

GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN

HARDIN, MONTANA

2009

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1. INTRODUCTION AND COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

STATISTICS

Latitude: 45.717623
Longitude: -107.618685
Elevation: 2902 feet
Persons per household: 3.34
Population: 3406
Households: 1411
Income per household: 73% of national average
Average house value: 63% of national average
Urban vs. Rural population: 74.3%
Married couples with children: 54.4%
Married: 59.3%
Speak only English: 82.3%
From out of state: 62.7%
Foreign born: 1.5%
Moved in the last 5 years: 50.1%
Work at home: 2.6%
Average travel time to work: 20 minutes
People enrolled in school (to gr 12): 30%
People with a Bachelor's degree or higher: 11.9%
People in the military + veterans: 20.6%
Unemployment: 9.2%
People below poverty line: 26.9%
Number of vacant housing units: 9.8%
Urban vs. rural housing: 74.7%
Homes owned by occupant: 63.2%
Rooms per home: 5.2
Detached homes: 67.6%
Median year structures were built: 1968
Median rent: 101% of national average
Rent as % of income: 25.1%
Median home owner cost: 80% of national average
Home owner cost of income: 20.7%

---Source: US Govt. Census 2000 (www.pikpuk.com)

In May 2008 the City of Hardin prepared a consultant-administered Needs Assessment and Income Survey and ultimately received 349 responses. The survey consisted of 45 questions taken from formats suggested by funding agencies as well as questions of particular concern to Hardin and covering a broad spectrum of issues; the opportunity to make other comments was also included in the survey-questionnaire format.¹

At the end of the survey, the results were summarized with the question, “Please indicate what you feel should be the top five priorities for the County or City to improve on in the Hardin area?” The results are as follows in order of priority:

1. Police protection
2. Attracting new business
3. Drug control
4. Streets-road repair
5. School-quality of education
6. Recreation-teen activities
7. School-structural repairs
8. Animal control
9. Wastewater
10. Sidewalks, curbs and gutters

The 2003 Growth Management Plan for the City also included a survey of the civic interests of the populace. Of the findings of that survey, the importance of addressing wastewater and emergency services survive in the top priorities of the respondents.

¹ Great West Engineering

2. PLANNING AREA BACKGROUND AND SETTING

Before the coming of the white man, the area of what is now Hardin and its environs was the home of the Absaroka or Crow Indians. The first white man to enter what is now the Hardin-Big Horn County area was probably Chevalier de la Verendrye who passed through in 1743 seeking a route to the Pacific. About 1804 a few hardy trappers and miners passed through as did William Clark's party of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. The increase of the white population did not start to accelerate until about 1864 and the opening of the Bozeman Trail, a short cut between the North Platte and the Three Forks of the Missouri. Fort C.F. Smith was built just below where Yellowtail Dam is located to protect white emigrants using the trail. In an attempt to appease the Crows, this fort was abandoned in 1868. After the defeat of white troops 15 miles east of Hardin at what is today Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, Fort Custer was constructed as a "preventive action" fort at the confluence of the Bighorn and Little Bighorn Rivers. This fort overlooked the present site of Hardin.

The town of Hardin was founded in 1907 and is, accordingly, one of Montana's younger towns. The land on which the community is located was purchased in 1906 by the Lincoln Land Company of Nebraska, and the original plats were surveyed by A. G. Smith and his nephew, Carl Rankin. Nearby Fort Custer was abandoned in 1902. For its 20-year existence, Fort Custer, with its hospital, opera house, military band, and tree-lined avenues, was the general hub of the area; Paddlewheel river boats brought tourists up the river, contributing mightily to area commerce.¹ The C. B. & Q. Railroad Depot which had been located across the Little Big Horn River was moved to its present site on the south side of Hardin; the morse key for the Hardin Station is still "FC" (Fort Custer).

Although several Indian names were considered for the new community, the present name comes from Samuel H. Hardin, an area cattleman and close friend of the president of Lincoln Land Company.

The first lot was sold to M. C. Spencer on May 30, 1907 for \$900. The Big Horn Motor Company was located on this site for many years, then a trucking company, and now it is abandoned. Hitching rails accommodated the primary means of travel in early—day Hardin, and broad Center Avenue hosted many a furious and dusty horse race.

In 1910, 63 residents circulated a petition to incorporate Hardin. After a favorable vote, the community became incorporated on January 3, 1911. Tom Mouat became the first mayor and A. N. Mitchell the first city clerk. Big Horn County was formed in 1913 from parts of Rosebud and Yellowstone Counties, and Hardin became the county seat. The County Courthouse was moved five times in Hardin before it located on its present site in 1936.

¹ Carla Colstad, former member, Hardin Centennial Committee, correspondence

As the service area for the surrounding farm and ranch land, Hardin grew and prospered, the population increasing to over 2,500 people. When Carla Colstad's mother moved to Hardin in 1938 there were 3000 people here—about the same today. Fort Smith had a larger population in the 1960's when Yellowtail Dam was under construction. When the Sugar Factory closed the coal mine started hiring. At that time you could drive from Boston to Seattle on Interstate 90; the only part not completed was at Hardin where all traffic halted at the City's lone stoplight. There were three drugstores, department stores, men's clothing store, ladies clothing store, jewelry store, two flower shops, two grocery stores, and a furniture store, all on Center Avenue. When the interstate highway was completed, the stores folded.¹

In May of 1969 the City of Hardin, by Resolution 869 of the City council, expressed its wishes to conduct a city planning program under enabling legislation granted by the State of Montana in Section 11, Chapter 38, Revised Codes of Montana, 1947. Lawrence Koebbe was mayor and Cedric Bond was city clerk at this time. The inclusion of a portion of the county area surrounding Hardin as allowed under state law was initiated by the Big Horn County Commissioners June 3, 1969. John Besel, Dick Gregory, and C. A. Naves, Jr. were the commissioners on the board and Joyce Lippert was county clerk and recorder.

The jurisdictional area of the Hardin-Big Horn City-County Planning Board was delineated and a map thereof filed with the County Clerk and Recorder October 7th, 1969. This jurisdictional area includes the incorporated area of the City of Hardin and those areas extending out from the city limits one mile south, two miles north, one mile east, and three miles west.

The Hardin-Big Horn City-County Planning Board was formed and, as was outlined in the Revised Codes of Montana (76-1-201—76-1-224) contained nine members appointed as follows:

- two official members appointed by the city council;
- two citizen members appointed by the mayor;
- two official members appointed by the county commissioners;
- two citizen members appointed by the county commissioners; and
- a ninth member selected by the above eight.

The first official meeting of the Board was held in the Commissioners' Office in the Big Horn County Courthouse June 6th, 1969. Financial planning assistance was obtained from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development under provisions of the 1954 Housing Act as amended.

¹ Carla Colstad, former member, Hardin Centennial Committee, correspondence

2.A. PHYSICAL SETTING

The City of Hardin is located on flat bottom lands and low terraces approximately one mile west of the confluence of the Bighorn and Little Bighorn Rivers. Most of the planning area rests on alluvial deposits. The terrain within central Hardin is very level (which contributes to the drainage problems that affect portions of the community). Elevation in the Hardin area ranges from 2,902 feet east of downtown Hardin to approximately 3,018 feet at the water tower on the bench west of Town.

Hardin is located at the confluence of the Bighorn and Little Bighorn Rivers in southcentral Montana. A sub-regional system of highways extends outward from the City in four directions, and a spur line of the Burlington-Northern-Santa Fe Railroad that extends westward to Billings 50 miles away and southward 55 miles to Wyoming is located at the southern edge of the community. The City's growth has been steady and the development relatively compact. Except for the County Fairgrounds, some light industrial development, and the County Airport, all development has been north of the railroad tracks. Interstate Highway 90 is located immediately north of the existing community, and the river junction lies less than one mile east of the City limits. Although Hardin's growth has traditionally been to the west, the location in 1970 of the interstate highway provided further impetus to continue the growth pattern. There are two accesses from the interstate: one directly north of the City and another three quarters of a mile east of the City limits.

Immediately east and south of Hardin are the borders of the Crow Indian Reservation. The Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation is about 40 miles east of the community. Custer Battlefield National Monument is 15 miles southeast of Hardin, and the Big Horn National Recreation Area and Yellowtail Dam are located 45 miles to the south.

Big Horn County contains an area of 5,055 square miles and contains a topography of high mountains, deep canyons, rolling hills and plateaus, and relatively level bottom lands. Elevations vary from 2,900 feet along the lower Big Horn River to more than 9,000 feet in the Big Horn Mountains. Mountainous areas cover the southern half of the County and the flatter lands extend northward toward the Yellowstone River valley. Hardin's townsite is in flat bottom land adjacent to the river.

The climate of the Hardin area is continental and semi-arid. Although temperatures can vary considerably both from day to day and season to season, general characteristics of the area are low relative humidity, moderate winds, generally sunny, and relatively light precipitation. Temperatures in the summer easily reach the nineties and often go higher with July generally the hottest month. The low humidity keeps even the hot daytime temperatures bearable and the nights are usually cool. In winter the coldest month is usually January with temperatures below zero not uncommon. Warm Pacific winds, a

welcome change in the cold winter months, are known locally as the Chinook and usually herald short warming trends. Year around winds at Hardin are generally westerly or northwesterly. Precipitation records have been kept at Hardin for 31 years and indicate a normal annual moisture rate of 12.19 inches. In moisture as in temperature, however, there are wide variations--as much as 30 percent over or under the norm. Over the past ten recording years, killing frosts have occurred as early as August and as late as June. The middle of May is the average for the last frost with a frost free growing season averaging about 125 days, sufficient length for most small grains, alfalfa, and hay crops. At one time, 95,000 acres was leased by the Campbell Farming Corporation, mostly in Big Horn County, and was the largest wheat farming operation in the world. Sugar beets, a major product of the area, declined drastically with the closing of the Holly Sugar Refinery at Hardin in 1971. Diversified crops such as corn--silage and grain--and sunflowers have replaced sugar beets, and there is a potential for even more specialized crops such as bird seed and popcorn. Because of the semi-arid climate and the wide moisture variations, irrigation has an important role as a moisture stabilizer and in increasing land productivity. The completion of Yellowtail Dam 45 miles southwest of Hardin has greatly increased the irrigation potential in the area, and is also protection against spring flooding from heavy snow melt. The production of livestock, mainly prime beef, is the contribution of the ranchlands and feedlots around Hardin.

The natural vegetation of the Hardin area is typical of that found in the upper Great Plains area. Short grasses, primarily western wheatgrass and blue gramma, are the dominant varieties. The soils in and around Hardin are covered in detail in the 1972 Comprehensive Plan.

2.B. EARLY SETTLEMENT

For many centuries before the arrival of explorers and settlers of European background, the area around Hardin was visited and intermittently settled by various Indian tribes. The first known European explorer to visit the area was the French explorer Chevalier de la Verendrye who was seeking a trade route to the Pacific. In the early nineteenth century, fur trappers and traders entered the region. In 1803 and 1804, the Lewis and Clark Expedition passed north of the area in their explorations and search for a route to the Pacific.

