

II: PLANNING AREA PRIORITIES

The specific planning areas identified for Lewis and Clark County and addressed in this chapter include the following: the Helena Valley; Augusta; Canyon Creek/Marysville; Canyon Ferry/York; Wolf Creek/Craig; and Lincoln.

The issues and priorities in this chapter were identified through stakeholder interviews, public workshops, and the work of the Lewis and Clark County Comprehensive Plan Citizen's Advisory Group. The focus is not meant to exclude the broader framework of the County-wide issues, goals and policies. Rather, the intent is to direct the effort of Lewis and Clark County toward short-term (e.g., the next five years) priorities that are specific to each of the planning areas, and reflect the aspirations of the people living in the vicinity.

In addition to the planning area priorities, this chapter also reviews how future land use patterns in the Helena Valley will be managed through identified Urban and Transitional Areas.

Helena Valley Planning Area Priorities

The Helena Valley is facing considerable growth and development pressure. Citizens of the Helena Valley planning area have many separate and interconnected concerns related to land use, transportation, and the natural environment. In the Helena Valley Planning Area, Lewis and Clark County should focus its resources on the action items outlined below:

- A. Opportunities for urban, suburban, and rural development must be made available, while at the same time assuring that adverse impacts related to this development are minimized. Identifying those areas where growth should occur can help direct the location and design of new development, creating a more cohesive community and minimizing initial and future costs to taxpayers.

Action Items:

Identify areas that may be classified using the following criteria:

- Areas already developing in an urban pattern and that have existing public facilities and service capacities.
- Areas already characterized by an urban pattern that will be served efficiently by public facilities in the near future (five years) should to be designated as Urban Growth Areas.
- Areas that will be served efficiently by public facilities in the five to twenty year period.

- New development should be encouraged to connect to public services whenever practical and provide the future opportunity for connections when not.
- New development should be encouraged to be contiguous to existing development in order to avoid the long-term cost to tax payers of providing services to an inefficient development pattern.
Encourage subdivision design in the Transitional Areas in a fashion that can be converted to higher densities if urban services become available, including cluster design.

B. Development should be encouraged in areas without environmental constraints.

Action Items

- Allow development in areas that do not have development constraints (e.g., areas with steep slopes, within the 100-year flood plain, critical wildlife corridors, wildlife habitat, ground water quantity and quality), or where constraints can be properly mitigated.

C. Improve the level of service of the existing transportation system, and establish and maintain an efficient transportation network, utilizing a variety of transportation modes.

Action Items

- Develop a prioritized maintenance plan, related to the Transportation Plan, with funding sources identified.
- Support alternatives to single occupancy vehicles.
- Provide for connecting streets among neighborhoods.
- Design a truck route to bypass the City center.
- Develop a plan to address forecasted transportation growth needs.

D. Provide a safe pedestrian and bicycle circulation network in the Helena Valley.

Action Items

- Consider pedestrian/bicycle needs when planning and designing new roads.
- Consider improvement and dedication of bikeways and pedestrian paths through developing areas.
- Provide widened shoulders where possible to accommodate pedestrians/bicycles on existing roadways as appropriate, with a preference for physical separation between motorized and non-motorized traffic.
- Provide widened shoulders where possible to accommodate pedestrians/bicycles on existing roadway, with a preference for physical separation between motorized and non-motorized traffic.
- Encourage mixed-use development that integrates compatible

residential, office, and commercial uses to reduce the need for automobile trips.

- Create additional connections between the trails/open space systems in Helena/East Helena and Lewis and Clark County.

E. Encourage the continuation of viable farming and ranching opportunities.

Action Items

- Use the Lewis and Clark County Voluntary Agricultural Land Preservation Program.
- Convene a task force to study ways to manage rural land changes, and to identify ways to preserve irrigated agricultural lands in the Helena Valley.

F. Work to reduce conflicts between agricultural and residential uses.

Action Items

- New residential uses should be required to provide buffers between themselves and conflicting agricultural uses.
- New agricultural uses that conflict with urban development should provide mitigation.
- Educate citizens about the importance of noxious weed management, and the means for eradicating noxious weeds and preventing their spread.
- Enforce existing weed abatement regulations.
- Support educating citizens about the importance of leashing or fencing their pets to keep them away from agricultural/farm land and from other animals.

G. Preserve access to public and recreational lands.

Action Items

- Use the Lewis and Clark County Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan to guide the siting of new facilities.
- Identify, protect, maintain, and—when appropriate—acquire rights-of-way providing access to key public and recreational lands, along with potential parking areas.
- Abandonment of public rights-of-ways should be prohibited unless shown to be in the public interest.

H. Protect and improve water quality and quantity of the Helena Valley watersheds.

Action Items

- Implement the recommendations of the Helena Area Wastewater Study (HAWT).

