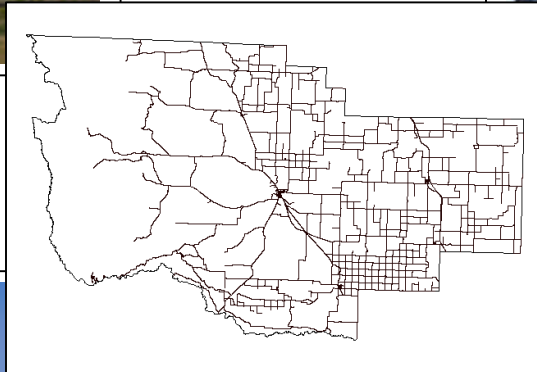


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# TETON COUNTY

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# GROWTH POLICY PLAN

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**TETON COUNTY**  
**GROWTH POLICY PLAN**

M A R C H 2 0 0 3

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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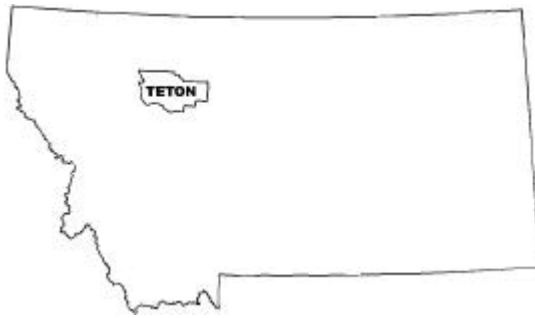
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# OVERVIEW

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Consider the treasures, the character, the richness and the complexities of Teton County. It is located along the eastern front of the Rocky Mountains with the Lewis and Clark National Forest and majestic mountain peaks comprising the western most portion of the County. The forested habitat, home to grizzly bears and mountain goats, gives way to the dramatic landscape of the great plains. Dinosaurs once roamed this same land and the wealth of fossil remains in the County are indicative of the rich natural heritage of this area.

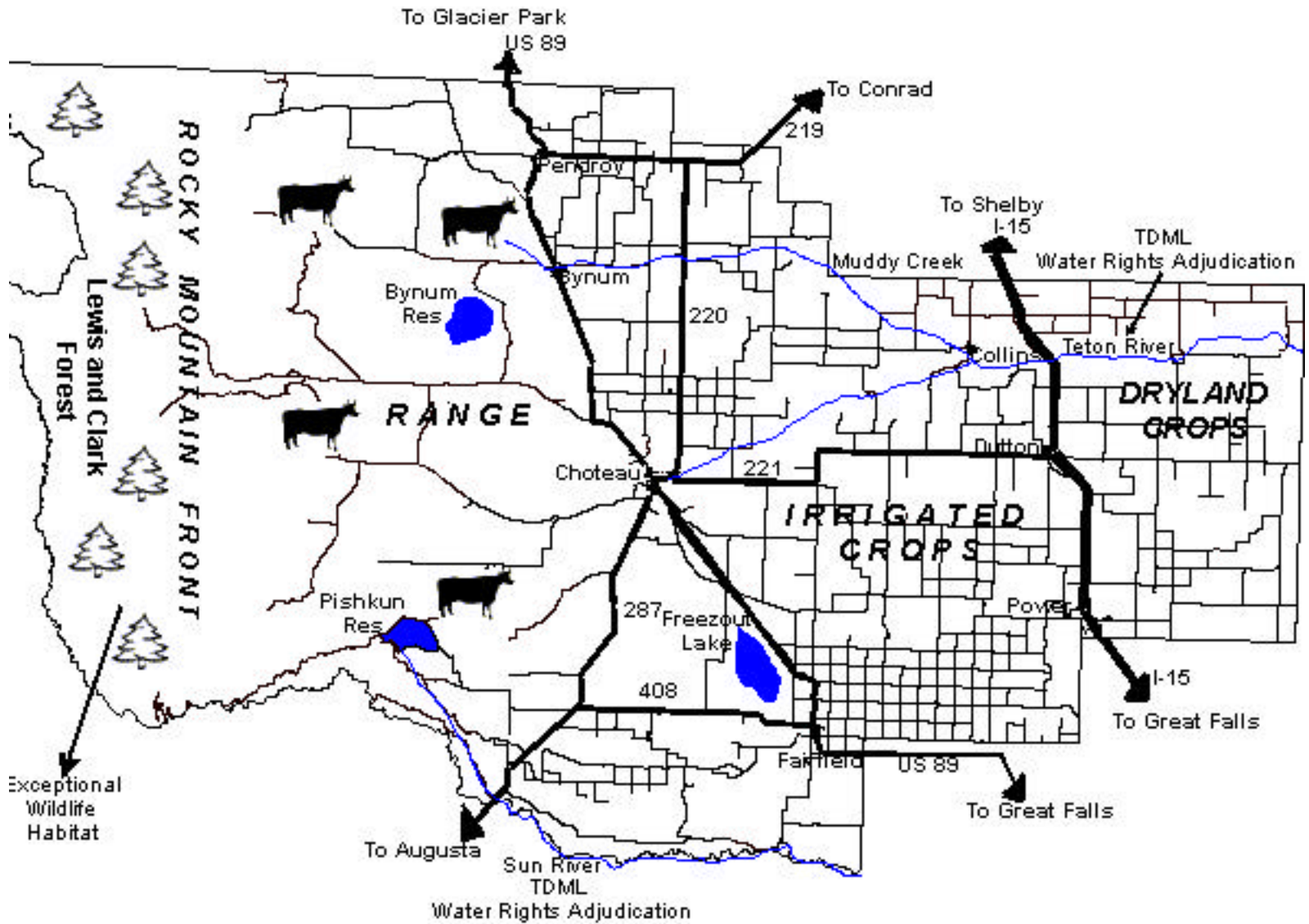
The County also has a rich agricultural heritage with irrigated cropland producing barley, wheat and hay and traditional ranch operations that still have ties to early settlers. Remnants of rail towns scattered throughout the county are symbols of the hopes and dreams of previous generations. High-speed grain elevators and Interstates highways have replaced these remote by-ways and remind one that change is constant and that tradition is always being challenged by a host of national and regional trends.

Nationally, the agricultural economy has been suffering and more producers rely on second incomes to supplement their operations. As this generation nears retirement, development of the land may be an attractive alternative. Technology has allowed some diversification in the economy with a growing telecommunications company located in Fairfield. The small town ambience also attracts lone-eagles and commuters that work in nearby Great Falls while tourists discover the area's charms as they pass through on their way to Glacier National Park.

Yet with all it has to offer, it remains paradise primarily undiscovered. While many counties in Montana have experienced double-digit growth over the last decade, Teton County's population has remained unchanged for the last 20 years and is still less than the peak population of 1970. With only 2.8 persons per square mile, the need for a growth policy plan may seem less urgent than other places in Montana. For precisely this reason, Teton County is in an enviable position.

Teton County is planning for it's future and laying the groundwork for mechanisms to manage change in advance of the explosive growth that other counties in the State have experienced. Inevitably, Teton County will be discovered and when new subdivisions beckon to urban refugees, Teton County will be prepared to guide this growth in a manner that will preserve the character that generations have come to cherish.