Apart from early hunters and trappers, most of the non-Indian people who traveled to the Big Horn area in the 1850's and 1860's were enroute to mining areas in western Montana or the Black Hills of South Dakota. In 1864, John F. Bozeman established the Bozeman Trail which provided a route to mining settlements in southwestern Montana. Fort C.F. Smith was established above the Bighorn River in 1866 to protect travelers along the Bozeman Trail.

The conflicts between the expanding non-Indian culture and the native Indians resulted in numerous negotiated treaties between the Federal government and the Plains Indian tribes. The most well-known of these conflicts was the Battle of Little Bighorn which occurred in 1876 when Lt. Col. George Custer was dispatched to the Little Bighorn Valley to locate, engage, and return Cheyenne and Sioux to reservations. After the defeat of Custer at the Battle of Little Bighorn, the Federal government focused more of its resources on defeating the Indian tribes and resettling the Indian peoples to reservation lands. The battle effectively marked the demise of the traditional buffalo cultures of the Great Plains Indians. Fort Custer, one of the fortifications built by the Federal government after the Battle of Little Bighorn, was constructed in 1877 just east of the confluence of the Little Bighorn and Bighorn Rivers overlooking the site of the present City of Hardin.

In the 1880's and 1890's, the area around Hardin was settled by cattle ranchers and later by sheep ranchers. In 1904, tribal lands adjacent to the Yellowstone River and the lower Bighorn Valley were ceded to the Federal government, and in 1906 this area was opened to homesteading. Within the next two decades the area around Hardin was fully settled.

The Town of Hardin was officially founded in 1906 and 1907 when the land on which the community is located was purchased by the Lincoln Land Company of Nebraska. The first lot, which is located at the site of what was to become Big Horn Motor Company, was sold in 1907. At about this time, the original railroad depot, which had been located across the Little Bighorn River, was moved to the present depot site on the south side of Hardin.

In 1911, the City of Hardin was incorporated, and in 1913 Big Horn County was re-configured. Many of the original ranchers in the Hardin area came to Big Horn County via Texas cattle drives. Some arrived from other states to the east and from the declining mining regions to the west. As with elsewhere in the Great Plains, the railroad was instrumental in promoting homesteading in the region.

Most of the emigrants to the region came from Nordic and Central European backgrounds. There was a large population of German-Russians who moved into the area at the start of the sugar beet growing era in the early 1900's. After 1937 when Holly Sugar built its refinery north of Hardin there was a significant influx of sugar beet workers from Mexico.

2.C. DRAINAGE AND FLOODING

The major natural drainageways in the Hardin area consist of Whitman Coulee, which is located north of Hardin, and Peritsa Creek and Williams Coulee, which are located west and south of Hardin. Several small intermittent drainageways flow directly into the

Bighorn River, Peritsa Creek, and Williams Coulee drain into the southwest side of Hardin, and overflowing water from these drainages has periodically caused flood damage on both the west and east sides of the City.

There is a channeled floodplain adjacent to the Bighorn River, but most of the flooding in the Hardin area is caused by overflows from the tributary creeks and drainage channels and ground water rising to the surface.

The natural drainage pattern has been extensively modified by man-made drainage irrigation canals and drainage ditches, the largest of which are the Two Leggin Canal located approximately one mile west of Hardin and the Farmers Canal located east of Hardin.

It should be noted that the floodplain and wetland delineation shown on the Environmental Constraints Map herein are from the USDA--Soil Conservation Service (SCS) and reflect historic flooding patterns. Drainage ditch and channel modifications have altered these historic floodplain boundaries. There are no completely accurate contemporary floodplain or wetland maps that reflect the most recent channel modifications.

As new areas are proposed for development, the USDA-SCS office should be consulted on flooding potential.

SOILS

Much of the Hardin area lies on level, poorly-drained silty clay soils underlain by a mantle of heavy clays at depths of 15 to 20 feet. The porous gravel underneath the clay mantle is generally saturated with ground water. These conditions contribute to the poor drainage of the area.

The silty clay soils are formed from alluvial materials deposited by the stream flows. The soils are generally rated as having severe to very severe limitations for private sewage treatment systems and are a major consideration for new subdivisions proposing to use both well water and a septic tank/drainfield system for sewage treatment and disposal.

The soils along the Bighorn River consist of deep and moderately deep loam, silt loam, and sandy loam soils underlain by gravel and sand. The soils in and around Hardin are covered in detail in the 1972 Comprehensive Plan.

2.D. GROUND WATER

The groundwater levels in Hardin vary throughout the area, but in some places ground water is only four feet from the surface. In most places, the groundwater level is less than ten feet below the surface. The water level also fluctuates with the yearly irrigation season. The City has investigated various dewatering strategies to address the high groundwater problems.

The quality of the ground water in the vicinity of Hardin is generally high in total dissolved solids with a considerable concentration of salts and non-carbonate hardness. There are also areas near Hardin where bacteriological contamination of the private water supply is likely due to the use of private septic systems and drain fields in areas with soil conditions unsuitable for private septic systems that rely on soil filtration.

Because of the poor water quality, some of the private water supplies in the Hardin area are not potable and are also unsuitable for some types of industrial processing. Due to these conditions, many water users outside the current service area are desirous of connecting to Hardin's municipal water supply.

2.C. VEGETATION

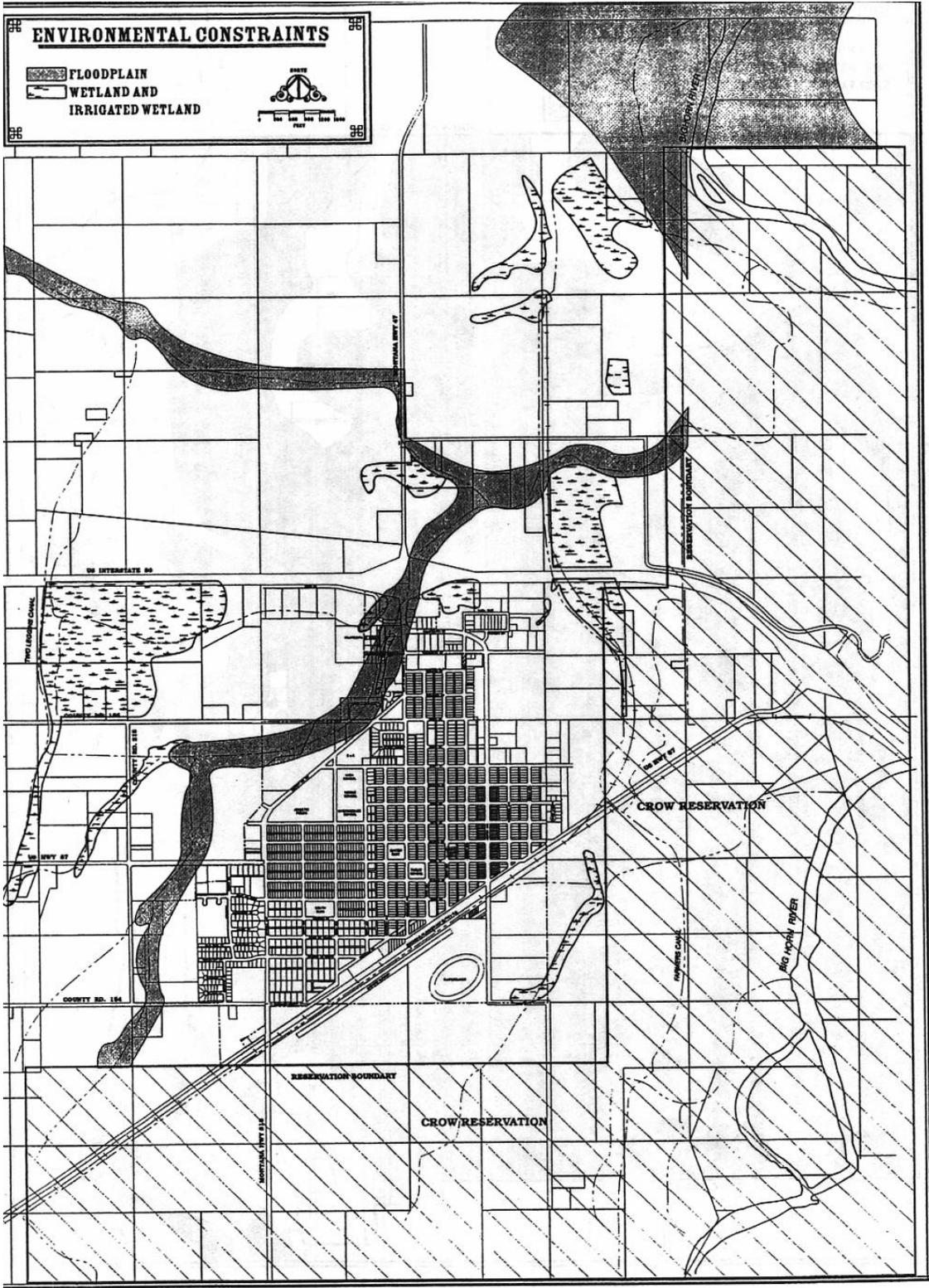
The natural vegetation of the Hardin area is typical of that found throughout the drier sections of the Upper Great Plains. Short grasses, primarily western wheat grass and blue gramma, are the dominant varieties. The less loamy soils, such as those found on the upland areas, support wheatgrasses and sedges. Overgrazed shallow soil bases and abandoned farm areas in the uplands usually revert to weedy, non-native, invader species grasses. Vegetative varieties on the heavier soils include black sage, meadow barley, sunflower, foxtail, and gumweed. Short grasses, primarily western wheatgrass and blue gramma, are the dominant varieties.

The leading cultivated crops in the Hardin area are wheat, barley, sugar beets, and hay.

2.E. FISHERIES

The Bighorn River is an excellent trout stream from Yellowtail Dam downstream to St. Xavier. The completion of the Yellowtail Dam, 45 miles south of Hardin has greatly reduced the heavy sediment loads, specifically silt, carried by the Bighorn River. Because

of this, the aquatic biota in these receiving waters has improved significantly over the past two decades. Nearer Hardin, the Bighorn River becomes a warmer water habitat, due primarily to the influx of sediment from the tributary creeks. Sauger and channel catfish are common in the reach near Hardin along with some walleyes and brown trout.



HARDIN • MONTANA

3. POPULATION

The City of Hardin has maintained a steady to slightly increasing population over the last several decades, increasing from 2,789 in 1960, 2,940 in 1990, 3,384 in 2000, to an estimated population of 3,514 in 2006; the increase from 2000 to 2006 was 3.8 percent. During this period the population of Big Horn County increased from approximately 10,007 in 1960 to 13,035 in 2006, an increase of 2.9 percent. The Montana Association of Counties currently has Big Horn County at 13,035 people (2008). The Montana Department of Commerce projected the County population to increase to 12,770 by 2010. Based on recent population trends, the City of Hardin population is projected to range from (3,300 low growth scenario) to 3,600 (high growth scenario) by the year 2010.