- Review the Helena Area Wastewater Treatment Facility Plan (HAWT); prioritize and implement strategies, as feasible.
- Protect and improve water quality and quantity along Ten Mile Creek.
- Consider extending the water quality district to include the Spokane Bench and Lakeside area.
- Make information about water quality and quantity available, particularly to prospective land buyers.

- I. With increasing population growth, the air quality of the Helena Valley is threatened.

Action Items

- Encourage activities that ensure that County and Federal air quality standards are upheld.
- Design and locate new development in ways that minimize additional automobile traffic.
- Encourage the use of alternative cleaner burning fuels.
- Work to mitigate dust from traffic on dirt and gravel roads.
- Develop and implement transportation demand management (TDM) strategies pursuant to the Transportation Development Plan.
- Examine opportunities for transit, car-pooling, and other transportation management strategies.
- Promote an integrated street network.
- Conduct public education on what individuals can do to preserve good air quality.

- J. Coordination between adjacent counties, the Cities of Helena and East Helena, and Lewis and Clark County is necessary in order to ensure that mutual land use goals are reached.

Action Items

- Establish an agreement between Lewis and Clark County, Jefferson County, Broadwater County, and the cities of Helena and East Helena for better coordination of land use change and transportation in Transitional Areas.
- Define the areas where city services can logically be extended based upon immediate five-year growth projections and negotiate inter-local agreements with the cities of Helena and East Helena for development review.
- Within the inter-local agreements with the cities of Helena and East Helena, establish common development standards, coordinated land use planning, urban service boundary areas and service area amendment processes.

- K. Planning and design can assist in the development of a sense of community in existing settlement and developing areas of the Helena Valley.

Action Items

- Encourage the preservation and protection of existing residential areas and plan future development in a manner, which promotes neighborhood settings and environments.
- Provide land use buffers between residential neighborhoods and incompatible land uses.
- Minimize the encroachment of industrial development on existing residential neighborhoods.
- Design subdivisions, planned residential developments, multifamily units, or other residential projects in a manner that encourages neighborhood environments.
- Provide for integration of individual subdivisions through transportation linkages.
- Encourage the preservation and enhancement of neighborhoods in existing residential areas.
- Plan future development that promotes neighborhood cohesion and pedestrian-friendly environments.
- Encourage mixed-use development that integrates compatible residential, office, and commercial uses to reduce need for automobile trips.

- L. Adequate opportunity for non-residential growth and development in the Helena Valley to meet the needs of a growing population and market place demands.

Action Items

- Encourage commercial and office development to locate in cities and within Transitional Areas whenever possible.
- Encourage commercial development, such as neighborhood commercial services, in areas that are currently under serviced, when adequate market area population is present.
- Encourage mixed-use development that integrates compatible residential, office and commercial uses to reduce need for automobile trips.
- Encourage cluster commercial development over strip commercial development.
- Large commercial and office developments should be encouraged only in areas served by a major street, and where adequate public services can be provided.
- Encourage the development of a commercial/industrial subdivision with all services, including roads, water, sewer, fiber optics, and other services, as required.

- M. Ensure that all parts of the Helena Valley have adequate fire protection.

Action Items

- Encourage the annexation of areas served by the Lewis and Clark County Volunteer Fire Department to be annexed into existing fire districts.
- Implement the design plans that are being formulated by the Fire Council.
- Ensure that roads and bridges can accommodate fire trucks.
- Develop a process to attract more volunteers.

N. Lewis and Clark County has sufficient marginal, non-irrigated grazing or non-irrigated croplands to meet the needs for the County's growth and development over the next 10 to 20 years. While the continued existence of the Helena Valley Irrigation District (HVID) appears secure at this point, the development of high density subdivisions adjacent to irrigated farm lands and the facilities of the HVID frequently results in management problems for agricultural operators and the District. Problems that can occur include interference with irrigation ditches and vandalism, harassment of livestock, and the spread of noxious weeds.

Action Items

- Support the public investment in the HVID and preserve its vital role in the County's agricultural economy and as a major source of recharge for the Helena Valley aquifer.
- When considering the proposed subdivision of agricultural lands irrigated by the HVID or adjacent to these irrigated lands, minimize potential land-use conflicts or adverse impacts on the HVID or agricultural lands irrigated by the HVID.
- Adopt development standards to limit development activities in areas with shallow groundwater.

Helena Valley Future Land Use

Future land use in the Helena Valley planning area will be guided by the Future Land Use Plan map and policies contained in this section of the Growth Policy (see figure 1). The Future Land Use Plan was developed by the Lewis and Clark County Comprehensive Plan Citizens Advisory Group (CAG).

The proposed future land use plan acknowledges some existing development patterns and infrastructure have been committed for development, though they may have some environmental, service, or other constraints. The Future Land Use Plan also reflects the community interest in preserving natural resource values, mitigating environmental issues, preserving public investments in infrastructure, and providing for efficient, cost-effective expansion of the community.

