coordinate street, sidewalk and water and sewer projects with Highway 93 upgrades for efficiency and cost effectiveness.

Issue 11: Ronan’s water supply and wastewater treatment systems will be inadequate within five years to handle future growth.

Goal 11: Ensure that Ronan’s water supply and wastewater treatment systems are updated, maintained, and appropriately expanded so that they do not inhibit development in areas designated for future growth.

Discussion: This goal has been characterized as a top priority by the Planning Board and City Council.

Objective 11-A: Prioritize future upgrades and possible expansion of the water supply and wastewater treatment systems and associated infrastructure based on potential build out scenarios and public health and safety. These improvements are a critical tool for the City to direct growth to the most desirable locations.

Objective 11-B: Work to aggressively secure funding from grants and partnerships with the private sector to improve the water supply and wastewater-related infrastructure. Also explore impact fees so that the costs of upgrades and expansion related to growth are paid for by the new users.

Local Services

Issue 12: Growth in and around Ronan will place an increasing demand on local fire, emergency medical and law enforcement services and will require capital improvements within the next five years.

Goal 12: Ensure that fire and emergency medical service providers are able to keep up with growth in and around Ronan.

Discussion: Ronan has an excellent fire department and emergency medical services. Participants were not concerned about the quality of the services, but some noted that the demand on these services will increase with growth, particularly given the high

percentage of senior citizens. However, a concern expressed at the public meetings was the perception of a lack of interagency cooperation law enforcement agencies. In general, participants seemed to feel that there are enough law enforcement officers, but they are not as effective as they could be because there are several entities with jurisdiction in the area, including the Ronan Police Department, the Lake County Sheriff's Office, the Montana Highway Patrol and the Tribal Police Department. A commonly expressed sentiment is more funding for law enforcement is needed, primarily so that more jail space can be provided.

Objective 12-A: Monitor the status of fire and emergency medical services at regular intervals (e.g., quarterly, annually). If issues arise, respond as needed.

Objective 12-B: Maintain or revise standards in the subdivision and zoning regulations that are necessary to facilitate the provision of fire, emergency medical and police medical services, or to minimize the need for such services. Seek suggestions from providers of these services.

Objective 12-C: Work with law enforcement agencies throughout the area to improve interagency cooperation and coordination. Evaluate efforts at interagency regularly and make adjustments and additions as needed.

Objective 12-B: Secure more funding for jail space.

Objective 12-D: Explore the use of impact fees and other funding mechanisms.

Issue 13: There is a lack of transit service between Ronan and other communities in the Mission Valley.

Goal 13: Promote transit service between Ronan and other communities in the Mission Valley.

Discussion: Many low-income residents do not have cars. Ronan has a high percentage of senior citizens in comparison with state average. Some services (e.g., Tribal health pharmacy) are available in some communities and not others, making access difficult for those who don't drive. The Missoula-Ravalli Transportation Management Agency provides morning and evening transport to and from Missoula, but may not meet the needs of the wider population.

Objective 13-A: Work with other communities, employers, the Missoula-Ravalli Transportation Management Agency and other government entities as well as the private sector to expand and operate a transit system service.

Issue 14: Ronan has excellent medical facilities.

Goal 14: Build on Ronan’s existing high quality medical facilities and services and promote the expansion of current and related services.

Discussion: Ronan has an excellent hospital. Other high quality medical services include dental, optical, and home health care services. These are strong assets that can be used to draw related businesses and future residents in order to help enhance Ronan’s economic vitality and quality of life.

Objective 14-A: Tout Ronan’s excellent medical facilities in promoting Ronan as a retirement center and/or a site for geriatric facilities.

Objective 14-B: Work with leaders of existing medical facilities to identify their future needs and how the City might assist while ensuring a balance of community interests.

Objective 14-C: Modify the zoning code to allow for the expansion of current facilities and the location of complimentary ones.

Issue 15: Ronan needs more services and activities for youth.

Goal 15: Improve the quality of life in Ronan by providing more services and activities for youth.

Discussion: Many of those interviewed praised the projects carried out by high school students to improve Ronan (e.g., the arch at the entrance to downtown.) The Boys and Girls Club serves some of the needs of younger kids. However, interviewees (including high school students) believe that there aren’t enough activities for youth, especially older youth. As a result, kids are bored and sometimes hang out and engage in anti-social behavior.

Some participants expressed a need for more services for troubled youth in general. Substance abuse (alcohol and drugs, especially methamphetamine) by youth should be addressed. Furthermore, kids are affected by the gambling and substance abuse problems of adults.

Objective 15-A: Provide more recreational facilities for kids.

Objective 15-B: Partner with social services providers and schools to develop and implement a program to address substance abuse by kids.

Objective 15-C: Assess the need for more after school programs for kids.

Objective 15-D: Promote continued involvement by youth in community improvement projects.

Land Use

Issue 16: The condition of properties in Ronan has deteriorated.

Goal 16: Clean up and improve rundown properties in Ronan.

Discussion: This issue was ranked as a high priority by those participating in the public meetings, interviews and work sessions. Cooperation with the Tribes is essential to address property owned by Tribal members. One person noted that building permits are expensive; this could be a barrier to upgrading properties.

Objective 16-A: Strengthen and enforce nuisance and community decay ordinances.

Objective 16-B: Initiate an annual or semi-annual cleanup campaign in Ronan as part of a community pride effort.

Objective 16-C: Consider developing a comprehensive urban renewal program. (See Title 7, Chapter 15, Part 42, MCA).

Objective 16-D: Consider the City purchasing downtown buildings and rehabilitating them.

Issue 17: Ronan contains an insufficient number of lots to build on, especially lots with sewer and water service. In order to increase available buildable lots, the City will have to make significant water, road, fire and wastewater capital expenditures within the next five years.

Goal 17: Increase lots available for building through annexation and infrastructure improvement.

Discussion: There are typically 10 or fewer lots available for development within the City limits. Some land is protected and not available or suitable for development. Significant pipeline upgrades would be required in order to serve residential development on the northern and western edges of the City; pipeline upgrades may be necessary for land development along the City's eastern boundary. The need to plan for annexation was mentioned by several participants.

Ronan is laid out in a traditional grid pattern with small lot sizes. However, the City should consider what development pattern is desired in light of the goals in the growth policy. (What type of development pattern will promote the development of higher-value

homes, affordable housing, pedestrian access to facilities and services?) One realtor noted that many people are looking for 2- to 3-acre mobile home lots and they are not available.