Figure 1: Teton County Issues Map



## **PLANNING BACKGROUND**

### 1. Teton County History

Prior to permanent settlement, the Pikuni, Piegan-Blackfoot buffalo hunters, controlled areas along the Rocky Mountain front. In 1867, the U.S. Government established the military post of Fort Shaw a few miles south of Fairfield on the Sun River. The first permanent settlers were squatters and cattlemen who located near the military forts and trading posts at Fort Shaw, Choteau, and Dupuyer.

The town of Choteau was originally named Old Agency and had served as reservation headquarters prior to the establishment of the Blackfoot Reservation in 1885. The Old Agency settlement was located three and one-half miles north of the present townsite. In 1876, A.B. Hamilton and his partner Isaac Hazlett moved their store to the present town site and the Old Agency site on the Teton River was abandoned. The Choteau townsite was laid out in 1883 and Choteau became incorporated in 1894.

Teton County was formed on March 1, 1893 from a portion of Chouteau County, with the town of Choteau as the county seat. Teton County was later subdivided when Toole, Galcier, and Pondera Counties were formed.

Early stockman introduced irrigation in the stream valleys and lower benches in the 1880's and 1890's but was significantly expanded with the development of the Greenfield Irrigation District. The District provides irrigation water for approximately 80,000 acres of land. Water is stored in Gibson Reservoir, Willow Reservoir and Pishkun Reservoir. Development of the reservoirs, canals and distribution system occurred from 1904 to 1936.

The town of Fairfield is the second largest community in Teton County and sprang out of economic activity related to the Greenfield District of the Sun River Irrigation Project. Dutton, located on the Burlington Northern Branch line in the eastern part of the county, is the third largest town. Prior to 1910 it was only a railroad siding named after a Great Northern Railway freight agent. Other towns are unincorporated communities that originated as grain shipping points located on railroad branch lines. They include Bynum, Collins, Farmington, Pendroy and Power.

### 2. Teton County Planning History

Teton County adopted a "Comprehensive Development Plan" for Teton County in 1981. Subsequently, the County adopted a Development Permit System in 1982 for commercial and industrial uses and updated the Subdivision Regulations in 1983. Although these regulatory documents codified many of the policies in the Comprehensive Plan the development review process still relied on many standards established only in the planning goals and policies.

Since 1981 the State of Montana has amended the Montana Code several times related to planning and subdivisions. In 1993, significant changes in the law changed the definition of subdivision from "parcels less than 20 acres in size" to "parcels less than 160 acres". A number

of exemptions were also eliminated with the result being that more development activity was subject to local subdivision review.

In 1999, the Montana Legislature passed an act changing the terms "master plan" and "comprehensive plan" to "growth policy". The act also established minimum requirements for preparation of growth policies. The legislation continued to allow counties to adopt this planning document on a voluntary basis.

Although this legislation provided clearer direction on the requirements for adopting a growth policy, there were still concerns about how local governments were using growth policies in the development review process. There were specific concerns about the legality of approving or denying subdivisions based on vague or ambiguous policies in the Growth Policy Plan. Due to these concerns, the 2001 Legislature amended the Subdivision Platting act to require:

*"When a growth policy has been approved, the subdivision REGULATIONS ADOPTED PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 3 OF THIS TITLE MUST BE MADE IN ACCORDANCE WITH the growth policy."*

As a result of these legislative changes, it became a high priority for all counties to update their Plans to comply with the 1999 legislation and provide clear policy direction that can be reflected in updated land use regulations.

In addition to these legislative changes, the western part of the State of Montana has experienced rapid population growth in the last decade. Counties found that regulations that were adopted 20 to 30 years ago were inadequate to address many concerns related to development. Community character, infrastructure costs, providing local services to new subdivisions, and compatibility of uses are some of the issues that have resulted in high growth areas. To deal with these issues, new planning tools have emerged that can help counties manage growth and promote sustainable development.

The combination of legislative changes, concern about potential development issues, and the opportunity to incorporate new planning techniques in the plan, prompted this current update of the 1981 plan. This plan represents Teton County's desire to provide for future development that is cost efficient to serve, that will preserve the rural character of the county and that will protect the unique natural resources of the area.

The Growth Policy Plan provides a vision for the County that indicates how it wants to develop and make public investments over the next 20 years. It analyzes land use, natural resources, public facilities, local services, population, economics, and housing to identify local issues and devise appropriate policies that will address those issues in a manner consistent with this vision. It provides the long-range focus to help decision-makers set priorities and evaluate whether development proposals are consistent with this vision. It is a tool to coordinate with other government agencies and to communicate to citizens and developers the vision of the community. The Plan provides the framework for regulatory updates, land use decisions, and public investments and will be an invaluable resource for the County as it enters the 21st Century.

## PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process began in the fall of 2001 with the formation of a Steering Committee to oversee preparation of the plan. The Committee met periodically over the two years of the plan with interested citizens attending the initial meetings. The Committee reviewed draft chapters of the County data profile, established direction for the goals and policies, and commented on all components of the plan.

Initially, the Steering Committee set out to update the goals and policies 1981 plan. After a number of meetings it determined that to properly address the issues and new trends that have emerged over the last 20 years, a complete rewrite of the plan would be required. The County hired a consultant in the Fall of 2002 to assist with the process.

In addition to the Steering Committee, the County partnered with the University of Montana to conduct a survey to solicit input regarding land use issues and various policy alternatives. The survey was mailed to over 600 residents and the response rate of over 80% indicated a high interest in the plan. This input was a valuable tool in crafting the goals and policies. (See appendix for survey results.) Throughout the two years of work by the Steering Committee, the local newspaper provided coverage of the various steps in the planning process. Following is a summary of the major steps in the planning process.

1. County awarded Community Development Block Grant to complete Growth Policy Plan. (Summer 2000)
2. Steering Committee created with representatives from County Planning Board, each of the three incorporated towns and a cross section of interest in the County. (Fall 2000)
3. Steering Committee meets several times for preliminary review of Goals & Policy. (January - June 2001)
4. Consultant hired to work with Steering Committee in preparation of plan. (Sept. 2001)
5. Survey mailed to over 600 voters in random sample and there was an 83% response rate. (January 2002)
6. County data profile completed. (April 2002)
7. Review draft of plan completed. (December 2002)
8. Town meetings and public hearings (January -March 2003)
9. Plan adoption by County Commission (Spring 2003)

The Plan is a dynamic document that represents a continuous process of setting goals and establishing priorities on actions to achieve those goals. This Plan provides for periodic updates and review of the plan. These updates will allow the County to reflect changing conditions and take advantage of new opportunities.

## HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

### Tip 1: Where to find Data & Statistics

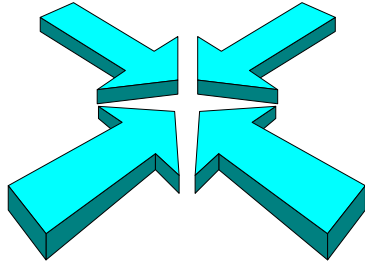
The County Profile section contains the data that was compiled for the plan. The data comes from census information as well as State and local agencies. A detail reference section is at the end of the County Profile and list the sources for the data. For additional information consult these sources.

