

MEMORANDUM

TO: Missoula Consolidated Planning Board
FROM: Andrew Hagemeyer and Christine Dascenzo, Community and Planning Services
DATE: March 5, 2019
SUBJECT: **Missoula Area Mapping Update**

Housing

Based on the population projection used by both the City of Missoula and Missoula County Growth Policies, we project the need for approximately 6,000 additional housing units over the course of the next 20 years within the Planning Area. Based on past development patterns, roughly 45% to 50% of those units will occur in locations that will be annexed into the City of Missoula prior to occupancy. We recognize these development patterns might change with continued the implementation of the Our Missoula Growth Policy.

We conducted an analysis of the potential for housing in the Planning Area based on the proposed land use designations and un-developable area. We used a range of densities based on what could be allowed in the land use designations. We eliminated areas of constraints such as floodplains, steep slopes and floodplains. Finally, we considered room for infrastructure, assuming 40% of any developable parcel is taken up in roads, stormwater, parks etc.

Based on this analysis, there is room for an additional 21,000 to 44,000 housing units.

Conclusion

At first glance the number of potential housing units seems bountiful, yet reality the land owner needs to be willing to develop for the land to be available, so these high numbers are necessary. Secondly, what we learned in this exercise is the that limiting factor in housing isn't the land base, it is infrastructure. Based on the location of infrastructure we have today, there is only room for 3,400 to 8,500 housing units, which is likely not enough to accommodate our future housing needs.

Potential Impacts to Soils

During the Planning Board discussion at the February 19, 2019 public hearing on the Missoula Area Mapping Project, staff was asked if we could do an analysis of how soils might be impacted if the community grows as envisioned in the proposed land use map.

For this analysis, we focused on the Natural Resource Conservation Service soil classification of Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance.

There are 12,940 acres of soils classified as Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance within the Planning Area, but some of this acreage has already been developed and is not available for agriculture.

To identify the acreage that is not available for agriculture, we developed some very simple criteria and used Montana Department of Revenue Cadastral data through a GIS application. The criteria are:

- Tracts less than one acre that have a structure of any value
- Tracts less than two acres that have a structure valued greater than \$50,000
- Commercial and Industrial tracts that have a structure valued greater than \$50,000
- Road right of ways

Based on these criteria, the acreage of Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance that is currently available to acreage is 9,943 acres.

Overall, the basic strategy to address agricultural lands in the land use map employed three tactics: Protect, Mitigate and Incorporate.

1. **Protect.** This tactic focuses on protecting the larger intact agricultural systems that are left in the Planning Area, mainly along the river corridor north and west of Missoula. The target is areas with Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance, large lots and nearby irrigation facilities. In this area, we wanted to preserve large lots, while allowing for clustering and density bonus to incentives protection. The Agriculture land use designation is the primary tool, but Working Land and Open, Resource and Recreation can result in similar outcomes.

4,653 acres, or 46.8%, of available Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance are within these land use designations which promote protection of the resource.

2. **Mitigate.** Due to past planning decisions, some areas of Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance have already transitioned into smaller tract sizes but have not necessarily developed. This is typical in areas like Target Range, Big Flat and the Wye. In this area, the strategy is to promote small agriculture through land use designations and mitigate the impacts to soils through clustering and incentives. Land use designations with these tools and purposes include Rural Residential and Small Agriculture, Rural Residential and Residential.

4,448 acres, or 44.7%, of available Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance are within these land use designations which promote mitigating loss of the resource.

3. **Incorporate.** The largest area of Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance not targeted for Protection or Mitigation is the area just east of the airport designated as Community Mixed Use. This area has long been targeted for growth by the city, county and landowners. In this area, the strategy is to incorporate agriculture through non-traditional and traditional means through a joint master planning process between the city, county and private sector.

428 acres, or 4.3%, of available Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance is within a land use designation which promotes the incorporation of the resource in to the urban fabric.

Conclusion

Overall, 95.8% of the available Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance are within land use designations intended to protect, mitigate or incorporate the resource. Existing land use patterns tend to have a significant influence on these numbers. In the land use designations intended to mitigate, 65% of the lots are already less than 10 acres in size which significantly fragments the resource and limits the possibility of landscape scale agricultural activity. However, it is important to note that the land use map by itself is only policy. Implementation of the map is critical to accomplishing additional protection or mitigation of the resource.

Land Use Designation	Acres	Percent
Open Resource and Recreation	706	7.1%
Agriculture	2853	28.7%
Working Lands	1094	11.0%
Rural Residential and Small Ag	2980	30.0%
Rural Residential	1029	10.3%
Residential	439	4.4%
Neighborhood Residential	201	2.0%
Planned Neighborhood	84	0.8%
Neighborhood Commercial	28	0.3%
Commercial Center	18	0.2%
Community Mixed Use	428	4.3%
Live Make	5	0.1%
Civic Employment Center	44	0.4%
Industrial Center	21	0.2%
Heavy Industrial Center	13	0.1%

Hazards and Resiliency

Dianna Maneta, Energy Conservation and Sustainability Coordinator with Missoula County Community and Planning Services, and planning staff worked on language to improve language on climate change in the document. We would like the Planning Board to include the following language, which was not directly based on public comment, but on our discussions on how to improve language within the document.

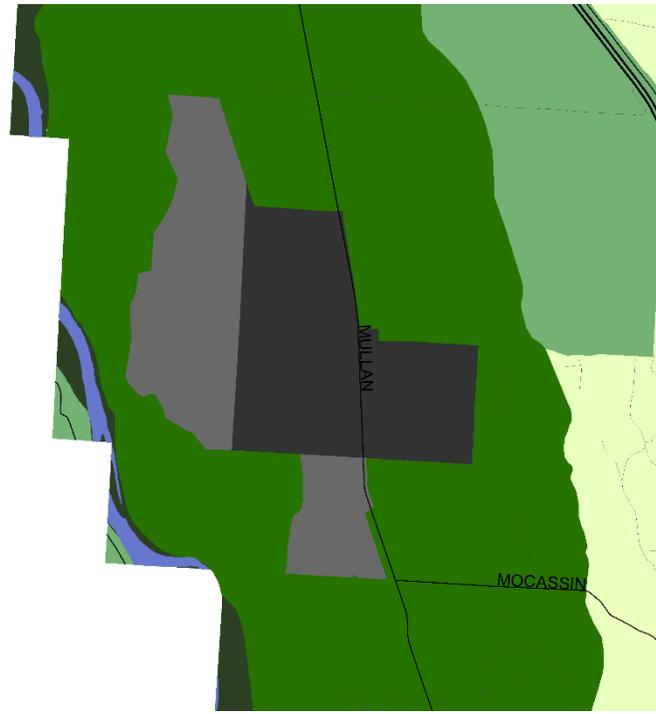
Page 9, Protect Public Health and Safety

(new paragraph under existing text)

Moreover, existing hazards will be exacerbated by climate change. Missoula County's summers are becoming hotter and drier, resulting in more frequent and severe wildfires and a longer wildfire season. At the same time, our winters and springs are projected to get warmer and wetter, leading to more frequent rain-on-snow events that cause the most destructive floods. Missoula County is currently engaged in a Climate Resiliency Planning process jointly with the City and Climate Smart Missoula, the outcome of which will include recommendations for how land use planning in the city and county can help make our community more resilient in the face of these changes.

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