Objective 17-A: Develop a plan for annexation of lands outside of the City. Identify and map land suitable for development and land that is protected from or inappropriate for development. Take into consideration: the Lake County Growth Policy; water and sewer capacity; environmental constraints; and the desired pattern of development in light of Growth Policy goals.

Objective 17-B: Coordinate with Lake County to develop a cooperative planning and zoning area outside of the City limits.

Objective 17-C: Improve and expand Ronan's water supply and wastewater treatment system so that it can serve lands identified as suitable for development and annexation.

Issue 18: The zoning ordinance is outdated and not consistent with community goals. Furthermore, the law requires that the zoning regulations be in accordance with the growth policy. (76-2-304, MCA)

Goal 18: Revise Ronan's zoning regulations so the regulations facilitate fulfillment of the goals and objectives of the growth policy.

Discussion: The zoning ordinance generally requires separation of incompatible uses. Because the community has indicated an interest in certain types of mixed uses, the zoning ordinance should be reviewed to ensure desirable types of land use might be intermingled. The zoning ordinance is a tool that may be used to protect certain features that attract people to Ronan, such as views of the Mission Mountains. Views can be protected by regulation of signage, building height, and height and location of wireless communication facilities.

Over the long term, design standards can improve the appearance of the city and support the maintenance of a common theme in the downtown area. (In general, nonconforming uses must be allowed to continue.) In addition, landscaping requirements could be established for commercial sites. The current zoning regulations hinder the use of land for singlewide mobile homes and trailer parks, which are affordable housing options.

Objective 18-A: Ensure that the zoning ordinance is consistent with the goals and objectives of the growth policy including allowing for singlewide mobile homes and trailer courts, eating and lodging establishments and mixed housing and compatible commercial land uses.

Objective 18-B: If desired by the downtown business community, amend the zoning to include design standards to implement a common vision or theme.

Issue 19: The subdivision approval process may be a barrier to the development of new lots and different types of housing. Furthermore, the law requires that the subdivision regulations be in accordance with the growth policy. (76-1-606, MCA)

Goal 19: Revise Ronan’s subdivision regulations so the regulations facilitate fulfillment of the goals and objectives of the growth policy, including the goal of increasing the availability of various types of housing.

Discussion: This issue was raised by interviewees who are familiar with property development issues. They asserted that tackling this issue is key to addressing Ronan’s need for all types of housing and increasing the municipal tax base.

Specific concerns mentioned include the following: the City and County subdivision approval process is cumbersome and lengthy; landowners cannot afford to comply with City and County subdivision requirements; a lack of predictability in subdivision review discourages landowners from subdividing; the roles and responsibilities of the City and County are not clear and developers get bounced between jurisdictions; and development is inhibited by the presence of multiple jurisdictions. Because subdivision is now generally taking place outside Ronan, working with Lake County is important.

Objective 19-A: Prepare and adopt subdivision regulations that are consistent with the goals and objectives of this growth policy.

Objective 19-B: Provide more predictability in the subdivision review process by clearly defining the City’s expectations in the regulations so developers know what is expected of them.

Objective 19-C: Provide incentives for the development of affordable housing in the subdivision review process. Examples are reducing fees, modifying requirements, or expediting the review period.

Objective 19-D: Consider requiring that a certain percentage of any large subdivision be dedicated for affordable housing.

Objective 19-E: Require that new subdivisions provide sidewalks and pathways that are adequately linked to the existing and planned sidewalk and trail system.

Objective 19-F: Seek and consider suggestions from fire and emergency medical services providers in revision of the subdivision regulations and individual development projects.

Objective 19-G: Require developers to build all infrastructure to City and/or Montana Public Works standards. Encourage developers to overbuild sewer and water

lines to allow for future development and encourage the use of “payback” agreements as additional development comes on line.

Issue 20: Spring Creek does not include many natural stream features that support fish and wildlife including meanders, substantial riparian vegetation and fallen woody debris. The floodplain also has not been mapped and could pose danger to life and property if a large scale flood were to occur.

Goal 20: Restore segments of Spring Creek as resources allow and map the 100-year floodplain.

Objective 20-A: Seek partnerships and funding to restore appropriate segments of Spring Creek to a natural channel with vegetation and structure that provide habitat to fish and wildlife.

Objective 20-B: Seek to have the 100-year floodplain delineated to protect life and property as a part of the Highway 93 upgrade and/or through other measures.

Objective 20-C: Ensure that proposed development along Spring Creek does not increase flood levels or result in loss of life and property.

Community Qualities

Issue 21: Ronan is a strong community; however, Ronan’s citizens need to show more pride in the community.

Goal 21: Foster a greater sense of community pride in Ronan.

Discussion: People appreciate the fact that Ronan is a small community and people know each other. Community members stated that Ronan is compassionate and accepting and that the community comes together in times of need. Furthermore, Ronan does not suffer from the traffic congestion that plagues other communities. The high school Student Council noted that Ronan is safe for kids. The outdoor amenities and spectacular view of the Mission Mountains make Ronan a special place, yet citizens often emphasize the lack of amenities in Ronan in comparison with Polson.

A number of residents commented that Ronan lacks a community identity. Others noted that there is a shortage of leaders and/or leadership in Ronan. While there are success stories, one person noted that there are a limited number of volunteers and they are usually the same people. Another asserted that the community needs social activities other than drinking and school-related activities. Overall, many citizens seem to feel pessimistic about the potential for revitalizing Ronan. This indicates that a concerted effort or campaign is needed to revive the community spirit.

Objective 21-A: Increase involvement in the community, develop leadership skills, instill community pride, and provide additional social activities by establishing task and project oriented task forces and volunteer committees (e.g., community clean up day). Make a concerted effort to recruit new volunteers to serve on these through a campaign that includes personal contacts.

Objective 21-B: Publicize and build on Ronan’s successes.

<p>Issue 22: The community of Ronan is culturally diverse and multi-jurisdictional, including Tribal and nontribal members, as well as people who live inside and outside of its borders.</p> <p>Goal 22: Involve all segments of the population in caring for the “Greater Ronan Community.”</p>

Discussion: There are multiple jurisdictions that govern the “Greater Ronan Community.” Tribal and nontribal members are sometimes affected by the services and regulations of different governments. Some community leaders live outside the boundaries of Ronan in Lake County. The school district is larger than the City limits of Ronan.