### Tip 2: Locating Goals & Policies

The goals and policies are derived primarily from issues that emerged from the information that was compiled for the County Profile. The Goals and Policy subjects have the same heading as the county profile section in this document. To locate a policy that may deal with a particular issue, it might be helpful to browse through the table of contents for the county profile section. The goal or policy will likely be located under the same heading as the topic in the profile.

### Tip 3: Copies of the Plan

Copies of the plan will be located at each of the public libraries in the County. Upon adoption of the plan, it is the intent of the County to have electronic files of the plan on the County web site for. Additionally, the County Planning Department can make copies of all or part of the plan with a charge to cover the copy costs.



# Goals & Policies

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*“Development policy statements should emerge from a process of identifying planning issues, problems and assets, and from formulating goal and objective statements.”*

A Primer on Land Use Planning and Regulation for Local Governments, Montana Department of Commerce Community Technical Assistance Program

Goals and policy provide the framework for the Growth Management Policy Plan. They present the community’s values and are a guide for comparing alternatives, setting priorities, and measuring progress of various programs. Goals and policies each represent a different level of detail. Goals flow from identification of planning issues to a general goal statement that describes what the County is striving towards to specific policies that can be translated to action. Following are some common definitions of Goals and Policies.

**Goal:** A goal is the most general statement and sets the broad framework for objectives and policies. It provides the overall vision of what the community is striving for.

**Policy:** Policy statements represent specific actions. A policy is more detailed than an objective and can readily be translated into a specific action or program.

**POPULATION & ECONOMICS**

**Issue 1.1:** Teton County is experiencing slow to no population growth. Additionally, the composition of the population is changing with a growing senior population that reflects the aging of the baby boom and longer life spans. The lack of population growth combined with the fixed incomes of an aging population, could result in an increased tax burden to meet the demands of needed infrastructure upgrades. There is difficulty in keeping and attracting young families to the area.

With a current countywide population of 6,445 people a 1% increase per year would result in an increase of 673 persons over 10 years while a 2% increase per year would produce a population of 1,411 over 10 years. With an average household size of 2.5, this would require between 67 to 140 new housing units per year to accommodate a growing population. This would be in addition to the 10 to 15 houses per year that are added to the housing stock as seasonal homes or to replace older units. Most of the new housing construction in the past decade took place in the unincorporated areas.

<b>Goal A:</b>	Promote sustainable population growth that will provide a base to support businesses and schools at a rate that local government can plan and provide for services.
<b>Policies :</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Coordinate with public infrastructure policies to support growth.</li> <li>2. For planning purposes set a growth target of 1 to 2% increase in population per year.</li> <li>3. Identify areas in County that are desirable for growth &amp; target capital improvements for these areas.</li> <li>4. Market the quality of life factors to attract new residents.</li> </ol>

<b>Goal B:</b>	Provide the means for young adults from Teton County to remain in the area and attract young families that represent the future of the community.
<b>Policies :</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work with schools to keep in touch with graduates.</li> <li>2. Review needs of young families to identify service gaps.</li> <li>3. Actively engage young adults in community leadership positions.</li> <li>4. Work with local agencies to promote activities and entertainment for youth.</li> </ol>

**Issue 1.2:** Teton County has experienced a growth in jobs and has diversified its economic base to include higher-than-statewide percentages of jobs in wholesale, trade, transportation and public utilities. Job growth, however, has outpaced population growth. This may be the result of residents holding more than one job to replace lower income from traditional agricultural sources and spouses working to supplement farm income. Highway 89 goes through Teton County and is a major route to Glacier National Park. It could attract more stops by tourists.

<b>Goal A:</b>	Promote economic development that supports the agriculture sector of the economy and existing businesses.
<b>Policies :</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Target value-added agriculture for economic development.</li> <li>2. Support entrepreneur training and programs.</li> <li>3. Help identify alternative income sources.</li> <li>4. Periodically survey existing businesses to identify needs.</li> <li>5. Coordinate with local economic develop agencies on business retention efforts.</li> <li>6. Promote niche markets for main street business.</li> <li>7. Monitor the Farm Service agency study of the effects of the Conservation Reserve Program on rural economies.</li> <li>8. Partner with landowners, finance institutions, public and non-profit sector to develop programs to support family farms.</li> </ol>

<b>Goal B:</b>	Continue to diversify the economic base with industries that do not threaten the rural lifestyle and or create a strain on public services.
<b>Policies :</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Target economic development efforts towards clean industries or industry that uses sustainable development techniques.</li> <li>2. Coordinate with local, regional and State economic development programs.</li> <li>3. Cultivate new economy businesses such as telecommunications, alternative energy, Internet, and lone eagles.</li> <li>4. Develop tourism and heritage resources to capture more tourist dollars that are traveling to Glacier Park.</li> <li>5. Minimize environmental impacts of resource extraction industries.</li> <li>6. Coordinate with economic development with land use and public infrastructure policies.</li> <li>7. Amend existing regulation to include performance standards for potential nuisances from commercial and industrial developments.</li> </ol>

**II. HOUSING**

**Issue 2.1:** Teton County has a tight housing market with less than one percent of the total housing units in fair or better condition available for new occupants. Persons on limited income have the most difficulty meeting their housing needs. There are limited housing assistance programs and the ones that are in place have waiting lists. Additionally, the percent of unsound/poor housing in the County exceeds the State average and contributes to the low availability of housing units. Although some areas, such as Collins, is experiencing job growth, there are no housing units in the area for workers creating longer commutes.

<b>Goal A:</b>	Expand housing stock to meet the needs of first time homebuyers, low to moderate income.
<b>Policies :</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Coordinate with local governments and public agencies to expand programs for homebuyers and low to moderate income families.</li> <li>2. Promote in-fill development to capitalize on existing infrastructure.</li> <li>3. Focus planning and capital improvement efforts around population centers.</li> <li>4. Conduct housing needs assessment in unincorporated areas settlements and determine potential for rehabilitation grants.</li> <li>5. Coordinate with cities to inventory housing stock in order to target areas for rehabilitation and demolition.</li> </ol>

**Issue 2.2:** Although population growth will not generate new demand for additional housing units, the changing population composition will create demand for housing types that include starter homes, rental units, and senior care housing.

<b>Goal A:</b>	Develop a variety of housing types to meet the needs of the changing population.
<b>Policies :</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Encourage efficient residential land development patterns such as cluster developments and neo-traditional developments.</li> <li>2. Promote development of multi-family rental units in incorporated areas near services.</li> <li>3. Target expansion and development of housing for seniors such as assisted living centers and active retirement communities.</li> <li>4. Identify areas in the County to promote developments with a mix of housing types and price range. (Single family, townhouse, apartments, accessory units ...).</li> <li>5. Work with cities on possibility of second floor rental units above businesses.</li> </ol>

**LAND USE**

**Issue 3.1:** The western part of the County is characterized by forested mountain ranges with exceptional scenic, wildlife, recreation, paleontological, and natural resource values. Much of the land is under Federal and State ownership and management decisions must be coordinated with private land and community concerns.