**INSERT FIGURE 1:
(HELENA VALLEY FUTURE LAND USE MAP)**

The major facilities plans for the Cities of Helena, East Helena and the unincorporated Helena Valley were instrumental documents in the designation of Transitional Areas where land uses could efficiently utilize existing and planned infrastructure. These plans address wastewater facilities, water supplies, transportation, parks, recreation, and open space.

Other significant documents contributing to the Future Land Use Plan include the following: groundwater aquifer studies, water quality studies, wildlife and winter range mapping, species of special concern mapping, hazards mapping (floodplains, wildfire, seismic, etc.), parcel and land use mapping, agricultural lands information, cultural resource mapping, slope analyses, and public lands mapping.

Principal stream corridors were identified as having multiple community values, including watershed and floodplain management, wildlife and fisheries (and related habitat), recreation, open space, and irrigation supplies.

Urban Areas

Three Urban Areas adjacent to the City of Helena were identified as compatible with planned municipal infrastructure within the next 20 years. Based on the current City of Helena Wastewater Treatment Plan and Water Master Plan, these areas will eventually be annexed to the City of Helena, and development will need to meet City development standards. It is anticipated that these areas could accommodate high-density development, with an emphasis on infill and a range of uses. Overall residential density at buildup would be a minimum of approximately four units per acre.

Most of the area within this “urban” designation was previously included within the Class I Preferred Development Areas of the 1989 County Comprehensive Plan. Possible Urban Development Areas adjacent to East Helena, where its municipal infrastructure could be extended, have not been identified.

East Helena policies on service extension and annexation have been fairly conservative due to deficiencies in infrastructure; however, recent improvements related to its capital facilities plans may alter this policy. It would be important to pursue a specific dialogue with the governing body of East Helena before such areas could be effectively delineated.

Area A

The Urban Area on the west side of Helena was identified due to anticipated needs for municipal sewer; existing septic systems are reaching the end of their useful life, and availability of suitable on-site treatment areas is limited. One special district is already served by the City wastewater system, the result of threats to public health. Infill residential development could increase density and efficiency of service provision. Steep slopes to the south and west, and the Ten-Mile Creek corridor to the north limit expansion of the area.

City of Helena water supply lines traverse this area and have provided water supply to some development. The street network in this area is well integrated with the City of Helena, due to old plats established prior to incorporation. However, the condition of streets ranges from adequate to poor. In addition, the City of Helena Fire Department currently provides fire protection service to the area on a contractual basis.

Most of the area south of Euclid Avenue is residentially zoned, except for a commercial strip adjacent to Euclid Avenue. Though several undeveloped tracts exist, their efficient development is constrained by limited water supply and wastewater treatment areas. The area north of Euclid Avenue is a mixture of undeveloped tracts, residential development, mobile home parks, and commercial and light-manufacturing uses. It is not zoned at this time. Pursuant to requests from landowners, incremental annexations to the City have occurred over time. This process may inhibit efficient expansion of the municipal infrastructure and has resulted in confusion over jurisdictional boundaries and related service provision.

The designation of the Westside area as an Urban Development Area anticipates the planned extension of central services to address the following issues: public health and safety concerns, deficiencies in service provision, opportunities of existing infrastructure, efficient land utilization, and creation of logical jurisdictional boundaries. Due to existing circumstances, it is anticipated that special provisions for phasing improvements will be necessary.

Area B

The area southeast of Helena (on both sides of the Interstate) is presently used for rangeland and dry land farming, has few environmental constraints, and is within the City of Helena planned service for municipal water and sewer. Residential uses and related commercial and public facilities are anticipated. The City of Helena has laid out a development concept for portions of Area B located south of Highway 12 and east of Interstate 15.

The City of Helena has constructed a water storage tank that will provide adequate supply and pressure for this area, as identified in the Water Master Plan. Future transportation linkages will need to be developed to serve this area. The Wastewater Treatment Facility Plan identifies available capacity to serve this area, with some improvements to the collection system.

Several transportation links are identified in the Transportation Plan, including the eastward extension of Broadway (under I-15) to Highway 12 and a southward extension of Colonial Drive to Montana City. Additional future transportation linkages will need to be delineated, including an I-15 interchange or overpass (Belview, Saddle) and eastward extensions to Highway 12. As of September 2003, an I-15 study is in the final stages of completion, with a record of decision (ROD) expected in the next few months. The results will identify potential transportation links, funding, and timelines.

The Parks Plan identifies an open space area and trail loop (East Ridge Loop) west of the Interstate and a linear trail corridor (East Ridge-Prickly Pear) extending northeastward to Prickly Pear Creek.

The area south of the Helena Airport and north of Highway 12 is considered to have high value for commercial/light manufacturing and industrial uses due to rail access, highway and air transportation alternatives and existing similar development. The area has some City of Helena infrastructure, including water supply lines, wastewater collection lines, and a stormwater collection system. An arterial linkage between Highway 12 and the Deport area is identified in the Transportation Plan.