Many meeting participants noted the importance of working with the Tribes to accomplish common goals. The suggestion that the Tribal government and the School District need to be part of the planning process ranked 9th among items prioritized at the public meetings. Concerns about the impact on authority can be a barrier to cooperation between the Tribal government and the City. There are cooperative success stories, including a strategic planning effort for the schools and the Mission Range Event Complex.

The Ronan School District will affect and be affected by major future plans for Ronan. One example of an issue where both the School District and the City have a stake in coordinating long-term plans is the location of the new high school and the future use of the existing high school. Outdated school buildings could potentially be used for a retirement center or other desirable purpose.

Objective 22-A: Involve the Tribal Council and the School District in the process for developing and implementing the growth policy and in ongoing planning processes. Ensure that each entity’s long-term needs for growth and change (e.g., needs for new facilities) are integrated with Ronan’s other plans.

Objective 22-B: Strive to place the larger community good above jurisdictional issues in all matters where both the City and the Tribal government play a role.

Objective 22-C: Use an outside facilitator to lead substantial collaborative planning efforts that involve Tribal and nontribal entities.

Objective 22-D: Encourage the Tribal Council and School District to have representation on the Ronan Planning Board.

Objective 22-E: Ensure that students have an opportunity to voice their opinions about planning decisions that will affect them. The extent to which students feel involved and connected to the city's future may affect their interest in remaining after graduation.

Objective 22-F: Encourage the Ronan School District to continue community service projects that benefit the community (e.g., archway, housing, etc.)

Issue 23: There are ambivalent perceptions about the experiences of children attending Ronan's schools.

Goal 23: Work to ensure that all students feel welcome and improve the reputation of Ronan's schools.

Discussion: While some participants mentioned as a point of pride that Ronan's schools draw Indian students from around the state, others were concerned that residents were moving to Polson or Charlo because of the schools. The reputation of the schools is an important consideration for prospective residents (e.g., hospital employees) who might consider relocating to Ronan. Furthermore, high turnover among students creates challenges for educators.

Social, cultural, and racial issues are the focus of concern. In particular, some meeting participants and interviewees believe that there is disparate treatment of students, depending on whether they are Tribal members or not. Harassment of students was a concern that was expressed more than once, as was the perception that school disciplinary action is administered unequally, depending on whether the student is white or Indian.

The diverse student body and cultural history in the Ronan school system is potentially an incredible asset and learning tool, but only if differences are not seen as dividing lines.

Objective 23-A: Encourage the Ronan School District to establish a task force composed of students, school officials, and local residents or some other mechanism to: track and document complaints regarding discrimination and harassment; make recommendations on how to improve relations; and disseminate information about what is actually occurring.

Objective 23-B: Encourage the Ronan School District to establish more special events, sports, and other vehicles to encourage both students and their parents to interact more broadly, and take greater pride in the school system.

Objective 23-C: Work to ensure appropriate representation of all groups and perspectives on the Ronan School Board.

Objective 23-D: Work cooperatively with the School District to publicize and market success stories from the school system.

VIII. Intergovernmental Coordination

Montana Code Annotated (MCA) 76-1-601 requires that growth policies contain statements on certain subjects. One of the subjects is how a local government will coordinate and cooperate with other governmental jurisdictions. Specifically, the law states the growth policy must describe how a city will coordinate and cooperate with the county in which it is located on matters related to the growth policy.

Description of Intergovernmental Coordination and Cooperation

The City of Ronan, Lake County and the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes have purchased approximately 62 acres of land on the western edge of Ronan and are in the process of planning a multi-purpose, family-oriented recreational and cultural facility. The three parties, along with numerous participants, are all doing their part to help provide for the needs of the local population. This process and project can be cited as a model for future cooperative efforts.

Lake County

Lake County has designated the area surrounding the City of Ronan a community growth area, where annexation and development are encouraged. The Ronan government seeks to have influence over how its boundaries develop. Therefore, the City of Ronan intends to pursue the establishment of a cooperative planning area with Lake County pursuant to MCA 76-1-504.

Establishing a cooperative planning area would require the Ronan City Council and Lake County Commissioners to devise a jurisdictional area and then form a City-County Planning Board as described in MCA 76-2-201 – 204. This board would be advisory in nature and make recommendations to the governing bodies on zoning regulations, subdivision proposals and other projects. Establishing a cooperative planning area and planning board would be likely to lead to further communication and cooperation between the City of Ronan and Lake County on multiple growth policy related issues.

The Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes

The Flathead Indian Reservation is a multi-jurisdictional area. The Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes have authority over surface water quality, air quality and land use for Tribal members within the City's boundaries. The Salish & Kootenai Housing Authority provides housing for many Tribal members in and around Ronan. Both the Tribal and City governments have a strong interest in working together for the needs of the local population.

Financing sewer, water, road and sidewalk improvements is likely to be a major issue in the coming years and the opportunity exists to pool resources in order to generate more funding. Another issue that has been expressed is the City has a decay ordinance but only has the authority to enforce it on non-Tribally owned properties. In order to address these and other issues, the City and Tribal Councils should meet at least quarterly and discuss both specific and general issues. It is hoped that by building and maintaining

friendships and working relationships, the parties will accomplish more together than they would separately.

IX. Subdivision Review

Subdivision Review Criteria

MCA 76-3-608(4)-(5) grants governing bodies the authority to require subdividers to design proposed subdivisions to reasonably minimize potentially significant adverse impacts identified through the review process. It is recognized that when requiring mitigation, the City of Ronan may not unreasonably restrict a landowner's ability to develop property and the City Council must consult with the subdivider and give due weight and consideration to his or her expressed preferences. However, in some instances the unmitigated impacts of a proposed development may be unacceptable and will preclude approval of the subdivision.

When required by law, subdivision applications shall include written documentation as to whether and to what extent a proposed subdivision is likely to impact agriculture, agricultural water user facilities, local services, the natural environment, wildlife and wildlife habitat and public health and safety. No specific geographic areas are exempt from this requirement. The Ronan Planning Board and City Council will evaluate the expected impacts and issue findings stating the degree to which impacts are expected and requiring mitigation when appropriate. The relative value of each criterion and the significance of potential impacts will be weighted in the context of the goals and objectives expressed in this Growth Policy, other adopted documents and the public interest.

1. Impacts of a Subdivision on Agriculture

Agriculture is defined as the use of land for growing, raising or marketing plants or animals to produce food, feed and fiber. This does not include gardening for personal use, keeping of house pets or landscaping for aesthetic purposes.