<b>Goal A:</b>	Work with all stakeholders to develop approaches that allow compatible uses along the Rocky Mountain Front while protecting the outstanding natural heritage of the area.
<b>Policies :</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Actively participate in planning efforts for Lewis and Clark Forest.</li> <li>2. Include outreach efforts to all landowners in the area to involve in planning decisions and coordinate between neighbor's actions that may negatively impact one another.</li> <li>3. Consult with public, non-profit agencies, and resource management with area of proposed development early in review stages.</li> <li>4. Conduct additional study or area plan to collect planning data, identify threats to natural heritage, identify compatible land use activities and strategies.</li> <li>5. Work on consensus building among stakeholders to develop strategies for the area.</li> <li>6. Coordinate with fire mitigation measures from local service policies.</li> </ol>

**Issue 3.2:** Agricultural land use is the main contributor to the local economy and reflects the rural quality of life that is attractive to most people in the County. Agricultural trends, however, are putting pressure on agricultural operators to take land out of production. These include a decrease in farm income, an increase in the average age of farmers and development pressures.

<b>Goal A:</b>	Preserve agricultural land and promote an environment for successful agricultural operations
<b>Policies :</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Coordinate with right-to-farm protections in Montana Code.</li> <li>2. Discourage developments that interfere with agricultural operations.</li> <li>3. Identify productive agricultural lands and target for agricultural preservation programs.</li> <li>4. Coordinate with State and Federal agencies to promote sustainable agricultural practices.</li> <li>5. Provide information regarding conservation easements and other incentives to preserve agricultural land.</li> <li>6. Consult with farmers and ranchers to identify issues and strategies to promote viable operations.</li> </ol>

**Issue 3.3:** There was increased development activity in the County in the later part of the 1990's decade. Most of this activity was in the unincorporated areas in the central and east half of the county. Such development encounters issues of adequate services such as roads, water, and solid waste as well as impact on agriculture, wildlife, sensitive areas and other quality of life factors. Appropriate sites for development in or near incorporated areas are limited.

<b>Goal A:</b>	Promote development that has adequate services and does not add to the tax burden for existing land owners.
<b>Policies :</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Promote land development in and around incorporated areas that can provide services and discourage inefficient land use patterns that make it difficult to provide public services.</li> <li>2. Review feasibility of requirements for adequate facilities ordinance and sustainable development techniques.</li> <li>3. Include provisions in subdivision reviews to participate in current or future special improvement districts or other funding mechanisms to pay for infrastructure and services.</li> <li>4. Amend submittal requirements to require more information on potential impacts on public services, infrastructure and natural resources.</li> <li>5. Require information on improvement guarantees and conditions of approval to be indicated on the subdivision plat.</li> <li>6. Consult with local agencies to determine the impact of development and make sure all requirements are being met.</li> <li>7. Work with cities in the County to promote cooperative planning efforts.</li> </ol>

<b>Goal B:</b>	Promote development that is compatible with existing land uses and that minimizes negative impacts on neighboring uses.
<b>Policies :</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Impacts of development should be confined to the site (parking, noise, glare, dust, ..... ) or mitigated.</li> <li>2. Require buffers between different types of land use.</li> <li>3. Review development standards to determine if they are adequate to meet health and safety concerns.</li> <li>4. Amend development regulations to preserve rural character with provisions for density, signs, open space, billboards and other features.</li> <li>5. Create procedures to support neighborhood plans and zoning where citizens initiate action.</li> <li>6. Coordinate development review with different local, state and federal agencies that are involved in various aspects of development or may be affected by new development.</li> </ol>

**NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Issue 4.1:** The Teton and Sun Rivers are both listed as impaired water bodies. Weeds, run-off, flow and habitat alteration and siltation are problems. Watershed groups representing multiple parties have been successful in developing plans and implementing projects to improve water quality and quantity.

<b>Goal A:</b>	Improve the overall water quality of the major rivers and streams in Teton County and improve water availability to users along these water corridors.
<b>Policies :</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Support efforts by watershed planning groups through involvement, consultation, technical assistance, and partnerships on projects</li> <li>2. Notify and request input from appropriate agencies of new development or activities that may affect water quality.</li> <li>3. Require land stewardship plans with major subdivision submittals that address such things as noxious weed control, wildlife, livestock grazing, other agricultural uses, and protection of water resources.</li> <li>4. Encourage landowners adjacent to waterways to use best management practices to protect water quality.</li> <li>5. Adopt standards for development along water corridors.</li> </ol>

**Issue 4.2:** Access to water for new development has restrictions due to water right issues and ground water availability. Water rights for the Teton and Sun River basins are being adjudicated with a preliminary decree forthcoming in the next two to three years and need to be monitored. The Teton River is subject to legislative closure for new water rights. Additionally, irrigation practices may effect water tables in the some areas.

<b>Goal A:</b>	New developments should have adequate water supplies while protecting the water rights of existing landowners.
<b>Policies :</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Monitor the water rights adjudication process.</li> <li>2. Require new development to submit information on impact of proposal on irrigation districts and existing water rights.</li> <li>3. Notify irrigation districts, State and Federal agencies and nearby landowners on potential impacts of development on water supplies.</li> <li>4. Coordinate with agencies on strategies for addressing water rights in areas where this might be an issue.</li> <li>5. Require new developments to demonstrate they have adequate water sources without negatively impacting existing uses and prohibit developments unless they satisfy this requirement.</li> </ol>

**Issue 4.3:** Teton County has a diverse landscape that supports a wide range of wildlife. Much wildlife habitat is located on public lands or protected with conservation easements. These areas have significant quality of life and economic impact and policy decisions need to be coordinated with local agencies. Additionally, other quality of life factors such as air quality, scenic resources and historic resources need to be preserved.

<b>Goal A:</b>	Preserve high quality of life by protecting natural heritage such as wildlife, clean air, scenic vistas and cultural resources.
<b>Policies :</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work with existing agencies to discourage development in areas with high natural resource value such as wildlife habitat and migration corridors, scenic areas, and archeological sites.</li> <li>2. Coordinate development standards for sensitive lands such as floodplains and slopes with regulatory agencies that oversee these areas.</li> <li>3. Coordinate with agencies that manage public lands on land planning issues and actively participate in planning efforts.</li> <li>4. Work with other agencies to educate landowners on agricultural practices that promote conservation and wildlife values.</li> <li>5. Provide information to landowners on private and non-profit efforts to protect important lands.</li> <li>6. Consult with state agencies on new development to make sure they are in conformance with air quality and other standards.</li> <li>7. Identify and map sensitive lands and lands with high natural resource value so information is available to decision makers.</li> <li>8. Design planning processes to involve land owners in decision making process for public lands.</li> </ol>

**PUBLIC FACILITIES**

**Issue 5.1:** The majority of county roads are gravel and designed for minimal agricultural and residential traffic. They may need upgrading if traffic levels significantly increase. Determining appropriate jurisdiction and maintenance responsibilities over public and private roads needs to be clarified. The County does not have a capital improvement plan to identify and schedule future improvements.