The designation of these eastside areas as Urban Development Areas anticipates the planned extension of central services to address the following issues: traffic congestion and safety concerns; opportunities of existing infrastructure and its efficient extension; efficient land utilization in an area with limited environmental constraints; and creation of new mixed-use neighborhoods. Due to existing circumstances, it is anticipated that it will be necessary to establish special provisions to address rural fire district obligations and to phase in improvements.

Area C

An area north of Helena (within one mile, roughly between I-15 and Green Meadow Drive) was identified as an Urban Development Area due to present development and annexation trends. This area has few environmental constraints, and is within City of Helena planned service areas for water supply and wastewater treatment.

A major wastewater transmission line has been installed in the western portion of this area, and sewer service has been extended to Fort Harrison. The area is located within the urban limits of the Helena Area Transportation Plan, which identifies several improvements. Future transportation linkages will need to be developed. A major study analyzing potential infrastructure improvements on the West Side was completed in 2002.

The eastern portion of the area is subject to the Noise Influence Area of the Helena Regional Airport. Significant commercial development has occurred along North Montana Avenue, which has been incrementally annexed into the City of Helena. This lot-by-lot extension of services has associated problems of integrating development, and the design and installation of infrastructure. The commercial emphasis has been auto-oriented, contributing to increased traffic congestion. A phased major residential area is planned and additional open land area is available for similar development

The designation of this northside area as an Urban Development Area anticipates the planned extension of central services and transportation improvements to address the following issues: traffic congestion and safety concerns, opportunities of existing infrastructure and its efficient extension, efficient land utilizations in an area with limited environmental constraints, integration of individual developments, and the logical extension of jurisdiction boundaries. Due to existing circumstances, it is anticipated that special provisions to address rural fire district obligations will be necessary. It is recognized that this area has become a community/regional commercial area and will continue as such.

Transitional Areas

Three Transitional Areas are identified. These areas contain existing low-density development and community services (schools, parks, fire protection, neighborhood, commercial, etc.) and could accommodate additional infill development.

Public investment would not be focused in these areas in the near term. To support future public investment in utilities and service provision, interim design and service provision strategies would be utilized, until a time when urban level services are indicated in these areas. Existing utility systems and roadways should be upgraded and expanded where feasible. Future transportation linkages will need to be developed to serve these areas.

Sub-area plans should be prepared for each of the three Transitional Areas to plan for future Valley Centers which could serve many of the daily shopping and service needs of residents within these areas. The anticipated overall development density could average 2-3 housing units to the acre upon buildup.

Area D

This area is located in the West Helena Valley. It has undeveloped areas with potential for infill development, particularly if a decision is made to build the Forestvale Road/I-15 interchange. However, this area is located beyond a reasonable service boundary for the City of Helena within their 20 year planning horizon.

Tenmile Creek is the southern boundary of the area and has been identified as a corridor for flooding, riparian habitat and a linear park/trail system. The north and west boundaries reflect agricultural lands, low-density residential developments (ranchettes), and/or public lands. The east boundary is Interstate 15, beyond, which are principally agricultural, lands.

Some environmental constraints exist in the area (e.g., 100 year floodplain, groundwater quality issues), which will need to be acknowledged. Wastewater treatment alternatives will be the principal factor in determination of build-out density. The alluvial aquifer provides available groundwater for additional development, but its quality needs to be preserved.

North Montana Avenue traverses the area and provides connection to the City of Helena. Safety/capacity improvements for the southern section are scheduled. If the Forestvale Road/I-15 interchange is constructed, additional commercial development is expected in that vicinity. Related traffic generation would require other transportation improvements. The area within the West Valley Fire District, including a new station, is centrally located on Forestvale Road. Rossiter Elementary School is located within the area. Portions of the area are zoned for agricultural, residential, and commercial uses. The Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan identifies Sierra Park (at Rossiter School) as a community park site.

The designation of this West Valley area as a Transitional Area recognizes the existing development pattern and anticipates the need for upgrading and extension of infrastructure to accommodate additional infill development. Planning will need to address the following issues: traffic congestion and safety concerns, multiple modes of transportation, opportunities of existing infrastructure, and its efficient extension, efficient land utilization, environmental constraints of in the 100 year floodplains, and protection of water quality.

Area E

This area is located in the northwest Helena Valley and is bordered by the major irrigation canal and Silver Creek on the south, and Green Meadow Drive on the west. These boundaries reflect agricultural lands, low-density residential developments (ranchettes) and/or floodplain. The northern limit of this area is approximately one mile north of Lincoln Road and is representative of the boundary between the productive alluvial aquifer to the south and limited bedrock aquifer to the north.

The area principally contains residential development of varying densities. Some non-residential development is also present. A portion of the area is zoned for residential use. The area is within the West Helena Valley Fire District and a station is located in the northeast corner of the area on North Montana Avenue. Jim Darcy Elementary School and a commercial center are located just east of the area on Lincoln Road.