The City of Ronan is surrounded by land that is currently used for agricultural production but which is expected to be developed and annexed over time for small town and urban scale development. Lake County has already identified the area immediately surrounding the City of Ronan as an area for growth and annexation. Due to the lack of currently available lots for development within the City, Ronan can only grow outward.

It is the intent of the City of Ronan to encourage growth and annexation while minimizing impacts to surrounding agricultural producers. All subdivisions of property that abut agricultural lands should include measures to control the spread of noxious weeds. In some cases the perimeter boundaries of a subdivision should be fenced to prevent conflicts with neighboring ranchers. When the City of Ronan reviews subdivision proposals, a case by case review will be necessary to limit or eliminate potential conflicts with agricultural producers and other measures as may be appropriate based on the conditions surrounding the property proposed for subdivision.

2. Impacts of a subdivision on agricultural water user facilities

Agricultural water user facilities are defined as those facilities that provide water for agricultural land or provide water for the production of agricultural products including, but not limited to, canals, ditches, pipes and other conveying facilities.

A number of irrigation canals and ditches exist within the City of Ronan. These waterways are generally part of the Flathead Irrigation Project that serves the Mission Valley and other lands. It is the intent of the City of Ronan to allow for growth and development in a manner that will not impede the flow of irrigation water to surrounding properties. During the review of subdivision proposals on lands where water courses exist, the subdivider will be required to demonstrate that irrigation flows to other lands will not be impeded by the development project. Typically a statement from Flathead Irrigation Project officials that water flows will not be disrupted by the proposed development project will suffice. However, all subdivision proposals on land with irrigation water courses will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

3. Impacts of a subdivision on local services

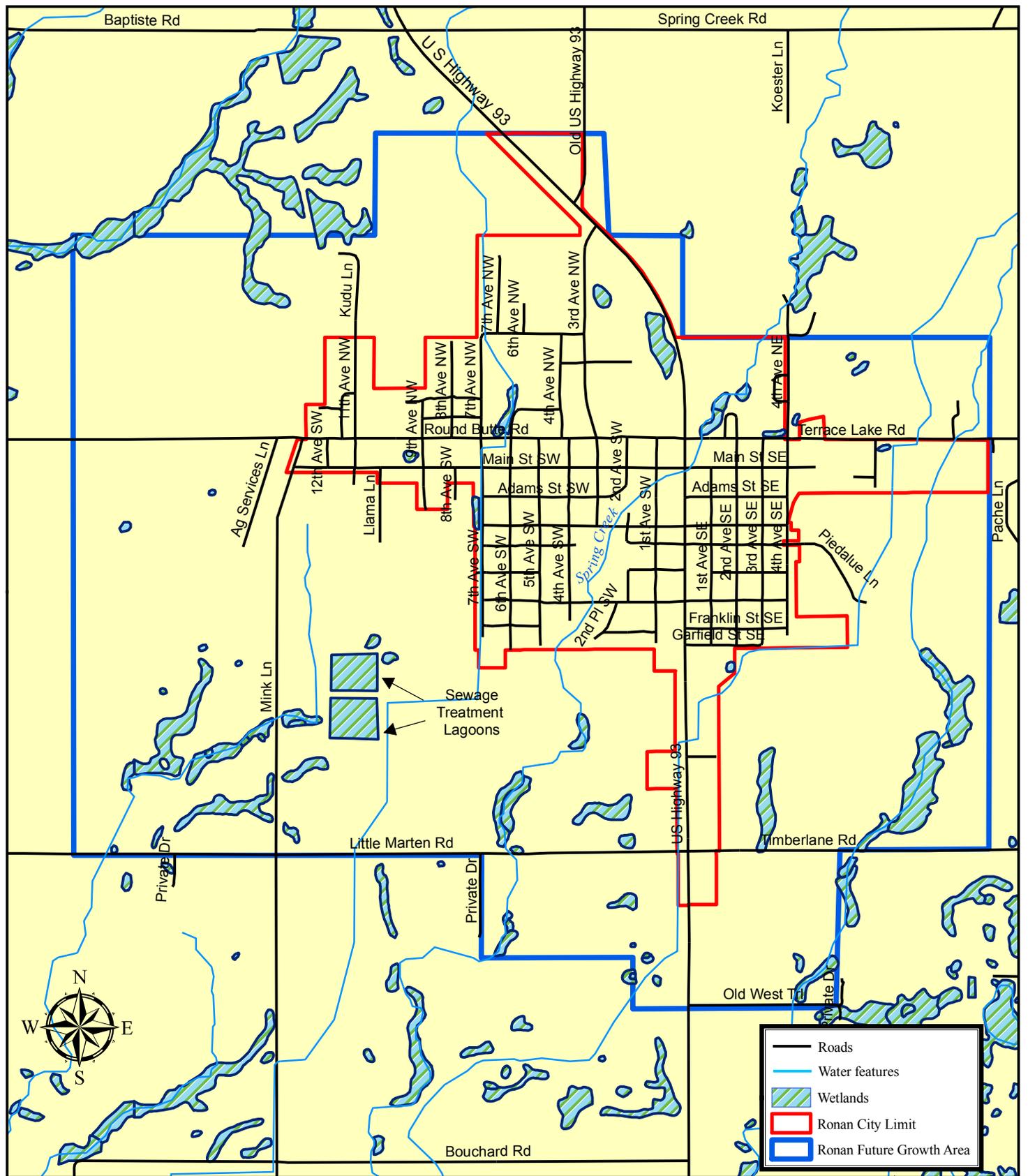
Local services are defined as all services provided by governmental or nongovernmental entities that are deemed to be necessary to maintain basic living standards. These services include fire and police protection, medical services, water supplies, wastewater conveyance and treatment, stormwater management, streets and sidewalks, electrical power, telecommunications, parks, schools, libraries and solid waste facilities.

Subdividers shall be required to demonstrate that all local services are available in sufficient capacity and quality to support the future occupants and users of their proposed projects. Typically such documentation consists of letters of review by the responsible agencies and service providers stating that the services are sufficient to support the future development. Where significant questions exist regarding the availability and capacity of certain services, a developer may be required to pay for the costs associated with hiring qualified, independent persons or firms to evaluate the existing local services and stating what, if any, upgrades, expansions or mitigation measures are necessary to support the proposed development project in a manner that will not result in diminishing services for established users.