<b>Goal A:</b>	Provide a safe, efficient, and economical road system.
<b>Policies :</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complete an inventory and assessment of County roads that provides information on condition and needed improvements.</li> <li>2. Develop a capital improvement program to schedule needed improvements.</li> <li>3. Adopt design standards for construction of roads in new developments to ensure adequate future maintenance and right-of-way for service vehicles.</li> <li>4. Develop policy to address maintenance and dedication issues in new developments that have private roads and clarify jurisdictional issues on existing roads.</li> <li>5. Coordinate with Montana Department of Transportation on improvement to State highways and access to State roads.</li> <li>6. Work with Montana Department of Transportation to upgrade the priority for improvements to Highway 89 north of Choteau.</li> <li>7. Require adequate financial guarantees for transportation improvements in new development.</li> </ol>

**Issue 5.2:** Each of the municipalities needs significant improvements to their water and wastewater facilities. Some facilities lack adequate capacity for new users and funding improvements is an issue that needs to be addressed. The County can play a role in coordinating activities between agencies, facilitating actions to fund improvements, and directing growth where there is adequate facilities.

<b>Goal A:</b>	Water and wastewater facilities should have the capacity to meet projected future growth and should be environmentally sound.
<b>Policies :</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Coordinate with appropriate governing bodies on assessing and improving facilities. Provide technical or grant writing assistance.</li> <li>2. Monitor the capacity and operating condition of existing facilities.</li> <li>3. Encourage development where facilities have capacity for growth.</li> <li>4. Encourage partnerships and innovative approaches to improve facilities such as the northcentral water system.</li> </ol>

**Issue 5.3:** Threats to public and private water supplies include contamination at the well head, septic field contamination, and agricultural practices. Land use and new development need to account for these potential threats.

<b>Goal A:</b>	Protect quality of groundwater and public water supplies.
<b>Policies :</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Determine well head protection zones for public water supplies in the county and include in a geographic information system.</li> <li>2. Review wellhead protection requirements and expand if necessary.</li> <li>3. Work with other agencies to educate landowners on non-point pollution sources and discourage practices that are a threat to groundwater supplies.</li> <li>4. Work with other agencies to monitor public and private wells routinely to identify potential problems so there can be early intervention to address the problems.</li> <li>5. Coordinate with state agencies that regulate discharge into water bodies and other pollution sources.</li> <li>6. Require new developments to submit information regarding impact on water quality.</li> </ol>

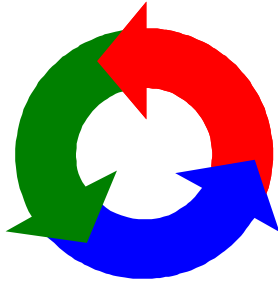
**III. LOCAL SERVICES**

**Issue 6.1:** The volunteer fire departments, emergency services, and Sheriff's department face personnel shortages. Due to two-worker families and time limitations fewer people are volunteering for these demanding jobs. Consequently, operating on a totally volunteer basis may be more difficult in the future. The Teton County Sheriff's Office provides all law enforcement services in the county, including the incorporated areas of Choteau, Dutton, and Fairfield. Nine officers cover the same territory previously covered by 13 officers. Small subdivisions in remote areas are harder to serve and may not have adequate access for emergency vehicles.

<b>Goal A:</b>	Provide professional and timely emergency service to all County residents.
<b>Policies :</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Monitor staffing needs and demand and conduct a cost/benefit study of paid staff for emergency services if critical need is determined.</li> <li>2. Coordinate with agencies that provide fire fighting on public lands.</li> <li>3. New development should have adequate water supply for fire fighting and incorporate fire protection measures in their design.</li> <li>4. Discourage development where services can not be provided in a timely manner.</li> <li>5. Design roads to ensure adequate emergency vehicle access.</li> <li>6. Require rural addressing information as part of subdivision submittal.</li> </ol>

**Issue 6.2:** Public school enrollment is projected to decline overall in the county. The school district may be faced with closing the Golden Ridge and Bynum schoolhouses, which had 10 and 18 students respectively in 2000, if there is much of a drop in enrollment in the future. The age distribution varies throughout the county with some school districts experiencing a declining student population while the Fairfield area has a stable enrollment. Large landowners have a heavier tax burden to support schools.

<b>Goal A:</b>	Work with schools to help provide quality education in Teton County.
<b>Policies :</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work with school district to identify issues regarding future enrollments and capital construction.</li> <li>2. Notify Schools of pending new developments.</li> <li>3. Discourage incompatible land uses from locating in vicinity of schools.</li> <li>4. Encourage opportunities for community partnerships with schools to address educational issues.</li> <li>5. Explore technology solutions with schools to provide additional educational opportunities for students and the community.</li> <li>6. Consider joint projects with schools to meet common goals for open space, recreation, and community meeting space.</li> </ol>



# IMPLEMENTATION

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## OVERVIEW

*"In short, planning is only as good as the commitment and abilities of the people responsible for carrying out the town plan." (The Small Town Planning Handbook, Daniels, Keller, Lapping)*

The implementation strategies provide a blueprint for translating the goals and objectives into measurable achievements. The goals and objectives provide a framework for decision making and indicate the level of involvement that the local government feels necessary to address an issue. The implementation program outlines specific action steps that are derived from the goals and policies. A successful implementation strategy helps the community establish priorities and identifies the resources to accomplish these action steps. This section includes the following requirements from the Montana Code Annotated regarding growth policy plans.

### **76-1-601 (2)**

A growth policy must include:

- (d) A description of policies, regulations and other measures to be implemented in order to achieve the goals and objectives established pursuant to subsection (2)(1);
- (e) 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;
- (f) An implementation strategy that includes:
  - (i) a timetable for implementing the growth policy
  - (ii) a list of conditions that will lead to a revision of the growth policy; and
  - (iii) a timetable for reviewing the growth policy at least every five years and revising the policy if necessary
- (g) a statement of how the governing bodies will coordinate and cooperate with other jurisdictions that explains:
  - (i) if a governing body is a city or town, how the governing body will coordinate and cooperate with the county in which the city or town is located on matters related to the growth policy;
  - (ii) if a governing body is a county, how the governing body will coordinate and cooperate with cities and towns located within the county's boundaries on matters related to the growth policy;

## TOOLS & TECHNIQUES

This section describes the various tools that are part of the implementation strategy to carry out the recommendations of the plan.

### 1) Land Development Regulations

Teton County currently has a Subdivision Ordinance and Development Permit Regulations that control land development in the County. The subdivision ordinance regulates the subdivision of land, platting of lots, dedication of new roads, and the provision of infrastructure improvements. The ordinance contains procedures for the preparation, review and filing of subdivision documents. The Development Permit System contains standards for commercial and industrial uses anywhere within the County. It does not regulate location of uses but does contain standards for site planning, parking, roads, and environmentally sensitive areas. There is a permitting process required for these uses. Both documents are over 20 years old and need to be updated to reflect the policies in the growth policy plan and to comply with State legislative mandates as well as current judicial rulings.