**Table 3-1
Population**

	<u>1960</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>%Chg 2000-6</u>	<u>2010*</u>
Hardin City	2,789	2,733	3,300	2,940	3,406	3,514	3.8	3,603
County	10,007	10,057	11,096	11,337	12,671	13,035	2.9	12,770
Montana				799,065	902,195	946,638	4.9	

Sources: Montana Department of Commerce, Census and Economic Information Center

*Cumin Associates Estimates

3.A. AGE DISTRIBUTION

In 1990 the median age of Big Horn County was 28.0, and the City of Hardin median age was 34.0. This difference is influenced by the median age on the adjacent Crow Reservation, 25.5--the lowest median age in Montana. The same could be said for those 36.7 percent of the Big Horn County population and 31 percent of the City of Hardin population under 18 years of age. The young population of the Reservation is also reflected in the approximately 9.0 percent of the Big Horn County population and 17.2 percent of the City of Hardin population in the 65 years of age or older category. *The population has grown older since 1990. The median age in 2000 was 29.8 years, up from 28.1 years in 1990. Although data for 2006 is not available for Hardin, the County's percent of those 65 years of age and older went from 8.6 percent in 2000 to 9.4 percent estimated in 2006 by Headwaters Economics, in their analysis of Big Horn County. The latter also, notes that the largest age category is 10 to 14 years old (1,322 people or 10.4*

percent of the total. The age group that has grown the fastest, as a share of the County total, is 50 to 54 years, up 275 people; their share of total rose by 1.7 percent.¹

**Table 3-2
Age Distribution**

1990	<u>18-24</u>	<u>25-44</u>	<u>45-64</u>	<u>65+</u>	<u>Median</u>
City of Hardin	247 (8.4%)	778 (26.5%)	550 (18.7%)	485 (16.5%)	25.6 yrs
Big Horn Co	1,379 (12.4%)	3,027 (27.3%)	1,756 (15.8%)	901 (7.2%)	33.8 yrs
State of Montana	13.2%	28.1%	18.4%	10.7%	29.0 yrs

2000	<u>18+Years</u>	<u>21+Years</u>	<u>62+Years</u>	<u>65+Years</u>	<u>Median</u>
City of Hardin	2,336 (69.0%)	2,214 (65.4%)	543 (16.0%)	472 (13.9%)	33.8 yrs
Big Horn Co	8,137 (64.2%)	7,595 (59.9%)	1,337 (10.6%)	1,089 (8.6%)	29.8 yrs
Montana	(74.5%)	(70.0%)	(15.8%)	(13.4%)	37.5 yrs

Race

1990	<u>White</u>	<u>American Indian/Alaskan</u>	<u>Asian</u>	<u>Other</u>
Hardin	2,247 (76.4%)	632 (21.5%)	16 (0.5%)	45 (1.5%)
Big Horn Co	5,769 (52.0%)	126 (46.2%)	21 (0.2%)	421(3.7%)
Montana	94.2%	4.8%	0.4%	2.1%

2000				
Hardin (3,227 counted)	2,107 (65.3%)	1,069 (33.1%)	12 (0.4%)	39 (1.2%)
Big Horn Co	4,486 (35.4%)	7,678 (60.6%)	63 (0.5%)	443 (3.5%)
Montana	90.8%	6.4%	0.6%	2.2%

2006				
Hardin	NA	NA	NA	NA
Big Horn Co	4,614 (35.4%)	7,899 (60.6%)	0.5%	NA
Montana	90.8%	6.4%	0.6%	NA

Gender

Male	1387	100	1592	100
Female	1553	100	1792	100
Median Age			33.8	

*Not Available

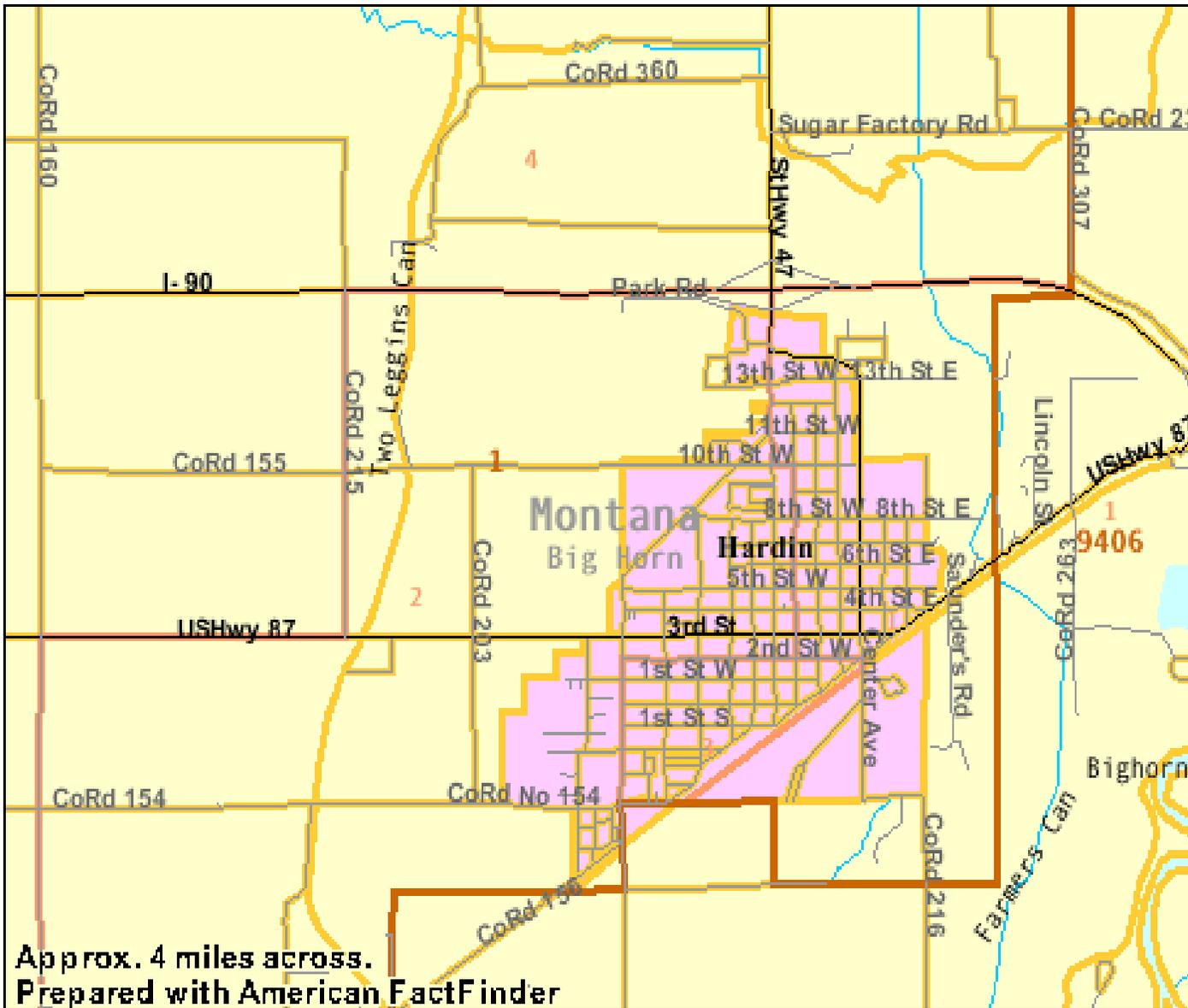
- Sources:
1. U.S. Census Bureau, 1990, 2000, and 2006 Estimates
 2. Cumin Associates

¹ www.headwaterseconomics.org, November 30, 2007

3.B. RACIAL COMPOSITION

The most significant aspect of recent population trends in Big Horn County has been the sharp increase in birth rates among the Native American population, particularly on the Crow and Northern Cheyenne Reservations and the relatively stable population of the non-Native Americans.

In 1990, the population of Big Horn County was approximately 52 percent White and 46 percent Native American, with approximately 3.9 percent making up other races such as Asian and Hispanic. The City of Hardin is approximately 76 percent White and 22 percent Native American; approximately 2.0 percent of the population consisted of other races. In 2000, Hardin was 65 percent, 33 percent Native American, and 1.6 percent others. However, only 3,227 of the total estimated 3,514 people in the City were counted, and the percentages are skewed. Many Native Americans living in Hardin use Crow Agency as their official address. In 2000 in the County the White population dropped from 52 percent to 35 percent, and the Native American population increased over the previous decade from 46 percent to 61 percent of the total population.



HARDIN GENERAL AREA/CENSUS TRACTS MAP

4. ECONOMY¹

The economy of the Hardin area is based on a combination of commercial and governmental services, agriculture, and tourism. While mining is an important component of the economy in Big Horn County and provides a substantial number of jobs in the area, little of the processing or value-added activity occurs in Hardin.

The largest employers and sources of revenue in the community are primarily government and nonprofit services. In Hardin, the Hardin School District (251 full-time and 30 part-time employees), Big Horn Memorial Hospital/Heritage Acres Nursing Home (155 employees), and Big Horn County (135 full-time and 9 seasonal employees) are the three largest employers.

Morrison-Knudsen Company, Inc. employs approximately 103 workers at the Absaloka coal mine located east of Hardin. Other major employers in Big Horn County are the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Indian Health Service, Crow Tribe, and the U.S. Department of Interior.

4.A. RETAIL SALES AND COMMERCIAL SERVICES

Hardin functions as a sub-regional commercial center serving most of Big Horn County. Goods and services purchased in Hardin include day-to-day groceries, convenience items, clothing, hardware supplies, building materials, and automotive supplies. Area residents travel to Billings or Sheridan, the nearest regional economic centers, for many of their larger purchases and for many specialty items.

The retail and service base in Hardin has remained relatively stable over the past two decades. The non-specialty retail sales and service sector has relatively little potential to expand significantly because of the proximity and easy access to regional centers.

4.B. TOURISM SALES AND SERVICES

The greatest potential for growth lies in retail sales and services and tourism-related businesses. In recent years, tourism has been the fastest growing sector of the local economy--other than governmental services.

Hardin has three geographic areas or commercial nodes that interact with the tourism economy—the highway-oriented commercial services near the Interstate Highway interchanges, the Downtown specialty shopping district, and Highway 313 to Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area.

¹ See www.headwaterseconomics.org for in-depth analysis of Big Horn County

The highway-oriented commercial services include motels, restaurants, service stations, and entertainment located near the interstate. These services are oriented to serve both through-travelers and destination visitors. Hardin's west end commercial includes two campgrounds, motel, Laundromat, car wash, convenience store, two veterinary clinics, bait shop, pool and pizza parlor, coffee and gift shop, beauty shops, nursing home, and a oxygen and medical equipment supplier.