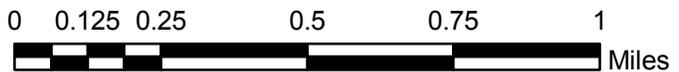
The question of whether additional information will be required will be decided during the pre-application phase of subdivision review. The independent persons or firms and their scopes of work will be agreed upon by the developer and the subdivision administrator, who will confer with the Planning Board and /or City Council, prior to engaging their services.

4. Impacts of a subdivision on the natural environment

The natural environment is defined as the physical conditions which exist within a given area including land, air, surface and groundwater, wetlands, geology, soils,



Ronan Area Water Features



1 inch equals 0.326244 miles

June 6, 2008

Source: National Wetlands Inventory, not intended to delineate wetlands

flora and fauna and objects of historic, prehistoric or aesthetic significance. Of particular significance in Ronan are the presence of high groundwater, stream water quality, floodplains, air quality, wetlands and cultural resources.

A subdivision proposal may have an unacceptable effect on the natural environment when after review and fact finding, the project is found likely to jeopardize the existing environmental quality in the area. Where significant questions exist regarding the potential impacts of a development project on the natural environment, a developer may be required to pay for the costs associated with hiring one or more qualified, independent persons or firms to evaluate the existing environmental quality, potential impacts and stating what, if any, mitigation measures may be appropriate.

The question of whether additional information will be required will be decided during the pre-application phase of subdivision review. The independent persons or firms and their scopes of work will be agreed upon by the developer and the subdivision administrator, who will confer with the Planning Board and /or City Council, prior to engaging their services.

5. Impacts of a subdivision on wildlife and wildlife habitat

Wildlife is defined as animals existing in their natural environment, not including humans, domestic pets or feral animals. Wildlife habitat is defined as areas containing features essential to wildlife for feeding, cover, migration, breeding, rearing, nesting or buffer areas.

The City of Ronan and the area immediately outside of the municipal boundaries are expected to be developed for small town and urban scale living and working in the coming years. These areas are not generally considered to be important or critical wildlife habitat. However, when significant questions exist regarding the potential impacts of a development project on wildlife and wildlife habitat, a developer may be required to pay the costs of hiring qualified, independent persons or firms evaluating the existing habitat values, potential impacts and stating what, if any, mitigation measures may be appropriate.

The question of whether additional information will be required will be decided during the pre-application phase of subdivision review. The independent persons or firms and their scopes of work will be agreed upon by the developer and the subdivision administrator, who will confer with the Planning Board and /or City Council, prior to engaging their services.

6. Impacts of a subdivision on public health and safety

Public health and safety is defined as a condition of well being, free from danger or risk of injury to the community at large, but may also include specific individuals or small groups of persons.

Subdivision proposals may impact public health and safety by presenting traffic hazards, danger to life and property from flooding or if sewer, water, roads and walkways, police, fire and emergency services are not available in sufficient quantity or quality to serve the future residents or users. MCA 76-3-510 permits a local government to require a subdivider to pay for all of the costs necessary to extend capital facilities related to public health and safety, including but not limited to, public roads, sewer lines, water lines and storm drains. When significant questions exist regarding the potential impacts of a development project on public health and safety, a developer may be required to pay for the costs associated with hiring qualified, independent persons or firms to evaluate the existing habitat values, potential impacts and stating what, if any, mitigation measures may be appropriate.

The question of whether additional information will be required will be decided during the pre-application phase of subdivision review. The independent persons or firms and their scopes of work will be agreed upon by the developer and the subdivision administrator, who will confer with the Planning Board and /or City Council, prior to engaging their services.

Subdivision Review Process

Typically staff planners from the Lake County Planning Department provide review services to the City of Ronan. However, Ronan may decide to use in-house staff to review preliminary plat applications or contract with other parties for these services. In any case, developers are encouraged to contact City Hall for the most current review procedure.

Procedure for Conducting Public Hearings on Proposed Subdivisions

The Ronan Planning Board and City Council shall use following procedure during public hearings regarding subdivision proposals.

1. Notice of the public hearing shall be advertised according to state law.
2. The presiding officer shall announce the purpose and subject of the hearing.
3. The presiding officer shall determine whether public notice of the hearing was provided. If proper notice was not provided, the hearing shall be re-scheduled.
4. The presiding officer shall ask if any member wishes to declare a conflict of interest in the matter to be heard, and excuse anyone who declares such a conflict from participating in the hearing. Any excused party may voice comment on the matter as a member of the public but not a voting member of the board.
5. In the event that a majority of Planning Board members are not present, a public meeting may proceed out of respect to the developer and those in attendance, although the official public hearing will be held by the governing body.

6. The presiding officer shall ask the subdivision administrator (typically a staff person or a contracted planner) to present a report on the proposal being considered.
7. The presiding officer shall direct questions from board members to the administrator. Such questions shall be for the purpose of clarifying the facts surrounding the proposal.
8. The presiding officer shall remind those present that all statements must address the merits of the proposed project as measured by its compliance or lack of compliance with the Ronan Growth Policy, Subdivision Regulations, Zoning Regulations or other rules, regulations or ordinances.
9. The presiding officer shall request a statement from the developer or a representative. Board members may ask questions of the developer or the representative.
10. The presiding officer shall ask for statements from members of the public. All public comments shall be directed to the board and individuals must identify themselves by name. The board may ask questions of members of the public.
11. In order to allow all parties the opportunity to speak and to ensure completion of the agenda, time limits may be set on individual comments.
12. When all statements have been given, the presiding officer shall ask anyone who has given a statement, including the developer or a representative, if they wish to rebut or clarify statements that have been given. Board members may ask questions following each statement.
13. The presiding officer shall close the public hearing and call for a discussion between board members. Board members will have the opportunity to discuss the proposal and any mitigation measures with the administrator, the developer or a representative.
14. The board shall make a recommendation for approval, approval subject to conditions or denial. Any conditions of approval or a denial recommendation must be supported by findings of fact and materials reasons stating the basis for the conditions or the negative recommendation.
15. Written statements, plans, photographs and other material offered in support of statements shall be retained by the City in accordance with its record keeping policy.

X. Implementation

This section of the Ronan Growth Policy includes a description of policies, regulations and other measures to be implemented in order to achieve the goals and objectives provided in Chapter of this document. The list below is not all inclusive and does not address every one of the objectives listed in Chapter VII., but is intended to be a starting point from which to address the issues described in this growth policy.