The principal road network has been established, but additional linkages will need to be established to integrate the area and provide for infill development of interior areas. Most of the road network is gravel-surfaced and pavement improvements will be necessary to accommodate additional development.

Water availability is a critical issue in the accommodation of additional development. As long as the alluvial aquifer is recharged by Silver Creek, current irrigation practices, and bedrock sources, adequate supplies should be available to serve additional development. Since water availability is a constraint (as evidenced in part by the appearance of dry wells), additional development to the north must be limited unless or until an alternate water supply is established.

A study is currently under way to analyze the availability of groundwater in this area. Depending on the results, it may no longer be appropriate to designate this area a Transitional Area. A draft Environmental Assessment completed by the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) in response to a petition to establish a controlled groundwater area in the North Hills (which was established in 2002) stated the following:

The amount of groundwater development that can be sustained in the North Hills depends on the properties and boundaries of the bedrock aquifer, the pattern and amount of recharge, and the pattern of groundwater development. Variable and often unpredictable hydrogeologic conditions within the North Hills, in addition to variable well construction, result in considerable differences in depths and yields of wells, often over relatively short distances. The combination of these factors needs to be considered in order to assess the potential for future groundwater development (DNRC, 2002).

Designation of this Northwest Valley as a Transitional Area recognizes the existing development patterns and anticipates the need for upgrading and extension of infrastructure to accommodate additional infill development. Future planning will need to address the following issues: transportation network and road surface conditions; multiple modes of transportation; opportunities of existing infrastructure and its efficient extension; efficient land utilization; protection of the groundwater resources; and establishment of a community park facility.

The Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan identifies a community park site for this general area.

Area F

The southeast Helena Valley is bordered by York Road on the north. North of York Road irrigated agricultural lands, possible environmental constraints and natural resource values may limit development potential. The eastern boundary approximates the boundary between rural-residential/suburban development and agricultural lands to the east. The southern boundary is Highway 12 West, south of which lie lands with significant environmental constraints to development related to heavy metals. The western boundary is established by the Prickly Pear Creek corridor and irrigated agricultural lands.

The area is characterized by a range of residential development (urban density, mobile home parks, ranchette density), a small commercial hub (Wylie Drive and Canyon Ferry Road), two gravel resource extraction operations, designated 100-year floodplains, and irrigation facilities. Portions of the area are zoned for residential and ranchette uses, but a majority of the area is not zoned.

The principal road network has been established, but additional linkages would need to be established to integrate the area and provide for infill development of interior areas. Much of the road network is gravel-surfaced and pavement improvements will be necessary to accommodate additional development.

The area is served by East Valley Fire District and Eastgate Fire District. Three stations are spaced within the area. Two elementary schools (Warren and Eastgate) are located within the area. The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan identifies two community parks within this general area.

High-density developments are served by central water supply and wastewater treatment system. Moderate and low-density developments are served by individual systems. The alluvial aquifer provides available groundwater for additional development, but its quality needs to be preserved. Elevated levels of nitrate in the groundwater have been identified in the southern portion of the area. There may be a correlation with the concentration of on-site wastewater treatment systems.

The designation of the Southeast Valley area as a Transitional Area recognizes the existing development pattern and anticipates the need for upgrading and extending infrastructure to accommodate additional infill development. Planning will need to address the following issues: transportation network and road surface conditions, multiple modes of transportation, opportunities of existing infrastructure and its efficient extension, efficient land utilization, environmental constraints (e.g., floodplain, metals, water quality, major transmission corridors), protection of groundwater resources, and establishment of a community park facility.

Special Use Areas

Two Special Use Areas--Fort Harrison and the ASARCO Smelting Facility—are identified on the Future Land Use Map (shown in yellow circles). These areas are so unique that they require their own special master plan studies. Analyzing these areas in detail for their development potential is beyond the scope of the Growth Policy update.

Fort Harrison Federal Community

The Fort Harrison Federal Community is located about two miles west of Helena. It serves the National Guard and VA Hospital, and is undergoing significant expansion. It is presently served by municipal water and recently approved for service by municipal sewer. The presence of these infrastructure facilities could influence additional development in the area, however, there are also other natural resource values and physical conditions (e.g., high groundwater, wetlands, floodplain, irrigated agricultural lands, low density zoning, etc.) that need to be considered.

ASARCO Smelting Facility

The ASARCO smelting facility and Superfund site in East Helena has affected environmental quality and land uses in the vicinity. Soils and groundwater contamination will continue to influence the types of land uses that may occur, including possible types of mitigation. The ASARCO plant suspended operations in 2001.