In addition to the existing regulatory mechanisms in place, the Montana Code provides for petition by landowners to create a planning and zoning district with accompanying development regulations. (MCA 76-2 (Part 1).) Although there are no areas in Teton County where landowners have taken such actions, it would streamline the future petitions if administrative procedures and forms were in place in the event of citizens wanting to pursue this type of zoning.

### 2) Capital Improvement Plan

"A Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) is a budgeting and financial tool used by a local governing body to establish public works rehabilitation and maintenance priorities and to establish funding for repairs and improvements. The CIP includes planning, setting priorities, effective public works management, financial management, and community decision process. A CIP consists of five basic elements:

- 1) inventory and evaluation of existing conditions for each facility (needs assessment);
- 2) prioritization of improvement needs for each public facility and prioritization of the needs for the entire infrastructure;
- 3) identification of monetary options that can be used to meet the needs;
- 4) establishment of a time schedule that matches available funds to the improvements required to meet the system needs; and
- 5) a brief written document (the CIP which is formally adopted by the governing body by resolution or by ordinance."

(Source: *Montana Department of Commerce, The Mini Capital Improvements Plan for Small Towns*)

### 3) Administrative Procedures

Many of the Plan's goals can be advanced through modifying and improving administrative procedures. This may include developing and updating mailing lists, updating forms, creating checklists and other user aids, reviewing notification procedures, distribution of plans, and examining timelines for reviews. The overall aim of these techniques is to promote more efficient use of staff resources, ensure comprehensive reviews and provide responsive service to the community.

#### 4) Planning Studies & Data Gathering

There are areas and issues that require more detailed studies and special strategies. These areas can be designated as special area studies or neighborhood planning areas that will be subject of a separate planning process with targeted strategies specific to that area. In addition to these study areas, there may be information that would be useful to decision-makers but was unavailable at the time of the planning process. Specific data gathering efforts such as instituting a Geographic Information System (GIS) or land inventories are examples such planning initiatives.

#### 5) State & Federal Programs/Technical Assistance

There are a variety of State and Federal programs available to help localities achieve the goals of the plan. The more commonly used programs include the Community Development Block Grant program, Treasure State Endowment Program, Community Technical Assistance Program, State Historic Preservation Office, and others. State agencies such as the Department of Environmental Quality, and Department of Natural Resource Conversation administer permitting procedures that may influence land development. The Montana Department of Transportation is responsible for much of the transportation infrastructure in the County. The USDA Farm Service Agencies, Rural Development Programs and Montana State Cooperative Extension are active in the County. Additionally, a number of professional organizations provide technical assistance and other resources. These include Montana Association of Counties (MACO), Montana Association of Planners (MAP) and non-profits.

#### 6) Education Programs & Public Outreach

Many planning objectives can be accomplished through voluntary efforts from citizens in the community. Communicating the plan's vision to the public is critical. Education and outreach efforts include disseminating information through publications, brochures, news releases, service announcements, displays and other public relations methods. It also means obtaining regular feedback through task forces, surveys, public meetings, and customer service questionnaires.

#### 7) Conservation Easements

The property owner grants an easement to a nonprofit group (land trust, conservation group ...) or public agency (Fish, Wildlife and Parks, ...) to guarantee its preservation. Conservation easements can be used to preserve open space, wildlife habitat, and environmentally sensitive areas. The property owner retains use of the land and receives tax benefits.

#### 8) Fiscal Impact Analysis

This is an analysis of a development proposal to determine the cost-benefit to the public. It considers costs such as roads, public safety, school, and other services as well as potential tax revenues.

#### 9) Design Guidelines

Design guidelines describe and illustrate site plan and design techniques that promote good design and environmentally sound practices. Guidelines are mostly an educational tool and compliance with the guidelines is voluntary. Some guidelines may eventually be adopted as part of a regulatory system.

## ACTION PLAN

The steps in the action plan are all related to advancing specific goals and objectives. The goals and objectives also establish the type of involvement the County will undertake. Following are criteria for evaluating the action steps.

- Does it relate to a specific need or issue identified in the County profile?
- Does it reflect priorities based on responses to community survey, feedback from public meetings and existing community plans?
- Are there resources available to undertake the effort?
- Does the strategy build on existing assets, take advantage of funding opportunities, or leverage outside resources?
- Does the strategy bring regulations and programs into compliance with State and federal requirements?

The action plan is a matrix that lists the task and identifies staffing, costs considerations, and timeframe parameters for each task. Following is a description of those parameters.

### 1. Staffing

*In-house* - Will be completed with existing staff.

*Contract* - Contract with outside firm to complete work.

*Partner* - Partner with other state/federal agency, non-profit, or other organization to complete work

### 2. Cost

*High* - Requires allocation of new funds that are not existing in budget.

*Medium* - Can be accomplished with existing budgeted funds.

*Low* - Zero or minimal costs.

### 3. Time Frame/Priority

*Near Term* - Immediate need. To be addressed within one year.

*Mid Term* - Defined need. May phase in implementation within 1 to 2 years.

*Long Term* - Requires program development that necessitates a longer timeframe 3+ years

*Ongoing* - Ongoing activity.

*As Needed* - Monitor and take action when need arises

**1. Update Teton County Development Regulations & Procedures**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Staffing</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Priority</b>
1. Rewrite Subdivision regulations.	Contract	Medium to High	Near-Term
2. Rewrite Development Permit Regulations.	Contract	Medium to High	Mid-Term
3. Develop process and forms for citizen initiated zoning petitions.	Contract	Low to Medium	Long-Term
4. Include right-to-farm provisions in codes.	Coordinate with Dev. Permit Rewrite		
5. Adopt sign and billboard regulations.	Coordinate with Dev. Permit Rewrite		
6. Include provisions for adequate facilities.	Coordinate with Subdivision Rewrite		
7. Incorporate improvement guarantees.	Coordinate with Subdivision Rewrite		
8. Require information for rural addressing to be submitted with subdivision applications.	Coordinate with Subdivision Rewrite		
9. Develop performance standards to minimize potential nuisances from commercial and industrial developments.	Coordinate with Dev. Permit Rewrite		
10. Require land stewardship plans as part of the submittal requirements.	Coordinate with Subdivision Rewrite		
11. Include development standards for sensitive lands along waterways, to protect water quality, flood plains, and slopes.	Coordinate with Dev. Permit Rewrite		

**2. Build Information for Planning**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Staffing</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Priority</b>
1. Compile planning library for use of staff & public including informational brochures and reference documents from State and Federal agencies that regulate or influence land use in the County.	In-House	Low	On-going
2. Add layers of information to GIS base map to include environmentally sensitive areas, historic resources, brownfield sites, scenic viewsheds, wellhead protection zones, zoning overlay districts, natural resources...	Contract	Medium	On-going, As needed
3. Contact Farm Service Agency about possibility of conducting a study of Conservation Reserve Program on local economies.	Partner	Low	Mid term