The Downtown specialty businesses include galleries, specialty clothing shops, restaurants, and gift shops. These businesses are generally dependent on drawing tourists and through-travelers from I-90 into the Downtown area. Most of the specialty businesses are oriented towards promoting the historic "authentic western" character of Hardin. The preservation of the historic character of the Downtown area is essential to many of these businesses.

All three components of the tourism industry have increased in recent years and represent some of the best opportunities for revenue generation and job creation in the area.

4.C. MANUFACTURING AND INDUSTRY

The area lacks a strong manufacturing or industrial base. The major private-sector employer in the region is Morrison-Knudsen Company, Inc. which operates the Absaloka Coal Mine east of Hardin. Employment and production at the Morrison-Knudsen operation and other mines in Big Horn County are significantly lower than in the mid-1980s. Today the employment is relatively stable.

While many resource economists predict future production increases in eastern Montana's large sub-bituminous coal fields, the prospects for a resurgence of the mining district are dependent on national market conditions. The mining industry will always have "boom-bust" characteristics.

The closure of the Holly Sugar Refinery in the early 1970's resulted in the loss of the largest single source of industrial employment based in Hardin. No major employer has replaced the facility.

Today Hardin and Big Horn County are focusing economic development efforts on attracting manufacturing, resource-processing, and distributive industries into the area. There is high unemployment in the region, particularly on the Reservation, and a large available labor force. Hardin has a full-time staff position focused on attracting viable, sound business into the area. Successful promotion of Hardin for industry is partly dependent on having diverse, readily available, industrial sites with appropriate infrastructure. The Two Rivers Industrial Site--that area around the old sugar refinery--provides excellent heavy commercial and light and heavy industrial sites. These available, City-serviced sites combined with imaginative economic incentives have

attracted the power generating plant with expressed interest in other projects ranging from ethanol processing to coal-to-oil operations.

The Two Rivers Site is removed from residential neighborhoods and located far enough from the City to avoid significant land use conflicts between industrial and non-industrial uses. Most jobs generated in the Two Rivers Site are primary jobs; this means that the dollars made in such jobs are original dollars coming from outside the established local economy. As such, these dollars turn over up to two times more in the local area as expenditures for groceries, housing, food, and similar items are purchased.

Other sites in the Hardin area are suitable for lighter industries and resource processing and discussed later in this Plan.

4.D. GOVERNMENT AND NONPROFIT SERVICES

The government and nonprofit service sectors are the largest source of jobs in the area. The largest employers in Big Horn County are the Bureau of Indian Affairs and tribal facilities on the Reservation. Government and nonprofit services will probably continue to be the largest source of jobs in the community, with the largest employment being in health care and education.

The potential for attracting new government and non-profit services to Hardin may be limited by the fact that many of the health care and social service needs in the region occur on the Reservation and many of the tribal-related services that were formerly located in Hardin and Billings are likely to be located in Crow Agency or Lodge Grass.

Table 4-1
Farm Income and Expenses
(Thousands of Dollars)
Big Horn County

<u>Item</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1999</u>
Total Cash Receipts from Marketings (\$000)	\$83,456	\$73,716	\$56,426
Cash Receipts: Livestock and Products	\$57,810	\$43,163	\$35,543
Cash Receipts: Crops	\$25,646	\$30,453	\$20,883
Other Income:	\$10,247	\$8,699	\$16,809
Government Payments	\$4,382	\$3,140	\$10,178
Imputed and Misc Income Received*	\$5,865	\$5,559	\$6,631
Total Production Expenses	\$80,596	\$78,634	\$72,024
Total Net Income Including Corp Farms	\$14,841	\$6,260	\$333
Less Net Income of Corp Farms	\$2,638	\$632	<\$50
Total Net Farm Proprietors Income	\$12,203	\$5,628	\$321
Plus Farm Wages and Perquisites	\$5,135	\$5,131	\$4,119
Plus Farm Other Labor Income	\$298	\$449	\$307
Total Farm Labor and Proprietors' Income	\$17,636	\$11,208	\$4,474

*Consists of imputed income, such as gross rental value of dwellings and value of home consumption, and other farm-related income components, such as machine hire and custom work income, rental income, and income from forest products (1978 to present).

Source: Regional Economic Information System, Bureau of Economic Analysis, US Census; May 2001 (Table CA45)

Table 4-2
Gross Income, Expenses, and Net Income
From Farming and Ranching*
(in 000s of 2005 dollars)

	1970	2005	Change
Gross Income (Cash + Other)	\$138,331	\$86,401	\$51,930
Cash Receipts fr Marketings	\$123,995	\$72,925	-5%
Livestock & Products	\$92,440	\$46,949	-12%
Crops	31,555	\$25,976	7%
Other Income	\$14,335	\$13,476	5%
Govt Payments	\$10,807	\$9,359	3%
Inputed rent & rent rec'd	\$3,528	\$4,117	2%
Production Expenses	\$100,383	\$84,458	
Realized Net Income (Inc-Exp's)	\$37,948	\$1,943	
Value of Inventory Change	\$126	\$3,427	4%
Total Net Income (Incl Corp Farms)	\$37,781	\$5,370	

*Farming includes ranching but not agricultural services such as soil preparation or veterinary services. This table represents farming enterprises and does not reflect income earned by individuals—both proprietors and wage and salary employees who work in farming.

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis and Headwaters Economics

From 1970 to 2005, 2,468 new jobs were created with the majority of 82 percent of such jobs in the wage and salary employment category (people who work for someone else.) In 1970, proprietors represented 26.4 percent of total employment; by 2005, they represented 23.1 percent. (Proprietors include sole proprietors, partnerships, and tax-exempt cooperatives.) Of the 1,060 proprietors in 1970 the number of nonfarm proprietors was 481 in the County, and the number of farm proprietors was 579. In 2005 of the 1,499 proprietors, 900 were non-farm and 599 farm proprietors. In the last 35 years, wage and salary disbursements grew at an annual rate of 2.2 percent, outpacing proprietors' income which shrank at a 3.7 percent.¹

Transfer payments contributed \$14.4 million to Big Horn County in 1970. By 2005, payments had increased to \$65.4 million. Welfare represented 20.3 percent of the payments and 4.9 percent of total personal income—up from both 1970 and 1980.

¹ www.headwaterseconomics.org

Table 4-3
Transfer Payments

	1970	2005
Total (in millions of dollars)	14.4	65.4
Retirement, disability insurance		
Benefit payments	13.1	62.3
Medical payments	1.3	15.5
Income maintenance benefit payments (welfare)	1.2	13.2
Unemployment insurance benefit Payments	0.5	1.6
Veterans benefit payments	1.7	1.0
Federal education and training		
Assistance payment (not Vets)	0.1	0.8
Other payments to individuals	2.6	1.3
Payments to nonprofit institutions	0.7	2.2
Business payments to individuals	0.5	0.9
Age-related (retirement, disability, Medicare)	6.1	22.9

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System

**Table 4-4
Firms by Size and Industry 2005**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>1-4</u>	<u>5-9</u>	<u>10-19</u>	<u>20-49</u>	<u>50-99</u>	<u>100-249</u>
Forestry, fish, hunting, ag	3	2	1	0	0	0	0
Mining	5	1	1	0	1	0	2
Utilities	4	2	1	1	0	0	0
Construction	22	17	4	1	0	0	0
Manufacturing	3	1	0	2	0	0	0
Wholesale trade	6	4	1	1	0	0	0
Retail trade	40	16	8	11	4	1	0
Trans & warehousing	14	12	0	1	1	0	0
Information	3	2	1	0	0	0	0
Finance & insurance	10	6	1	1	2	0	0
Real estate, rental, leasing	11	7	3	1	0	0	0
Prof, scientific,tech services	15	10	5	0	0	0	0
Admin, spt, waste mgt, remed. Services	4	4	0	0	0	0	0.
Educational services	2	1	1	0	0	0	0
Health care and social assist	18	8	3	2	2	2	0*
Arts, entertain, recreation	13	10	1	0	1	1	0
Accommo, food services	25	8	7	6	0	0	0
Other services (except public Administration	22	20	2	0	0	0	0
Unclassified establishments	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	221	132	40	25	17	4	2

*One between 250-499

Sources: U.S. Census, County Business Patterns
Headwaters Economics

In 2006, the unemployment rate in Big Horn County was 6.2 percent compared to 3.2 percent in the State and 4.6 percent for the Nation. Since 1990, the unemployment rate varied from a low of 6.2 percent in 2006 to a high of 14.0 percent in 1992. Based on Bureau of Economic Analysis, Headwaters Economics estimates that commuting data suggests that the County is an employment hub. (Income derived from people commuting into the County to work exceeds the income from people commuting out.) The net difference represents 7.3 percent of the total income of the County.

¹ Headwaters Economics

**Table 4-5
County Wages and Employment 2005**

	<u>Employment</u>	<u>% of Total</u>	<u>Avg Annual Wages</u>
Total Public and Private	4,444	100	\$30,721
Total Private	2,199	49	\$44,038
Goods-Producing	865	19	\$56,260
Natural Res & Mining	455	10	\$56,325
Ag, For, Fish, & Hunting	70	2	\$22,472
Mining	386	9	\$62,449
Construction	391	9	\$57,634
Manufacturing (Incl Forest)	19	0	\$25,886
Service-Providing	1,334	30	\$17,973
Trade, Trans, & Util	468	11	\$18,415
Information	28	1	\$12,006
Financial Activities	100	2	\$27,995
Prof & Bus Services	71	2	\$24,901
Educ and Health Services	227	5	\$21,529
Leisure & Hospitality	387	9	\$11,709
Other Services	46	1	\$16,631
Unclassified	8	0	\$37,389
Total Public	2,244	50	\$28,460
Federal Govt	497	11	\$47,197
State Govt	50	1	\$32,817
Local Govt	1,697	38	\$22,838

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

Of the major categories, the highest paying sector is Construction, accounting for 17.8 percent of total employment and paying \$57,634 annually in 2005. The largest employment sector is Local Government, accounting for 38.2 percent of total employment and paying \$22,833 per year in 2005. Goods producing employees were paid an average of \$56,260, while service producing employees received an average of \$17,973. Wages in the private sector (\$33,038) exceeded wages in the public sector (\$28,460) by 16.1 percent. This data does not include proprietors or benefits.