Following the description of implementation measures is a strategy for development, maintenance, and replacement of public infrastructure, including drinking water systems, wastewater treatment facilities, sewer systems, solid waste facilities, fire protection facilities, roads and bridges as required under Montana Code Annotated 76-1-601.

Description of Policies, Regulations and Other Implementation Measures

1. Update and Adopt Subdivision Regulations

The City of Ronan will adopt updated subdivision regulations within two years of adoption of the Ronan Growth Policy or re-adopt Lake County's Subdivision Regulations (potentially with revisions) in order to comply with 76-1-606, MCA which requires that subdivision regulations be made in accordance with a growth policy.

2. Update Zoning Regulations

The City of Ronan intends to update its zoning regulations within three months of adoption of the Ronan Growth Policy. Some of the items to be addressed are allowing different types of housing in identified areas, providing expanded commercial areas for hotels and restaurants as well as mixed use development, allowing home occupations, and expanding the industrial zoning district. The zoning regulations within the City limits will be based in part on the future land use map in the following chapter.

3. Develop a Cooperative Planning Area

The City of Ronan intends to initiate discussions with Lake County regarding the development of a cooperative planning area for the area outside of the City's boundaries that are expected to be annexed over time. Discussions are intended to begin within six months of adoption of this growth policy.

The City has identified a future growth area and Lake County has also targeted an area surrounding the City limits for future growth. The intended outcome of these discussions is a cooperative planning area and the establishment of a City-County zoning district that will guide small town and urban style growth as adjacent areas are annexed. If zoning regulations are adopted for a cooperative planning area, they will be based in part on the future land use map.

4. Downtown Task Force

The City of Ronan will address issues related to the Central Business District by inviting business owners and other interested parties to meet and plan to improve the vitality and appearance of the downtown area. Leadership will be sought from business owners, the Chamber of Commerce, the Ronan Planning Board and City Council and other interested parties. Assistance may be sought from the Montana Department of Commerce's Main Street Program, Lake County Community Development Corporation, MSU Design Center, contractors and others. Items to be discussed include:

- Developing a common architectural theme and/or design standards,
- Tax increment financing (7-15-4201, MCA),
- Business improvement district (7-12-1101, MCA),
- Property tax abatement,
- Landscaping and streetscape improvements,
- Encouraging visitors to the area to spend time in town, and
- Other revitalization efforts.

The city will begin the process of addressing these and other issues related to the downtown area within six months of adoption of this growth policy.

5. Park and Trail Improvements and Development

The City will continue to expand its park and trail system through the use of City resources, grants, Community Transportation Enhancement Program funds, subdivision fees, possibly impact fees and other means. Subdivision developers are generally encouraged to donate cash in lieu of parkland except where identified in this growth policy or where special circumstances exist. This is will be an ongoing project with no specific time table.

6. Growth and Development

Ronan will generally encourage the re-development of properties within the City limits as well as development and annexation of properties adjacent and/or just outside of the municipal boundaries. All of the lands within the future growth area identified in this growth policy are intended for annexation at some point in the future. The City intends to aggressively address capacity issues related to sewer and water facilities through the use of City resources, grants, loans, bonds and impact fees in order to make sure the City has the ability to serve future development.

Developers will be required to pay a proportional share of the costs of extending infrastructure, in addition to impact fees, needed to serve the future residents and businesses within their development projects. The City will also work with existing businesses to help provide the infrastructure necessary for business retention and expansion on an as-needed basis. Additionally, the City will seek to appoint representatives of the Ronan School District and the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes to its planning board in order to foster the spirit of cooperation, communication and for the greater good of the community.

7. Neighborhood Revitalization

The City will initiate and publicize a “Neighborhood Clean Up Day” either annually or bi-annually in order to encourage property owners to maintain a high level of attractiveness in neighborhoods. The City will work with the Lake County Solid Waste District, the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes, private solid waste haulers, students and others to ensure waste can be disposed of responsibly and all interested parties are invited to take part in this effort. This is a relatively small step but one that can be cited as a success and can be used as a building block.

The City will also continue to talk with the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes about efforts to enforce or mirror the City’s blight ordinance on Tribal member and trust property in order to keep Ronan’s residential areas attractive.

8. Community Collaboration

Many of the goals and objectives cited in Chapter VII do not have clear implementation mechanisms but will be addressed on a case-by-case or as-needed basis over time. Goals such as working with all segments of the population of the greater Ronan community or addressing issues related to public perceptions about the schools or working with business owners for job retention and expansion will be addressed as opportunities arise.

Strategy for Development, Maintenance and Replacement of Public Infrastructure

In order to expand the tax base of the City, provide a good environment for business development, retention and expansion, provide for public health and safety and adhere to regulatory requirements, the City of Ronan must develop, maintain and upgrade public infrastructure. Below is the anticipated strategy for doing this.

Water Supply

The currently identified needs related to the City’s water supply system include the following:

- The City must find a way to store more water in its tank while reducing water pressure where necessary and/or build an additional tank. This is a pressing issue and must be investigated and solutions found in order to keep fire flows at acceptable levels as development occurs.
- Replace substandard water lines.
- A continuous monitoring telemetry system should be installed in order to alert City staff when a problem arises.
- The water storage and settling basin should be enclosed for security reasons and upgraded due to cracking.
- The ozone and chlorination treatment plant should be expanded or replaced.
- Add one or more high productivity wells.

In order to address these needs, the City will seek the services of an engineering firm to compile a preliminary engineering report that investigates the water system and recommends ways to cost effectively repair and expand it. The preliminary engineering report should include build out scenarios based on the future land use map and revised zoning regulations. Costs for compiling such a report will be paid through City funds and/or grant assistance. Once the report is complete, revised priorities will be developed based on 1) public health and safety, 2) regulatory requirements, 3) providing for growth and development, and 4) efficient water use and management. Prioritized improvements will be paid for from hook up fees, special improvement districts (7-12-4102, MCA), possibly impact fees (7-6-1601, MCA), municipal capital improvement funds (7-6-616, MCA) and other revenue sources including bonds, grants and loan assistance as appropriate.

Wastewater Treatment

The May 2006 Preliminary Engineering Report for Municipal Sewer System Improvements lays out specific improvements that will be necessary to implement over time. Identified high priority improvements to date include:

- Disinfection of the wastewater wetlands effluent,
- Modifying Cell 3 and installing aeration,
- Auxiliary power for lift stations,
- Sewer main and collection line capacity,
- Aerated lagoon capacity, and
- Pump station capacity for the lift stations.
- Other priorities such as installing a spray irrigation system or mechanical treatment system may become necessary as more information becomes available.