**3. Promote the development, maintenance, and replacement of public infrastructure to meet the needs of the citizens of Teton County**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Staffing</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Priority</b>
1. Complete an inventory and assessment of county roads.	Contract & In-house	Medium	Mid-Term
2. Adopt a Capital Improvement Program (CIP).	Contract	Medium to High	Mid-Term
3. Adopt policy on jurisdiction and maintenance for public and private roads.	Coordinate with Subdivision Rewrite		
4. Submit public comment to Montana Department of Transportation the need to make Highway 89 improvements north of Choteau a high priority in the Transportation Improvement Plan.	In-house	Low	Near-Term
5. Monitor North Central Montana Regional Water System process and pass resolution of support when considered for additional legislation.	In-house	Low	As-Needed
6. Include information on GIS database indicating if city water and service is available to property and wellhead protection zones.	GIS Contract	Incorporate as part of existing contract	On-Going
7. Establish task force of cities' public works officials to consider joint application processes, shared technical assistance, and information sharing on common water and sewer difficulties.	Partner	Low	Near-Term
8. For major developments require that a Fiscal Impact Analysis be submitted with development plans.	Coordinate with Subdivision Rewrite		
9. Revise development standards to accommodate fire protection vehicles and reflect standards for fire prevention.	Coordinate with Subdivision Rewrite		
10. Work with local jurisdictions to host a grant writing workshop with representatives from State and Federal agencies.	Partner	Low	As Needed

**4. Work with County, State and Federal agencies to strengthen or create initiatives and programs to meet the housing and economic development needs of the area.**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Staffing</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Priority</b>
1. Work with schools on youth leadership programs such as a youth commission or government day ...	Partner	Low	On-going
2. Create a coordinating council for organizations involved in economic development.	Partner	Low	On-going
3. Work with watershed planning groups to develop design guidelines and best management practices.	Partner	Low	Mid-Term
4. Conduct housing needs assessment to determine if county can apply for Community Development Block Grant Home Funds to provide housing rehab assistance to unincorporated housing developments in the county.	Contract	Medium	Mid-Term

**5. Incorporate Public Outreach & Education Methods into the Planning Process**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Staffing</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Priority</b>
1. Revise development review process to notify interested parties such as watershed groups and irrigation districts.	Coordinate with Subdivision Rewrite		
2. Create checklist and develop guides to clearly explain the various development processes to citizens.	In-House	Low	Long-Term
3. Work with Internet Provider to put Growth Policy Plan and other documents on county web site.	Partner	Medium	On-going
4. Work with University of Montana to conduct additional surveys on planning issues.	Partner	Medium	As Needed

**6. Special Planning Initiatives**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Staffing</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Priority</b>
1. Establish cooperating agency status with Federal agencies in order to participate and represent local concerns in the planning process for public lands.	In-house	Low	Near Term
2. Create special study area for the Rocky Mountain Front and develop planning strategies specific to the area.	Contract-In-House	Medium - High	Long Term
3. Work with solid waste companies to host a household hazardous waste collection day and distribute materials on non-point pollution sources.	Partner	Low	Mid-Term

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

No single government agency can address all of the issues in the Growth Policy Plan. Many agencies offer various types of public services and still more are involved in land use, environmental, and transportation issues. Their activities all need to be coordinated to promote efficient operations, avoid duplication and minimize the potential for conflicts. There are already many examples of coordination and cooperation between agencies. These include sharing information, regular meetings between public officials of agencies, and inviting comment on development proposals.

In addition to coordination of activities, some issues require a joint response from multiple agencies. Agencies may partner on capital construction projects, share staff, conduct joint planning processes or enter intergovernmental agreements on a variety of issues. In some instances, there are regional agencies with representatives from various jurisdictions to provide specific services.

The Montana Code specifies:

" if a governing body is a county, how the governing body will coordinate and cooperate with cities and towns located within the county's boundaries on matters related to the growth policy;"

There are three incorporated towns in Teton County (Choteau, Fairfield, Dutton). The following policies will direct coordination between the County and these towns.

- The County will provide each town with a copy of the Growth Policy and will meet with local officials upon request to discuss the plan
- The County Planning Board will continue to hear subdivision cases for the towns.
- The County will notify towns of pending development proposals within 4 miles of the town limits
- The City and County will share meeting agendas and minutes
- The County will encourage towns to adopt individual growth policies for the town and will work with them during the planning process to coordinate policies and implementation strategies
- The County will encourage the towns to incorporate existing facility plans into a capital improvement plan and will support applications for infrastructure grants
- The County and City will share databases and other information in the planning process

In addition to coordination with the towns, the following table lists other agencies that have operations in Teton County and activities that will promote intergovernmental coordination.

**Table 1: Intergovernmental Coordination**

Lewis & Clark National Forest	The update of Forest Plan is to be scheduled in next few years. Teton County will establish "Cooperating Agency Status" to have more local input on decisions.
State Agencies	Information sharing, public participation, coordinated review processes with the following agencies:  Department of Environmental Quality reviews water & sewer systems. Development musts comply with variety of State regulations. Hazardous waste & solid waste regulations. Water & Air Quality.  Fish, Wildlife and Parks manages wildlife preserves in Teton County.  Montana Department of Transportation maintains State Highways in the County  Department of Natural Resources and Conservation. Deals with water rights and groundwater issues
School Districts	Coordinate on new subdivisions. Shared use of facilities. Cooperate on Youth leadership programs
Teton County Economic Development Corporation	Economic Development planning for the County. Regular updates, information sharing, assist with land use issues for potential new businesses.
Watershed Groups	Teton & Sun River Watershed Groups. Representative at meetings, information sharing, distribute educational materials to land owners, notify of pending development reviews, invite input on land development regs
Irrigation Districts	Greenfield, Bynum, Eldorado, Eureka/Teton Co-Operative, Farmers Co-Operative, Brady. Information sharing, notify of pending development reviews, invite input on land development regs
Utilities	Northwestern Energy, Sun River Electric Coop, Three Rivers Telephone, Water Districts, Solid Waste providers. Information sharing, notify of pending development reviews, invite input on land development regs.
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	Wetlands, Hazardous Wastes. Information sharing. Distribution of educational materials.
Fire Districts	Coordination through the County Department of Emergency Services and a Fire Council. Notify of pending developments. Invite input on land development regs
Regional agencies. (Rural Development Office, Area Council of Aging ...)	Share planning information. Invite comments during drafting stages of the plan and for development review

## REVIEW & UPDATES

Planning is a continuous process. All types of plans must be reviewed and revised on a regular basis to reflect current conditions. Changes in development practices, legislation, grant programs, budgets and numerous other factors may alter priorities or make certain policies outdated. It is important that regular reviews of the Growth Policy Plan be part of the planning program.

### 1. Schedule for Review

- Annual Report

The County planning staff will make a one-year status report to the Plan Commission. This report will indicate the completion of ongoing work of the items in the action plan and will identify any issues that may require revisions to the Growth Policy Plan. The annual status report will be scheduled as an item on the Planning Board agenda and the public will be invited to comment on the report.