Table 4-6
Employment Sector Comparison
2000

<u>Sector</u>	<u>County %</u>	<u>State %</u>
Public administration	15	5
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	12	1
Educational services	16	9
Health care and social assistance	15	11
Mining	3	0
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	3	2
Utilities	1	1
Construction	7	7
Accommodation and food services	6	6
Real estate and rental and leasing	1	2
Transportation and warehousing	2	4
Other services (except public administration)	3	5
Admin & support & waste management services	1	3
Wholesale trade	1	4
Finance and insurance	2	5
Information	0	3
Retail trade	9	12
Professional, scientific, and technical services	2	6
Manufacturing	1	14

Source: U.S. Census 2000, SF3 Table P49

Table 4-7
Big Horn County Personal Income
by Major Source and Earnings by Industry
(Thousands of Dollars)

<u>Item</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1999</u>
Personal Income	\$122,713	\$150,122	\$168,296
Nonfarm	\$105,077	\$138,914	\$163,549
Farm(1)	\$17,636	\$11,208	\$4,747
Population Counted	11,311	12,169	12,573
Per Capita Personal Income (dollars)	\$10,849	\$12,336	\$13,386
Wage and Salary Disbursements	\$74,559	\$93,669	\$107,396
Other Labor Income	\$12,702	\$17,065	\$18,362
Proprietors' Income (Including Farm)(2)	\$18,808	\$14,177	\$10,349
Earnings by Industry:			
Farm Earnings	\$17,636	\$11,208	\$4,747
Non-farm Earnings	\$88,433	\$113,703	\$131,360
Private Earnings	\$57,436	\$74,277	\$84,609
Ag Services, Forestry, Fishing, Others	\$1,205	\$1,393	\$1,618
Mining	\$28,580	\$29,102	\$31,933
Construction	\$3,064	\$2,578	\$4,042
Manufacturing	\$924	\$1,171	\$1,059
Transportation and Public Utilities	\$3,172	\$4,464	\$3,461
Wholesale Trade	\$1,413	\$1,753	\$2,170
Retail Trade	\$5,935	\$7,763	\$8,255
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	\$1,581	\$1,828	\$4,217
Services (including educ., bus., & health)	\$11,562	\$24,225	\$27,854
Government	\$30,997	\$39,426	\$46,751

(1) Farm income consists of proprietors' income; the cash wages, pay-in-kind, and other labor income of hired farm workers; and the salaries of officers of corporate farms.

(2) Proprietors income includes the inventory valuation adjustment and capital consumption adjustment.

Source: Regional Economic Information System, Bureau of Economic Analysis,
US Census, May 2001 (Table CA05.2)

Table 4-8
Source of Personal Earnings by Industry Classification*
\$000

	2000	2006
Total Personal Income	202,034	260,315
Per Capita Personal Income (dollars)	15,956	20,449
Farm	6202	12,337 (2005)
Non-Farm	151,807	207,793
Private Earnings	70,887 (2001)	105,907
Mining	30,981	48,524
Construction	2370 (1999)	10,003
Manufacturing	1157 (1999)	883
Wholesale Trade	2461 (2001)	2778
Retail Trade	6352 (2001)	6809
Transportation and Warehousing	5283	2908 (2003)
Information	462 (2001)	591
Finance and Insurance	2507	3462
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	420 (2001)	801
Professional and Technical Services	2908 (2001)	3525
Administration and Waste Services	321 (2001)	292
Health Care and Social Assistance	***	***
Ambulatory Health Care Service	605 (2001)	825
Social Assistance	642 (2001)	642
Government and Gov't Enterprises	81,436	101,886
Federal, Civilian	29,626	37,810
Military	983	2271
State	1730	61,805
Local	49,097	59,482

*Based on 2002 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS); all dollars are current dollars and not adjusted for inflation.

**Not available

***Not shown to avoid disclosure of confidential information

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis with calculations and table prepared by the Montana Regional Economic Analysis Project, April 2008

Table 4-9
Full-Time and Part-Time Employment by Industry
 (Number of Jobs)

Big Horn County

<u>Item</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1999</u>
Total Full and Part-Time Employment	4,850	5,666	6,244
By Type:			
Wage and Salary Employment	3,790	4,324	4,762
Proprietors' Employment	1,060	1,342	1,482
Farm Proprietors	496	561	634
Non-Farm Proprietors*	564	781	848
By Industry:			
Farm Employment	839	798	804
Non-Farm	4,011	4,868	5,440
Private Employment	2,771	3,673	4,161
Ag Services, Forestry, Fisheries, Other	139	174	180
Mining	599	530	511
Construction	173	204	205
Manufacturing	84	83	72
Transportation and Public Utilities	129	155	119
Wholesale Trade	78	67	84
Retail Trade	520	714	727
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	144	140	237
Services	905	1,606	2,026
Government and Govt Services	1,240	1,195	1,279
Federal, Civilian	428	439	434
Military	87	73	71
State and Local	725	683	774
State	43	51	49
Local	682	632	725

*Excludes limited partners.

Source: Regional Economic Information System, Bureau of Economic Analysis,
 US Census; May 2001 (Table CA25)

Table 4-10
Earnings by Place of Work
Part and Full-time
Big Horn County

<u>Item</u> (in thousands)	<u>1990</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1999</u>
Earnings by Place of Work	\$106,069	\$124,911	\$136,107
Wage and Salary Disbursements	\$74,559	\$93,669	\$107,396
Other Labor Income	\$12,702	\$17,065	\$18,362
Proprietors' Income	\$18,808	\$14,177	\$10,349
Nonfarm Proprietors' Income	\$6,605	\$8,549	\$10,028
Farm Proprietors' Income	\$12,203	\$5,628	\$321
Total Full/Part-Time Employment	4,850	5,666	6,244
Wage and Salary Jobs	3,790	4,324	4,762
Number of Proprietors	1,060	1,342	1,482
Number of Nonfarm Proprietors	564	781	848
Number of Farm Proprietors	496	561	634
Average Earnings Per Job	\$21,870	\$22,046	\$21,798
Avg wage and salary disburse	\$19,673	\$21,663	\$22,553
Avg Nonfarm Proprietors' Income	\$11,711	\$10,946	\$11,825
Per Capita Personal Income	\$10,849	\$12,336	\$13,386

*Excludes limited partnerships.

Source: Regional Economic Information System, Bureau of Economic Analysis, US Census; May 2001 (Tables CA30 and CA1-3)

In 1999, for every household that made over \$100,000, there 25.4 households that made under \$30,000. Ten years earlier, for every household that made over \$100,000, there were 99.7 households that made under \$30,000. (Not adjusted for inflation.)¹ As shown in Table 4-8, personal income in the County increased by 28.8 percent (\$58,281,000 total dollars) between 2000 and 2006, while farm earnings totals increased 99 percent (from \$6202 to 12,337,000) for the same period. Wholesale and retail trade have remained relatively steady. In Table 4-8, other industries are categorized under non-farm earnings—such as forestry, utilities, and agricultural support services, but the data is too spotty to correlate or show any patterns. From this University of Montana data (Table 4-8), “Educational Services” only provides data for 2005 (\$208,000).

¹ www.headwaterseconomics.org

HOUSING

In 1990, the housing stock in the City of Hardin included a total of 1,303 housing units, of which 920 (71 percent) were single-family homes, 183 were mobile homes or trailers, and 200 were apartment units. The mean number of rooms per dwelling unit was 5.2, and there was a median of 2.25 persons per housing unit. Approximately 87 persons live in group quarters, primarily nursing homes. The vacancy rate in 1990 was 16.3 percent for rental units and 14.6 percent for owner-occupied units. Table 4-11 shows the change for 2000. (Table 4-12 shows that, between 2000 and 2007, 39 new dwellings were constructed in Hardin.) The 2008 Needs Assessment for Hardin showed 2.4 people per household but did not indicate whether that was for owner-occupied or rental-occupied units. The Assessment also indicated that 93 percent of respondents owned their own home. In 1990, the median value for owner-occupied units in the City of Hardin was \$43,500 and the median rent was \$220.

**Table 4-11
Hardin Housing Stock**

<u>Item</u>	<i>1990</i>		<i>2000</i>		<u>Change</u>
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	
Households Total	1303	100	1411	100	8.3%
Occupied	1113	85.4	1295	91.8	16.4%
Owner Occupied	708	54.3	757	58.5	6.9%
Renter Occupied	405	31.1	538	41.5	32.8%
Vacant	190	14.6	116	8.2	-38.9%
Seasonal	8	0.6	5	0.4	-37.5%
Persons/Owner Occupied Unit		2.59		2.51	
Persons/Renter Occupied Unit		2.51		2.61	

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, Housing Census, 2000

Specified owner-occupied housing units median value in 1990 was \$53,096 and \$61,400 in 2000. In 1990 the percent of median income necessary to buy the median house was 16 percent and 14 percent in 2000. The income required to qualify for the median house was \$17,908 in 1990 and \$17,350 in 2000. Median household income in 1989 was \$25,166 and \$27,684 in 2000--adjusted for inflation. Median family income was \$27,505 in 1989 and, adjusted for inflation, \$31,095 in 1999.¹ Median value of a home in Hardin

¹ Headwaters Economics

in 2000 was \$60,300 compared to Montana with a \$95,800 value.¹ The median value of home equity is \$82,113 (State: \$90,186), and the median mortgage debt is \$31,444 for Hardin and \$35,329 for Montana.² Median dwelling age for Hardin is 32 years (Montana 29 years). (The 2008 Needs Assessment indicated an average age of residences of 45 years.) Average household income is \$34,686 and \$47,318 for Hardin and Montana respectively. The median cost of rent in Hardin in 2000 was \$353, and the monthly homeownership cost for people with mortgages was \$644.³

In 2000 43 percent of single-family homeowners had only a first mortgage. Those holding a second mortgage constituted 16 percent, and those with no mortgage at all—41 percent.⁴

Table 4-12
Single-family New House Construction Building Permits--Hardin

- 1997: 10 buildings, average cost: \$71,500
- 1998: 1 building, cost: \$72,000
- 1999: 3 buildings, average cost: \$73,000
- 2000: 0 buildings
- 2001: 1 building, cost: \$76,000
- 2002: 6 buildings, average cost: \$81,500
- 2003: 6 buildings, average cost: \$81,500
- 2004: 6 buildings, average cost: \$122,300
- 2005: 7 buildings, average cost: \$86,100
- 2006: 8 buildings, average cost: \$125,900
- 2007: 5 buildings, average cost \$116,400

Source: www.city-data.com/County/Big Horn-MT

Table 4-13
Residence in 1995

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Hardin</u>	<u>Montana</u>	<u>U.S.</u>
Same house	1426	46.4%	53.6%	54.1%
Different house, same county	1023	33.3%	22.5%	24.9%
Different county, same state	260	8.5%	9.9%	9.7%

Sources: U.S. Census, 2000; ePodunk

¹ US Bureau of Census, Census of Housing, 2000

² [www. Realestate.com](http://www.Realestate.com)

³ US Bureau of Census, Census of Housing, 2000

⁴ Census of Housing, Ibid.

Table 4-14

Homeowner's Income and Housing Debt--Hardin

	<u>Hardin</u>	<u>Montana</u>
Median Dwelling Age	32 years	29 years
Average Household Income	\$37,686	\$47,318
Median Value of Home Equity	\$82,113	\$90,186
Median Mortgage Debt	\$31,444	\$35,329

Source: www.realestate.com (2008—estimated)

The 2008 Needs Assessment found that 58 percent of the respondents felt the condition of housing in Hardin to be average while 31 percent felt it was below average. Fifty-four percent of the respondents felt additional, subsidized, low-cost housing for lower income families or senior citizens is needed. Those feeling that the City needs additional rental housing constituted 61 percent of the respondents. Those indicating that their neighborhood suffered from various forms of blight amounted to 61 percent. In a question concerning additional health service needs in Hardin, the Assessment respondents overwhelmingly (54 percent) indicated a need for assisted living facilities.