As stated in the 2006 Preliminary Engineering Report, the City's engineer will also assess build out scenarios based on the future land use map and revised zoning regulations to re-evaluate these and other potential priorities. The City will aggressively seek to ensure the primary wastewater treatment infrastructure has the capacity to accommodate anticipated growth while individual developers will be expected to upgrade and extend lines and lift stations needed to serve their projects. Funding for the maintenance and expansion of the primary system will be sought through grants, loans, bonds, special improvement districts (7-12-4102, MCA), impact fees (7-6-1601, MCA), municipal capital improvement funds (7-6-616, MCA) and other sources.

Solid Waste

The Lake County Solid Waste District manages solid waste disposal in conjunction with private haulers. The City of Ronan will work cooperatively with the Solid Waste District and other parties on an as-needed basis to ensure sufficient capacity and systems are in place to dispose of solid waste in an efficient and environmentally responsible manner. Currently residential property owners are charged approximately \$105 dollars annually for county solid waste disposal.

Fire and Police Protection

Within five years there will be the need for full-time paid Fire Department personnel in order to take some of the burden off of volunteers. There will also be the need for additional police officers. These positions will be added on an as-needed basis and will be paid for using tax dollars and possibly through the implementation of impact fees and other revenue sources if the City Council chooses to explore this funding mechanism.

Stormwater Management

An overall evaluation of water flows and stormwater system capacity would help to identify priority areas and improvements. Currently this is a lower priority than water, sewer and transportation but may become a higher priority as the need arises and regulatory requirements become more stringent. With the proposed improvements to Highway 93, the Montana Department of Transportation will be developing stormwater management techniques. The City should attempt to “piggyback” on this effort, especially in identified trouble spots such as the intersection of Main Street and the highway. Also, as development occurs, all new subdivisions and development projects are required to maintain any increased stormwater flows on the property.

Transportation

Identified priorities for City street maintenance and upgrades include the following:

- Main Street,
- Second Avenue Southwest,
- Third Avenue Southwest,
- Eisenhower Street Southwest, and
- Third Avenue Northwest.

The City intends to upgrade one of these streets or portions of one street each year as funding allows. It is likely that Special Improvement Districts (7-12-4102, MCA) will have to be established to pay for the costs of upgrades in order to spread the costs to affected users over time. This effort includes identifying the street or street segment to be upgraded, developing cost estimates and the City Council adopting a resolution of intention to create the district. The affected property owners are then given notice of the intent to create the district and opportunity to protest. If less than 50% of those property owners protest, the City may create the district. Such improvements can also include stormwater management and sidewalks.

As stated elsewhere in this document, the creation of sidewalks and pathways are seen as a high priority to link existing and future neighborhoods with commercial, employment, medical and recreational facilities. Priorities are the maintenance of existing sidewalks as well as the expansion of the sidewalk network to extend to both the west and east sides of town.

The U.S. Highway 93 improvements are expected to include a number of crosswalks and sidewalks. Coordination between the City and Montana Department of Transportation to expand the proposed sidewalk segments could provide an important community asset in a

cost effective and efficient manner. Other sidewalk segments should be expanded over time through the creation of Special Improvement Districts.

As the City grows it will also be necessary to develop one or more east/west travel corridors to link the undeveloped land west of town with the central business district and Highway 93. Buchan Street has been identified as a likely candidate to bring travelers to the Mission Range Events Center but others will be needed to accommodate through traffic. Ideally these travel corridors would not significantly impact the existing residential neighborhoods. Developers who propose subdivisions outside of the City's boundaries will be required to develop streets and sidewalks that link with the existing street network in a manner proportionate to the expected impact of the new development.

Parks and Recreation

The identified priorities for parks and recreation include:

- The acquisition and development of a 5-acre park to the east of 4th Avenue Southeast,
- The acquisition and development of a park on the north side of town,
- The development of the Mission Range Event Complex which could include recreation facilities for all age groups, and
- The expansion of the existing trail and pathway network

Acquisition and development of parks and trails will be accomplished through the use of community Transportation Enhancement Program dollars, grants, loans, requiring subdividers to donate cash in-lieu of parkland and other available funding sources. One such funding source could be the establishment of a Park Maintenance District (7-12-4001, MCA), which authorizes a city or town, upon petition of 10 percent or more of the qualified electors of a proposed park district, or upon a resolution of intention by the City Council, to submit the issue to the electors of the proposed district. If approved, the district may be created for maintenance and the establishment of recreation facilities, among other purposes.

XI. Future Land Use Map

The future land use map is intended to help to implement some of the goals and objectives of this growth policy. The future land use map includes land both within and outside of the current municipal boundaries in order to guide growth and development as the City expands and as development proposals are reviewed. It is also intended to form the basis of zoning regulations for the present and in the event Ronan and Lake County develop a cooperative planning area.

The future land use map provides seven distinct classifications, which are described below.

1. Highway Commercial

This area is shown in a darker shade of orange on the future land use map and is intended for commercial development that residents and visitors use for quick stops (gas stations, fast food restaurants and convenience stores), motels and larger restaurants that require large spaces for vehicle parking, car dealerships and similar businesses. Other types of commercial services may also be located within this area.

2. Mixed Commercial/Industrial

This area is shown as gray on the map and is intended to allow for heavy commercial and industrial uses that generate noise, dust, odor, etc. and that require substantial amounts of space. It can also include lighter commercial businesses.

3. Mixed Commercial/Residential

This area is shown as blue and provides for a wide array of land uses. It includes commercial or service businesses such as bars and restaurants, retail businesses, galleries, medical facilities and services, public buildings, grocery stores, etc. It also is intended to provide area for buildings with commercial shops on the ground level and apartment, townhouse or condominium living on the second and third floors. Detached single family residential lots would be permitted in this area too.

4. Mixed Residential

This area is shown as light orange on the future land use map and is intended to provide areas for detached, single-family structures and modular homes as well as apartments, condominiums and townhouses. This area would also be appropriate for group homes such as retirement communities.

5. Mobile Homes/Manufactured Housing

This area is shown in purple on the map and is intended to allow for “affordable” single family residential development by way of modular and mobile homes.