- Five Year Review

The Montana Code requires that the Growth Policy Plan be reviewed every five years. Upon the fifth anniversary of adopting the plan, the Planning Board and staff will undertake a major review process to evaluate plan. The plan will be modified according to public procedures specified in the Montana code. Evaluation criteria include:

- Are the community's goals current and valid?
- Have circumstances, information assumptions, needs or legal framework changed?
- Does additional public input suggest the need for changes?
- Are the community planning process and planning products providing effective direction to local officials and staff?
- Is there new data that should be incorporated into the plan?
- Does the action plan reflect the completion of work items?
- Should new action items be identified and the timeline modified?
- What issues have emerged that the Plan should address?

## 2. Checklist of Conditions that Require Plan Revisions

There may be times prior to the five-year review that the County would want to revisit certain aspects of the plan and amend specific elements. Conditions under which this may occur include:

- Address issues that come up during implementation phase that may not have been anticipated during the drafting of the plan.
- Reflect new development proposal or building techniques that are not provided for in the plan.
- Modify to comply with changes in state legislation, judicial decisions or state programs.
- Reassess priorities to take advantage of new opportunities such as grants, partnerships, and State and Federal program.

## 3. Public Participation

Citizen input is the basis for the policies in the plan. Involving citizens helps develop a consensus between various interest groups. Citizens learn more about how government and planning work; how much programs cost; and the difficulty or ease of program implementation. Public outreach provides accurate information on planning issues and gives citizens the opportunity to participate in planning. Citizens will develop ownership of plan and are more likely to support planning efforts. Most importantly, public participation promotes the public interest by involving a cross section of interest groups that will demand fairness and balance in planning policies. General principles for public participation include:

- ◆ Must occur at all stages of the planning process
- ◆ Must include a variety of techniques to reach a broad audience
- ◆ Although not everyone will choose to participate, everyone must have the opportunity to participate if they so desire.
- ◆ Must meet legal due process requirements such as notification of meetings, open meetings and appropriate documentation of meetings.

The following techniques were part of the growth policy planning process and will continue to be used in future processes.

**Table 2: Public Participation Techniques**

<b>Technique</b>	<b>Description</b>
Citizen Advisory Committees	Teton County established a steering committee to develop the plan. The Committee had representation from different interest in the County. This technique will also be used for rewriting land development regulations.
Opinion Surveys	As part of the planning process, Teton County partnered with the University of Montana to conduct an extensive survey to assess residents priorities and attitudes towards various land use issues. The County will continue to look for partnering opportunities for future planning surveys.
Town Meetings	The County conducted town meetings in each of the three incorporated towns to present the draft plan and obtain public input.
Workshops	Future planning processes may involve workshops to explore specific issues.
Web Publishing	The county will work with the ISP to post an electronic version of the plan on the County web site.
Press Coverage	The weekly newspaper was invited to all meetings and regularly reported on the planning progress.
Comment Period on draft documents	As part of the plan a contact list was developed to notify interested parties about the availability of draft documents. Review copies were available at the public libraries and at the County courthouse. Parties could submit written comments or attend public meetings.
Public Displays & Exhibits	Future planning processes may include the creation of displays and exhibits that will contain information on the plan.
Present to Civic Groups & Clubs	Upon request, Staff or Planning Board members will present an overview of the Growth Policy Plan to citizen groups.

## SUBDIVISION REVIEW

Subdivision is the division of land that creates one or more parcels for the purpose of selling, renting, leasing or conveying the land. In Montana, subdivisions that create parcels containing less than 160 acres (excluding right-of-ways) are subject to the Montana Subdivision and Platting Act (MSPA - MCA 76-3) In addition to the State Code, subdivisions are subject to local regulations. Under the MSPA, land division may fall into one of three categories that do not require local government subdivision review.

1) Divisions Exempt from local Approval but requiring a Survey - Land divisions that are exempt from local government review and approval as subdivisions, but which must be surveyed and a certificate a survey filed (without local subdivision approval) before title can be transferred.

- ◆ Any parcel 160 acres or larger in size that cannot be described as consisting of 1/32 or larger aliquot parts of a section.
- ◆ Parcels less than 160 acres but are exempt under provisions for a family transfer, agricultural purpose, or relocation of a common boundary line.

2) Divisions Exempt from Subdivision Review and Surveying

- ◆ Parcels 160 acres or larger and parcels exempt under family transfer, or agricultural purpose that can be described as consisting of 1/32 or larger aliquot parts of a section.
- ◆ Divisions of land created by a court order, eminent domain, agricultural leases, oil, gas, or water interest, and other miscellaneous exemptions.

3) Amended Plats

Within a platted subdivision the relocation of common boundaries and the aggregation of five or fewer aggregated lots may be accomplished without approval of the governing body but must be surveyed.

Among the requirements in Section 76-1-601 of the Montana Code regarding requirements for growth policies is the following.

- (h) a statement explaining how the governing bodies will:
  - (i) define the criteria in 76-3-608(3)(a); and
  - (ii) evaluate and make decisions regarding proposed subdivisions with respect to the criteria in 76-3-608(3)(a); and
- (i) a statement explaining how public hearings regarding proposed subdivisions will be conducted.

The flow chart indicates the public hearing process for reviewing subdivision. The criteria in 76-3-608 (3)(a) will be evaluated in the staff report to the Planning Board and considered as part of the deliberations. Definition of criteria will be reviewed in detail as part of the subdivision regulation updates but will generally reflected the recommended definitions as follows:

Definitions of criteria in 76-606(3)(a)

**Agriculture** - Montana Code Annotated contains definitions for the words "agriculture" and "agricultural" as follows:

- 41-2-103, MCA Definitions. As used in this part, the following definitions apply:
  - (1) "Agriculture" means: (a) all aspects of farming, including the cultivation and tillage of the soil; (b)(i) dairying; and (ii) the production, cultivation, growing, and harvesting of any agricultural or horticultural commodities, including commodities defined as agricultural commodities in the federal Agricultural Marketing Act (12 U.S.C. 1141j(g)); (c) the raising of livestock, bees, fur-bearing animals, or poultry; and (d) any practices, including forestry or lumbering operations, performed by a farmer or on a farm as an incident to or in conjunction with farming operations, including preparation for market or delivery to storage, to market, or to carriers for transportation market.
- 87-8-701, MCA Definitions. Unless the context requires otherwise, in this part the following definitions apply: (1) "Agricultural and food product" includes a horticultural, viticultural, dairy, livestock, poultry, bee, other farm or garden product, fish or fishery product, and other foods.

**Agricultural Water User Facilities:** those facilities which provide water for agricultural land as defined in 15-7-202, MCA, or which provide water for the production of agricultural products as defined in 15-1-101, MCA including, but not limited to ditches, pipes, and head gates.

**Local Services:** Any and all services or facilities that local government entities are authorized to provide.

**Natural Environment:** The physical conditions which exist within a given area, including land, air, water, mineral, flora, fauna, noise, and objects of historic or aesthetic significance.

**Wildlife:** Living things which are neither human nor domesticated.

**Wildlife Habitat:** Place or type of site where wildlife naturally lives and grows.

**Public Health and Safety:** A condition of optimal well-being, free from danger, risk, or injury for a community at large, or for all people, not merely for the welfare of a specific individual or a small class of persons.

## **SUBDIVISION - Process** (For major subdivisions of 6 or more lots)

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