In April 2008, the State of Montana prepared a white paper on housing affordability problems for Montana counties—projected out to 2020. This white paper indicated the County had 4,030 households in 2006(?), a figure which would increase by 11.4 percent by 2020. This study is the latest to deal with housing in the area but fails to reflect or correlate with the more comprehensive U.S. Housing Census data.

Table 4-15
500 New Jobs by 2010
Housing Needs

Total dwelling units:	1,750
Single-family (71%):	1,250
Apartments/multi-family (20%):	340
Mobile homes (9%):	160

Source: Cumin Associates

Although only about 40 new housing units were built in Hardin over the past eight years, this timeframe was basically before the City took a very active roll in promoting economic development; the most visible part of this effort is the Two Rivers Port Authority, the tax increment financing district (TIFD) established mostly north of the interstate, and the annexation of that area into the community. The new prison facility just south of the interstate has also been recently constructed. The TIFD industrial district is now a prime location for new industry, and the City's Economic Development Office has been very active in promoting the site and economic development in general. Because the industrial site already has much of the needed infrastructure of paved streets and utilities in place, the area could easily become the location of large new industries in a very short timeframe—industries that will provide good-paying jobs and the demand for community services, the primary one which is housing. If the housing demand is not planned for and met by the City in a timely manner, the workers will drive the 45 minutes to Billings and take with that move all the incidentals that make for a sound economy including housing tax base, groceries, insurance needs, etc.

The Table 4-15 represents the housing needs if 500 new jobs were introduced into the Hardin economy, and the City worked hard to keep most of those workers in Hardin—for example 400. It is assumed each worker would need a place to live. Accordingly 400 new dwelling units (80 percent of the total demand) are added to the current housing totals to amount to a new total of 1,750 dwellings. If the same proportion of single-family to the rest of housing units as was the ratio in 2000 (71 percent) is used, approximately 285 new single-family homes will be needed. The number of trailers allowed in the City is slightly reduced from 2000 levels. The number of additional apartments or multi-family units needed is estimated at 80.

A standard City-sized, single-family, lot in Hardin is 7,000 square feet (50 feet wide by 140 feet long) which are usually found 12 per 300-foot square City block—six on one side with a 20-foot alley separating the lots. An idea of the impact of 400 new jobs with the workers staying in Hardin can be visualized when the 285 single-family units are divided by the average size City block: approximately 24 new blocks of single-family housing—and this does not include the needs for streets and parks! Add to this area the need for multi-plexes or apartments.

Hopefully, through careful planning and subdivision development standards, such housing will be integrated with multi-family units in new, clustered, residential neighborhoods. It is also important for the integrity of the City and its existing services infrastructure to fill in the presently vacant areas of the City and to renovate or replace those areas of the City needed rehabilitation or replacement. It is also important from a marketing position to require quality development in the new subdivisions and housing projects. Such improvements as paved streets, boulevard sidewalks, even lighting should be a standard requirement. If the housing market is viable, such as with the need of 400 new workers, builders and developers can provide the niceties in their projects to make Hardin an attractive place to live. Such good developments can become the springboard

from which other community service improvements can be justified, such as to law enforcement.

It is through the extension of City utilities and streets that City Leaders guide the growth of the community, and it is important for the City to decide where and how it wants to grow prior to having to face new development proposals. This will be addressed further later in this Plan.

If, for some reason, only 100 new housing units are needed over whatever timeframe demand occurs, then approximately 70 of these will be single-family homes and 30 will be apartments or some other sort of related housing or clustered housing. The single-family alone would require about five and a half new city blocks of land, or, as noted above, good infill or replacement projects.

If the need for hundreds of new housing facilities should suddenly occur, such as in 2009 or 2010, the City should consider aggressive and innovative measures to capture the housing demand market as much as possible. Such measures should include using City-owned land such as that north of the prison (also recommended for residential use by the Hardin Industrial Park Master Plan)¹ or the old trailer court in the heart of the City's west end (between Third and Fourth Streets and Lewis and Miles). The City could offer such parcels up for development through the Two Rivers Authority and take a second position to the development financing required to construct the projects. Benefit to the City would come from the increased tax base, the control of the site the position could give them (as to aesthetics, types of housing, quality, etc.), and monetary return as the projects mature, units are sold, or the developer moves the City out of the projects via payments of some sort.

Although current land use is shown on the 2009 Land Use Maps included in the following Section—and which includes vacant areas of Town, the City Planning Office should specifically inventory vacant residential lots in the community as well as analyze potential redevelopment sites. Tax incentives for redevelopment should be considered from the City for such potential redevelopment sites or some other kind of incentives involving providing available community infrastructure services. Cities that only promote new development on their periphery undermine their own physical integrity and, as decay continues in their interior, sprawl continues outward. The latter costs the taxpayer and the City more and more dollars in the continuing extension of everything from fire service to utility lines. In neglecting older, rundown areas of town, the core of a community will remain weak and the ability to provide quality central services difficult.

¹ Hardin Industrial Park Master Plan, January 2006, Interstate Engineering, Inc.; pg. 10

5. LAND USE

Figure 1 shows the land uses in the area of the City-County Planning Board's jurisdiction as last inventoried. As can be readily surmised, over 95 percent of the land is in agriculture use or is lying vacant. Map 1 shows the Board's jurisdiction and certain salient features of the planning area. Figure 2 further refines land use by showing the breakdown for Hardin. Map 2 indicates the location of presently existing land uses in the City. The map illustrates Hardin's compactness and the relative exclusiveness of the residential areas; neighborhoods such as those between Terry and Crow Avenues are almost entirely free of non-residential uses such as commercial establishments. The map also shows the tendency for strip commercial developments along major transportation routes such as the western end of Third Street and the north end of Crawford Avenue.

Table 5-1
Planning Board Jurisdictional Area Land Uses--1972

<u>Land Use</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Commercial	17.102	0.13
Residential	4.935	0.03
Industrial	73.426	0.57
Primary/Secondary Hwys	252.387	1.97
Interstate Hwy	138.348	1.09
Railway	110.101	0.87
Subtotal	596.299	4.66
Agriculture or Vacant	12,203.701	95.43
Total	12,800.000	100.00

Source: Hardin Comprehensive Plan, 1972

Table 5-2
City of Hardin Land Use--1972

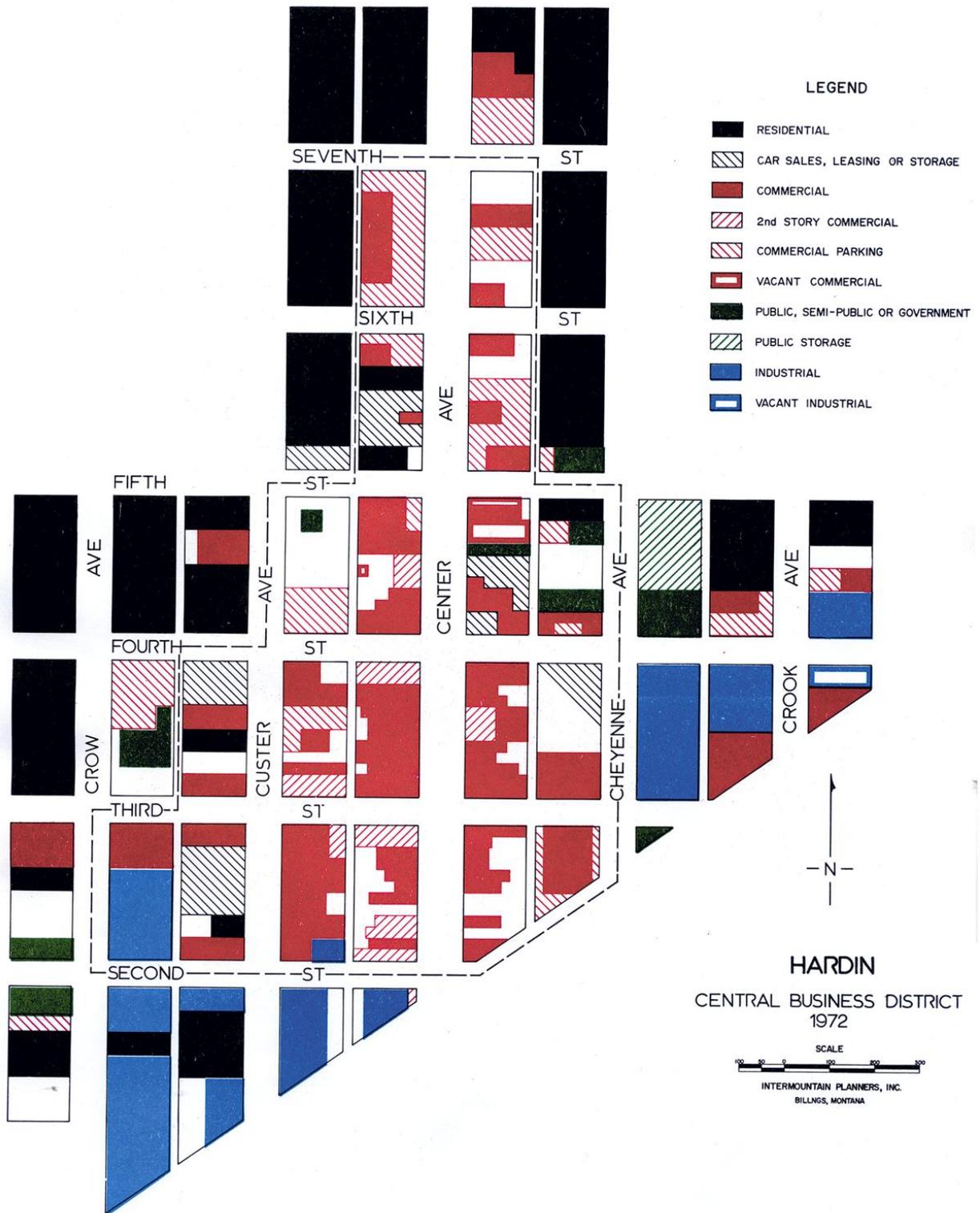
<u>Land Use</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Street/Alley Right-of-Way	158.7	23.62
Railroad Right-of-Way	33.7	5.02
Residential	160.0	23.82
Vacant	139.4	20.75
Semi-Public	4.6	0.68
Commercial	30.4	4.52
Industrial	7.5	1.12
Public	137.5	20.47
Total	671.8	100.00