Balance of Helena Valley Planning Area

Development outside of identified Urban and Transitional Areas needs to be self-sufficient, served by on-site wells, individual septic systems, and/or community well and sewer systems that serve individual and/or adjacent subdivisions, and may include private roadways. Development density may be dependent upon the following: the level of service that could be provided by the developer, the environmental constraints identified on the property, and the design standards in place at the time of review.

Augusta Planning Area Priorities

The following issues were identified through stakeholder interviews, public workshops, and the work of the Lewis and Clark County Comprehensive Plan Citizen's Advisory Group. The focus here is not intended to exclude the broader framework of the County-wide goals and policies. Rather, the intent is to focus the effort of Lewis and Clark County on short-term (e.g., the next five years) priorities that are specific to the Augusta planning area, and were developed by people living in the area.

Citizens of the Augusta planning area feel the priority for the short-term is a continued and increased focus on the provision of basic services. In the stakeholder interviews there were very few complaints about current county service provision; in general, the citizens of Augusta see the role of Lewis and Clark County as focusing on road maintenance and fire and police protection. According to local residents, the County should focus its resources on maintaining and upgrading the following basic services:

- A.** Road maintenance should be the primary emphasis of the County in the Augusta planning area.

Action Items

- Work with the Augusta Planning Area residents to prioritize needed road improvements.

- B.** Provide adequate fire protection.

Action Items

- Work to ensure that the Augusta area has adequate fire protection.

- C.** Provide adequate police protection.

Action Items

- Work with the Lewis and Clark County Sheriff's office to ensure that the Augusta planning area has adequate police protection.

- D.** Work to control and eradicate noxious weeds.

Action Items

- Educate citizens about the importance of noxious weed management and means to eradicate the spread of noxious weeds.
- Work to enforce existing weed abatement regulations.

Canyon Creek/Marysville Planning Area Priorities

The following issues have been identified through the stakeholder interviews, public workshops, and the work of the Lewis and Clark County Comprehensive Plan Citizens Advisory Group. They represent the issues that have been emphasized in these forums and therefore have been identified as short-term priorities (five years). The focus on these issues is not intended to exclude the broader framework of the County-wide goals and policies. Rather they are intended to focus the effort of Lewis and Clark County in the Canyon Creek/Marysville planning area.

Citizens of the Canyon Creek/ Marysville planning area feel the top priority, short-term issues are: a continued and increased focus on the provision of basic services, maintaining agricultural lands, and reducing conflicts between residential and agricultural uses. During area meetings on the Growth Policy, residents expressed interest in receiving assistance from the County to develop a neighborhood plan for their planning area. In the one to five year periods, Lewis and Clark County should focus on the following planning priorities in the Canyon Creek/Marysville planning area.

A. Maintain and improve the existing transportation system.

Action Items

- Increase maintenance on County roads in the planning area, based on availability of funds.
- Work to mitigate the impact of dust created by automobile traffic on hay quality.
- Clean road culverts in the fall.
- Maintain Stemple Pass as an unpaved road.
- Complete improvements to Marysville Road.

B. Provide adequate fire protection.

Action Items

- Work to ensure the Canyon Creek/Marysville area has adequate fire protection.
- Expand the Canyon Creek Fire District to include areas adjacent to main thoroughfares.

C. Provide adequate police protection.

Action Items

- Work with the Lewis and Clark County Sheriff's Office to ensure that the Canyon Creek/Marysville area has adequate police protection.

- D. Preserve agricultural lands and existing uses, and minimize conflicts between agricultural and residential, industrial, commercial uses.

Action Items

- New residential land uses should be required to provide buffers between themselves and conflicting agricultural uses.
- Further explore the advantages of cluster development to protect the quality of life in the community.
- Consider appointing an Agricultural Representative to the Planning Board.
- Encourage adherence to the Wildland-Residential Interface Guidelines.
- Work to see that industrial development doesn't interfere with agricultural uses.

- E. Implement a strategy for controlling the spread and eradication of noxious weeds in the area.

Action Items

- Educate citizens about the importance of noxious weed management and means to eradicate the spread of infestation of noxious weeds.
- Work to enforce existing weed abatement regulations.

- F. Require new development within the Canyon Creek/Marysville planning area to meet minimum design guidelines and criteria.

Action Items

- Develop on existing lots or parcels.
- Establish minimum design standards and criteria for new development within the planning area. Included as part of these design standards would be the following:
 - Ensure that the cost of developing and maintaining roads to serve new developments is covered by the developer/new homeowners.
 - Require roads to be constructed prior to subdivision.
 - Require minimum standards to meet fire access requirements.
 - New development should preserve and protect water quality, aesthetics, wildlife, and environmental concerns of the area.
 - Establish impact fees or pay as you go fees for services necessary to support new development.
 - Maintain the aesthetics of the community rather than encourage development.
 - Discourage temporary housing developments of more than 5 units within the planning area.
 - Discourage temporary housing developments of more than 5-10 units at one location.