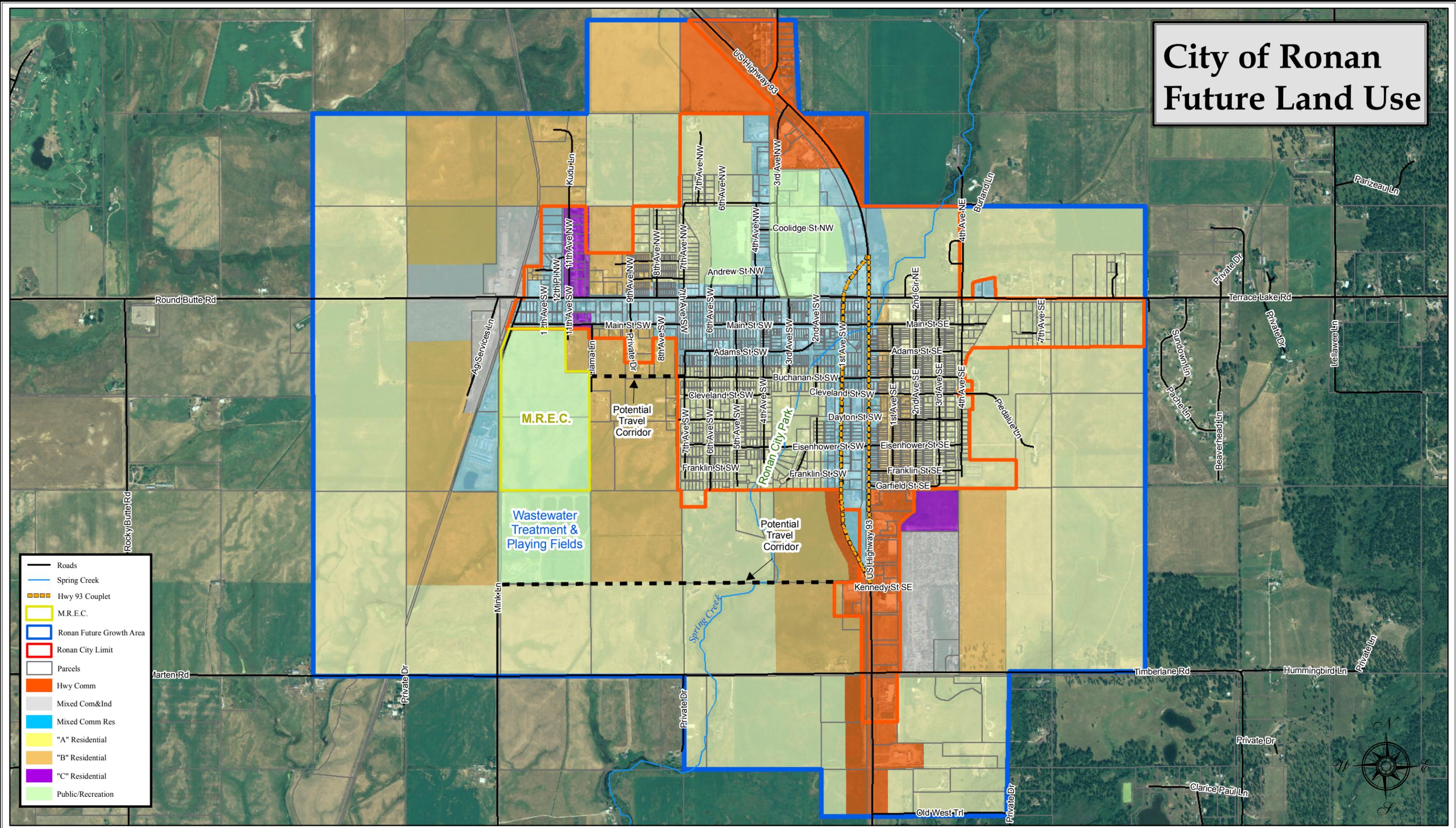
6. Public/Recreation

This area is shown in green on the future land use map and is intended to show existing and anticipated public and recreation areas such as schools and the Mission Range Events Center.

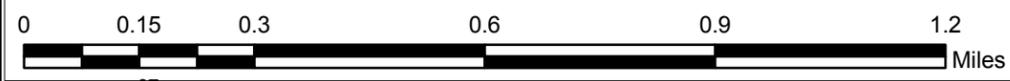
7. Single-family Residential

This area is shown in yellow on the map and is intended for larger lot (7,500 square foot+), detached housing with the potential for parks and home occupations that generate very little vehicle traffic. The single-family residential area would be the most restrictive.

City of Ronan Future Land Use



- Roads
- Spring Creek
- Hwy 93 Couplet
- M.R.E.C.
- Ronan Future Growth Area
- Ronan City Limit
- Parcels
- Hwy Comm
- Mixed Com&Ind
- Mixed Comm Res
- "A" Residential
- "B" Residential
- "C" Residential
- Public/Recreation



1 inch equals 0.238147 miles

June 6, 2008

Important: This map is intended to show preferred future land use and intended to be a guidance document.

XII. Growth Policy Review and Revision

This growth policy is intended to help guide future development, redevelopment and growth of the City of Ronan. Periodic evaluation of the growth policy, particularly the goals, objectives, future land use, parks and recreation and infrastructure maps and implementation measures, will help to ensure the document remains both useful and timely. It is expected that as time passes and conditions change, the growth policy and its components will have to be updated. Montana Code Annotated 76-1-601 (3)(f) requires that a growth policy be reviewed at least every five years and that it be revised as necessary. The following is a schedule for growth policy adoption, review and revision:

Table 5, Adoption, Review and Revision Schedule

2008	Adoption
2011	Review if maps, goals and objectives, implementation measures, revisions as needed
2013	Review all chapters, revisions as needed
2015	Review of maps, goals and objectives and implementation measures, revisions as needed
2017	Revision of the Growth Policy

During the reviews, the Ronan Planning Board and City Council will consider the following questions:

- Have the circumstances, information and assumptions materially changed?
- Are the community's goals and objectives current and valid?
- Does the plan appear to be meeting the current and anticipated needs of the community?

This growth policy or its components may also be amended based on requests from parties other than the Planning Board and City Council. It may also be amended based on significant changes in the community or based on emerging community needs such as:

- A significant increase in population and/or geographic area within a one or two year period,

- A major change in economic conditions,
- A significant change in the City's infrastructure and needs, or
- Unanticipated needs or conditions that are not adequately addressed in this growth policy.