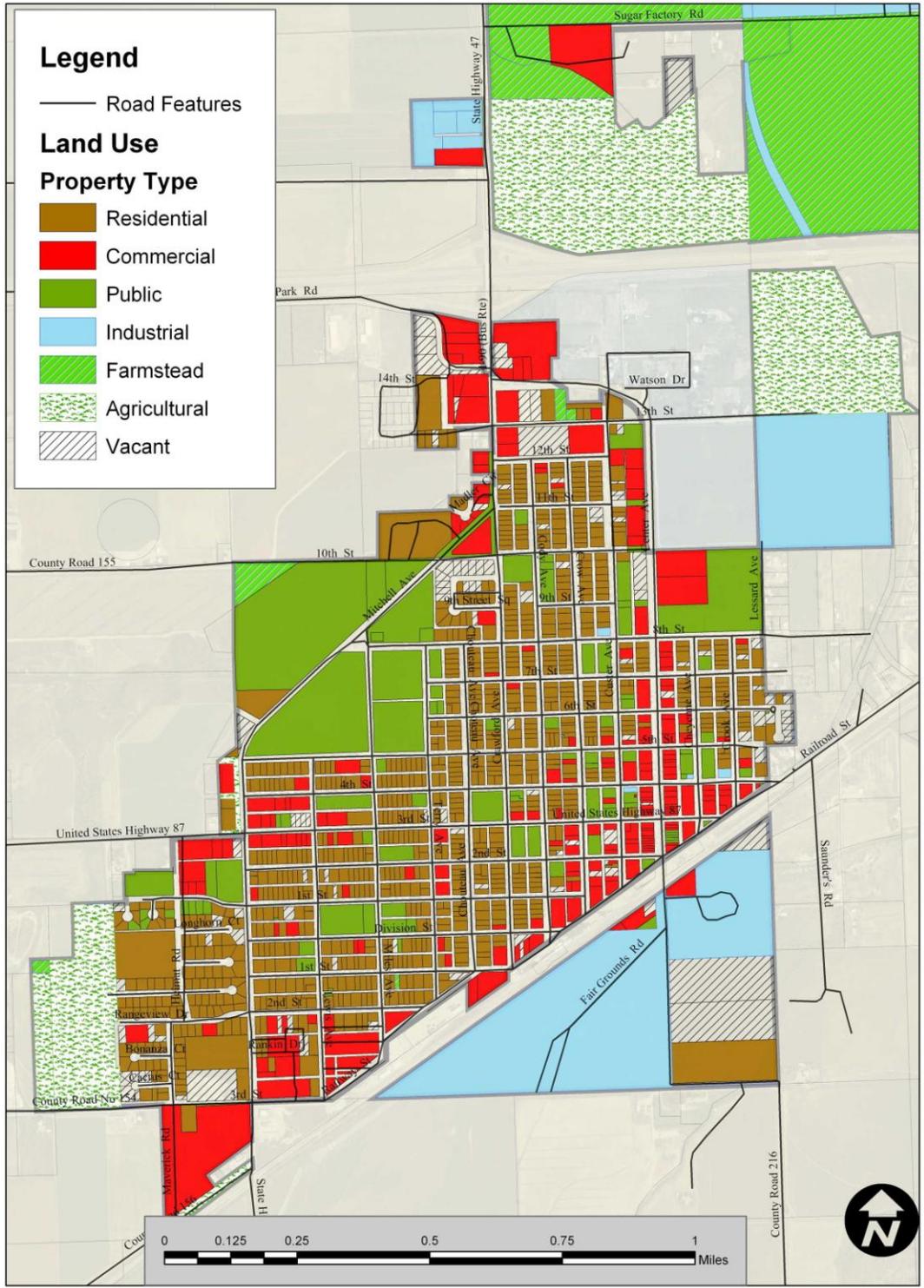
LAND USE ANALYSIS OF DEVELOPED AREA—1972

Street/Alley Right-of-Way	158.7	29.81
Railroad Right-of-Way	33.7	6.33
Residential	160.0	30.05
Semi-Public	4.6	0.86
Commercial	30.4	5.71
Industrial	7.5	1.41
Public	137.5	25.83
Total	532.4	100.00

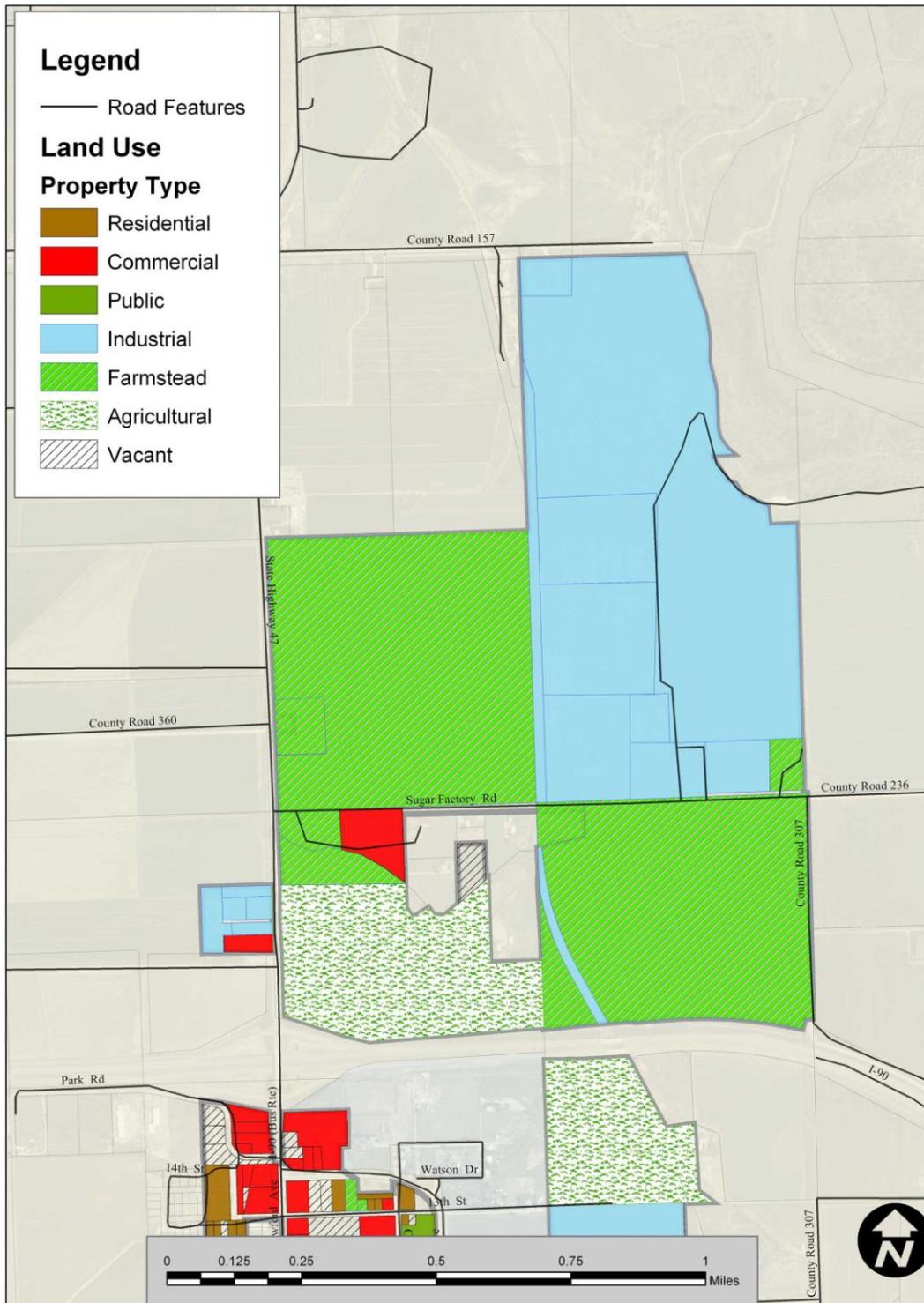
Source: Hardin Comprehensive Plan--1972







Hardin Land Use 2009



Hardin Land Use 2009

**Table 5-3
2009 Land Use**

<u>Land use</u>	<u>Acres</u>
farmstead	512.640795
industrial	113.702719
commercial	96.589119
agricultural	84.470259
vacant	79.333925
public	131.000677
residential	216.688018

Source: Cumin Associates with mapping by Global Positions, LLC,
Bozeman, Montana

A. PRIME RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AREAS

(1) Southwest Planning Area:

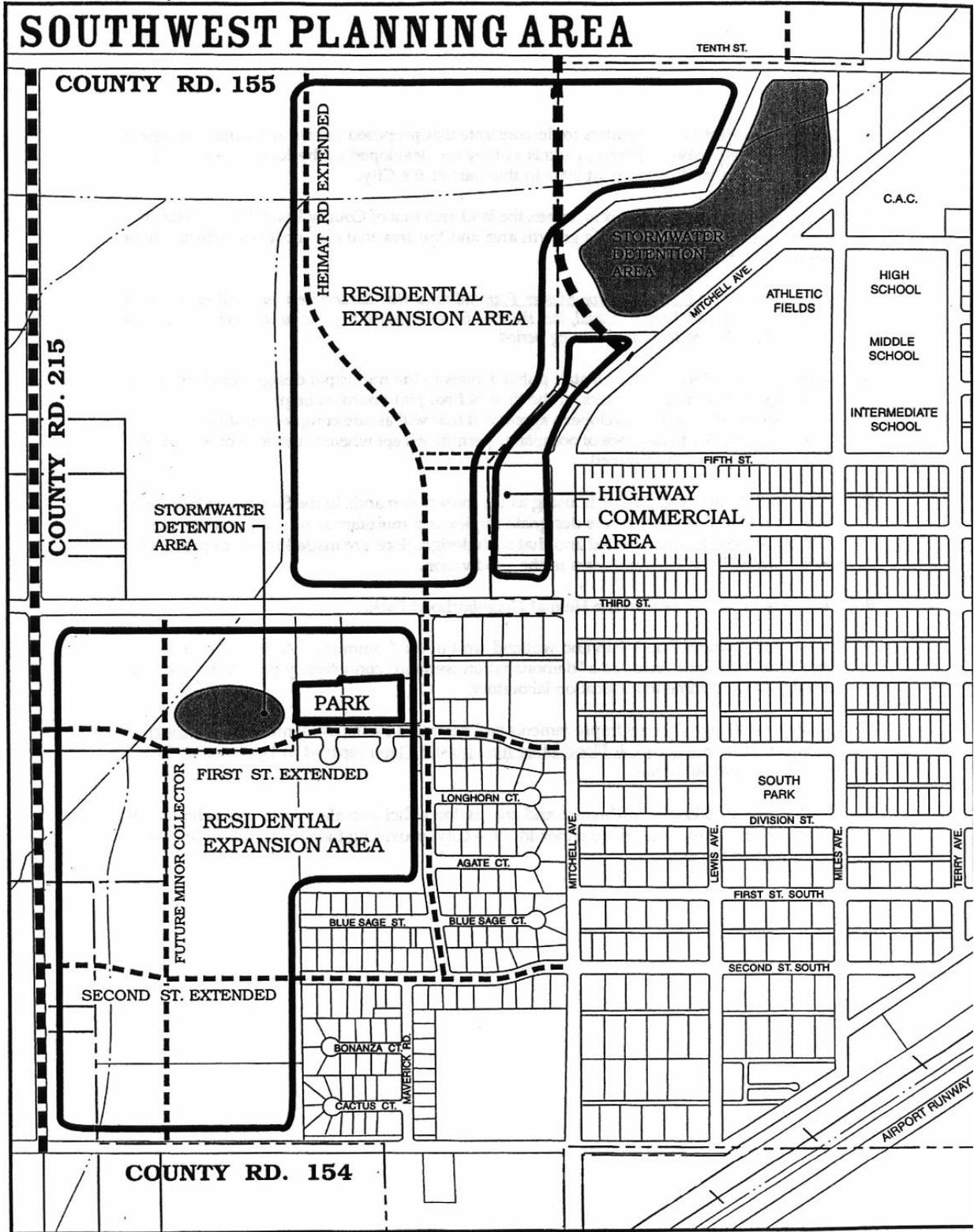
This residential growth area consists of the area south of 10th Street and west of Mitchell Avenue. The major subdivisions are the Westlich Heimat Subdivision and the Dorn Subdivision. There are numerous rural residences outside the City limits on Third Street (Highway 87) and County Roads 215 and 154. The newer housing that has been constructed in the Southwest Planning Area consists of a mixture of single-family and apartment construction. Most of the apartments have been concentrated in the vicinity of 1st Street and Heimat Avenue.