G. Preserve and enhance the natural environment within the planning area.

Action Items

- Encourage natural buffer zones or setbacks from drainage ways.
- Preserve water and air quality.
- Preserve the natural visual integrity of the planning area.
- Encourage wildlife conservation and habitat protection; preserve natural vegetation.
- Logging should follow the DNRC Best Management Practices with an emphasis on maintaining the visual integrity of the timbered areas.

H. Monitor the potential impact of any proposed mines or industrial projects in the area to identify possible implications for the Canyon Creek/Marysville area.

I. Address concerns regarding areas of possible community decay and mechanisms available to eliminate or limit such development.

J. Support continued efforts for rural addressing.

Marysville Sub-area Concerns

- Promote a feasibility study and pursue grant money for a centralized water and sewer system.
- Implement design or performance standards to keep residential development standards high and to maintain the current character of the neighborhood.
- Encourage the post office to remain in the town site and be kept sufficiently staffed and in good condition so that it can handle the needs of the community.
- Preserve the natural visual integrity of the surrounding scenery.
- Preserve cattle grazing rights.
- Support mine reclamation.
- Support clean up the old Marysville dump.

Stemple Sub-area Concerns

- Encourage continued annexation into the neighboring fire districts.
- Continue to support the rural addressing system.
- Support mine reclamation.

Flesher Acres Sub-area Concerns

- This area will be the most severely impacted by increases in traffic and development along the Highway 279 corridor. Impact fees or other mechanism should be put in place to help mitigate these impacts.
- Future development needs to address water quality, access of emergency vehicles, and new roads detracting from the aesthetic value of the area impacts.

Silver City Sub-area Concerns

- The existing junkyard in the area is a concern and should be addressed through existing ordinances and through zoning or community decay performance standards to abate this type of development.
- Commercial development may be best suited at the intersection of Highway 279 and Birdseye Road.
- Water quantity is a concern in the area.
- Water and air quality are concerns in area residents.
- This is an area for potential development. Many parts of the area are subdivided into 20-acre tracts and other landowners have expressed an interest in subdividing other portions.

Prickly Pear Road Sub-area Concerns

- Many of the roads in this area are impacted by logging/mining equipment and fall hunting traffic. Because of this, speed and maintenance are constant issues.
- Rural addressing would enhance the delivery of emergency services.
- Preserve existing development density patterns while keeping an agricultural aspect.
- Maintain aesthetics of the area rather than encourage development.

Canyon Ferry/York Planning Area Priorities

The following issues were identified through stakeholder interviews, public workshops, and the work of the Lewis and Clark County Comprehensive Plan Citizen's Advisory Group. The focus here is not intended to exclude the broader framework of the County-wide goals and policies. Rather, the intent is to focus the effort of Lewis and Clark County on short-term (e.g., the next five years) priorities that are specific to the York/Canyon Ferry planning area, and were developed by people living in the area.

Citizens of the York /Canyon Ferry planning area feel that the top priority short-term issue is a continued and increased focus on the provision of basic services, maintaining water quality, and controlling land subdivision. In the York /Canyon Ferry planning area, Lewis and Clark County should focus its energies on maintaining and upgrading the following basic services:

A. Control and eradicate noxious weeds.

Action Items

- Educate citizens about the importance of noxious weed management and various means to eradicate the spread and infestation of noxious weeds.
- Work to enforce existing weed abatement regulations.
- Establish a weed district boundary in cooperation with the BLM, US Forest Service, and local landowners.
- Apply for weed grants to help eradicate noxious weeds in the area.

B. Maintain high standards for subdivisions in order to minimize their impact on both the natural environment and taxpayers.

Action Items

- Establish minimum design standards.
- Compile standards for developing in riparian areas.
- Ensure that new subdivisions are provided with adequate fire protection, either through an on-site water supply or services provided through a fee.
- Require roads to be constructed prior to subdivision.
- Require that maintenance funds be established for long-term preservation of improvements.
- Clearly define the economic responsibility for road construction and maintenance.
- Work with local Fire Departments and the Rural Fire Council to ensure new subdivisions will have adequate fire protection.

C. Address Canyon Ferry/York Roads Road traffic and maintenance concerns.

Action Items

- Review traffic control and safety issues along the Canyon Ferry and York Roads and take the appropriate actions.
- Resurface York Road from the York Bar to the end of the pavement.
- Evaluate the possibility of the installation of a four way stop or better traffic control at York Road/Nelson Road/Black Bear Road junction.

D. Maintenance of other public County roads.

Action Items

- Increase maintenance, based upon the availability of funds, as a high priority in Lewis and Clark County.
- Dust control along Nelson and Jimtown Roads within the York town site.
- Work with Federal agencies to increase the availability of funding for County roads accessing U.S. Government recreational land.

E. Work to improve water quality.

Action Items

- Develop and enforce septic system regulations.
- Preserve riparian areas along Magpie, Soup, Beaver, and Trout Creeks; establish setbacks.
- Encourage the development of wellhead protection areas in areas of source water use or proposed use.
- Provide citizen education regarding the source and distribution of water supplies, the potential threats to the quality and quantity of drinking water, and pollution prevention methods.

F. Maintain the integrity of the Missouri River corridor.

Action Items

- Work cooperatively with local watershed groups, conservation districts, private landowners, and other entities involved with Missouri River issues.
- Missouri River corridor access should be maintained and protected.
- Maintain public access through private land to public land.

G. Continue to improve fire protection, emergency, and safety services.

Action Items

- Assist with_a process to attract more volunteers.
- Assist with a joint purchase agreement for new equipment.
- Work to ensure that all residences and roads are clearly marked and addressed in rural areas.
- Assist_with the development of better emergency medical service (EMS) service in the area.

H. Preserve agricultural/ranching, lands.

Action Items

- Update the Lewis and Clark County Voluntary Agricultural Land Preservation Program and the resulting Land Evaluation and Site Assessment system. Utilize as a tool in land use planning.
- Convene a task force to study ways to manage rural land changes.
- Establish minimum lot sizes within agricultural lands.
- Explore the use of cluster subdivision where residential development occurs in rural and agricultural areas.

I. Commercial and recreational development should be encouraged in appropriate locations.

Action Items

- Support efforts to identify locations in Canyon Ferry and York where commercial and recreational site development is appropriate.

J. Better community services should be encouraged.

Action Items

- Complete work with the U. S. Forest Service to determine the future of the York Community Hall, York Fire Station, Smith Memorial, and York Cemetery.
- Assist in developing a community park on land between York Community Hall and the Smith Memorial.
- Work with local residents to determine the future of county Park land on American Bar.
- Consider use of an RID to establish a closer transfer site and recycling area.
- Encourage community representation on county matters affecting this planning area.

Wolf Creek/Craig Planning Area Priorities

The following issues were identified through stakeholder interviews, public workshops, and the work of the Lewis and Clark County Comprehensive Plan Citizen's Advisory Group. The focus here is not intended to exclude the broader framework of the County-wide goals and policies. Rather, the intent is to focus the effort of Lewis and Clark County on short-term (e.g., the next five years) priorities that are specific to the Wolf Creek/Craig planning area, and were developed by people living in the area.

Citizens of the Wolf Creek/Craig planning area feel that the issues that need to be addressed are a continued and increased focus on the provision of basic services, the

preservation of agricultural lands and open space and the development of tourism. In the one to five-year periods, Lewis and Clark County should focus on the following planning priorities in the Wolf Creek/Craig planning:

A. Improve maintenance of County roads throughout the years.

Action Items

- Develop a prioritized maintenance plan connected to specific funding sources.
- Lyons Creek and Little Wolf Creek Roads need improved maintenance.
- The Seven Mile Road between Craig and Highway 287 needs improved maintenance.
Monitor the traffic safety issues at Bowman's Corner.
- Explore options for road improvement and maintenance in the Wolf Creek area.

B. Preserve and protect agricultural lands.

Action Items

- Identify prime agricultural lands in the Wolf Creek/Craig planning area and determine which lands should be preserved over the long term.
- Support identification of prime agricultural lands in the Wolf Creek/Craig planning area and determine which lands should be preserved over the long term.
- New residential uses should be required to provide buffers between themselves and conflicting agricultural uses.
New agricultural uses that conflict with existing development should provide mitigation.

C. Control and, wherever possible, eradicate noxious weeds.

Action Items

- Educate citizens about the importance of noxious weed management and means to eradicate the spread of infestation of noxious weeds.
- Work to enforce existing weed abatement regulations.

D. Ensure that all parts of the Wolf Creek/Craig area have adequate fire and law enforcement protection.

Action Items

- Ensure that roads and bridges can accommodate fire trucks.
- Work with the Lewis and Clark County Sheriff's Office to ensure that the Wolf Creek/Craig planning area has adequate police protection.
- Develop a process to attract more volunteers.
- Develop a joint purchase agreement for new equipment.

- Work to ensure that all residences and roads are clearly marked and addressed in rural areas.

E. Increase the emphasis placed on tourism development in the area.

Action Items

- Coordinate with the County's economic development effort to ensure that tourism development is a high priority.

F. Maintain the integrity of the Missouri River corridor.

Action Items

- Work cooperatively with local watershed groups, conservation districts, private landowners, and other entities involved with Missouri River issues.

Lincoln Planning Area

The Lincoln Sub-area Plan is being rewritten as part of a separate process, and will be adopted as part of the Lewis and Clark County Growth Policy. The Lincoln Sub-area Plan is incorporated by reference as part of this Growth Policy.

Information regarding the Lincoln Sub-area is contained in the adopted Lincoln Planning Area Comprehensive Plan/Growth Policy and can be obtained by contacting the Lewis and Clark County Development office at (406) 447-8373.