The major deficiency in the development of this area has been the lack of adequate through-streets and the fact that some of the streets have not been paved or brought up to City design standards prior to acceptance. There is ample area for further expansion to the west, and new subdivisions in the area need to assure provision of adequate infrastructure to service this area.

Southwest Planning Area Development Guidelines

(a) Construct 1st Street and Rangeview Drive as minor collectors extending as through-streets between Mitchell Avenue and County Road 215. Both of these streets will need to cross the Northwest Drainage Ditch which drains a broad agricultural area on the west side of the City.

(b) Complete Heimat Road as a north-south minor collector street serving this neighborhood. As the Southwest Planning Area develops, a second north-south minor collector street and through-street will be needed midway between Heimat



(c) Discourage further unsewered development in this area. Further expansion of septic tank and drainfield sewage treatment systems will make future extension of public utilities more costly and complex.

(d) The land area east of County Road 215 is A probable growth area and one that can most cost-effectively be served with public utilities. Require prospective subdividers to demonstrate that proposed streets and utility easements will adequately serve adjoining parcels as they are developed in the future. Avoid “land-locking” potential development sites in this part of the City.

(e) Require subdividers to either install public streets to the municipal design standard, with required improvements such as water, sewer, sidewalks/curbs/gutters, and lighting, at the time of final plat approval or provide a performance bond and a developer’s agreement that will assure completion of the infrastructure prior to issuance of occupancy permits--except where extensions or exceptions are granted by the City Council.

(f) Allow multifamily and duplex housing as the market demands in the Southwest Planning Area, provided that subdividers designate duplex and multifamily housing lots on the plats at the time lots are created and that such designations are made known to prospective single-family-home lot purchasers in the subdivision.

(g) Complete improvements to the Heimat Neighborhood Park.

(h) Preserve the natural floodplain and wetland west of the Community Activity Center and High School Athletic Fields as a “demonstration wetland” conservancy park to be used as an outdoor environmental education laboratory.

(i) Construct drainage channel improvements and detention basins as identified in the Storm Drainage, Erosion Control, & Flood Mitigation Master Plan prepared in 1986.



(j) Modify the City's Zoning Ordinance and annexation policies to allow rural households with horses or other large animals to annex into the City, providing there is sufficient lot area to accommodate the animals.

(2) Northwest Planning Area

The Northwest Planning Area is a mixed-use area located north of 10th Street and west of Crawford Avenue. The area currently contains a variety of uses including highway commercial development along the Crawford Avenue frontage, two older mobile home park and trailer courts, and approximately 20 residences--including both single-family homes and duplexes--in the Wagner Subdivision. There are several rural residences on Park Road and County Road 155.

The area is crossed by a major drainage channel that runs in a generally north-south direction. The Northwest Planning Area lacks a defined street pattern. With the commercial development along the Crawford Avenue frontage, the options for extending through-collector streets are limited. The City needs to take positive steps to assure that sufficient right-of-way corridors are reserved to construct 13th as an east-west minor collector street and 10th Street as a major collector. The vacant land adjacent to the City here is prime residential development, and the City may want to consider some sort of incentives to properly develop this land in the manner it desires.

Northwest Planning Area Development Guidelines

(a) Reserve sufficient right-of-way for the extension of 13th Street as a through-minor collector street.

(b) Reserve sufficient right-of-way for a north-south through-minor collector street approximately one-quarter mile west of Crawford Avenue.

(c) Reserve sufficient right-of-way for a second north-south collector street approximately one-half mile west of Crawford Avenue that would connect 10th Street (County Road 155) and Park Road.

(d) Limit commercial development to those areas currently zoned C-2 Highway Commercial.

(e) Maintain the lots in the 1-90 Park Subdivision as commercial sites.

(f) Encourage the redevelopment of the blighted mobile home and trailer court properties. The Madler Subdivision and Madler Addition (Grandview Campground) should be replatted or redeveloped with streets and utilities designed to meet City standards.

(g) Construct drainage channel improvements and stormwater detention basins as identified in the Storm Drainage, Erosion Control, & Flood Mitigation Master Plan.

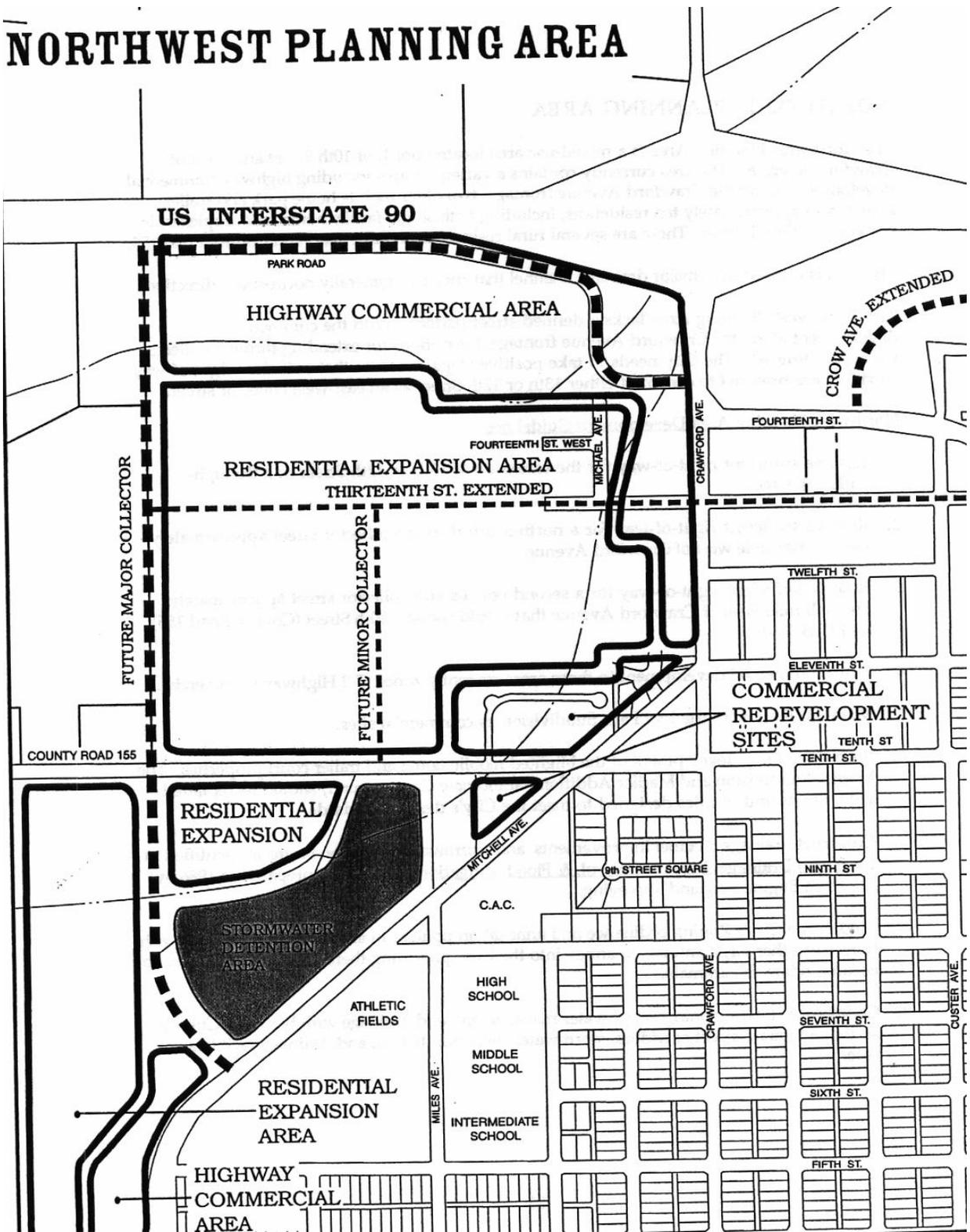


(h) Modify the City's Zoning Ordinance and annexation policies to allow rural households with horses or other large animals to annex into the City, providing there is sufficient lot area to accommodate the animals.

(i) Coordinate street planning, stormwater management, and drainage with Big Horn County, so that adequate street corridors, stormwater detention basins, and drainage facilities are planned for.

(j). Future developments along 10th Street (County Road 155) need to allow for the extension westward of this street as a major collector, as it will eventually serve the new County Airport about a mile away.

NORTHWEST PLANNING AREA



B. OTHER RESIDENTIAL AREAS

There is an area of approximately 17 single-family homes located in the northeast corner of the City north of County Road 24 and east of Center Avenue. This area, called “The Watson Drive Area,” is presently outside the City Limits. All of the properties are on private septic systems and wells. Some of the residences have reportedly experienced septic system and water supply problems. As funding becomes available from either State or Federal grants or special assessments, the City will annex this area and provide streets and public utilities constructed to meet the City’s design standards.

The City’s central residential areas are in pretty good shape but with isolated lots and dwellings in blighted and deteriorated condition, and the City should continue its policy of encouraging the maintenance and improvement of these problems in this central area. The areas that need renovation need to be inventoried and prioritized. Incentives such as waiving review fees or grant-and-aid programs for such rehabilitation need to be utilized.

The most serious concentrations of substandard housing are in the mobile home parks. The older parks lack paved streets and connecting circulation. The City has taken positive action against the worst of these situations. The City needs to continue a strenuous policy of controlling the movement of mobile units around and into the City, and nonconforming mobile home parks should not be permitted to increase the number of units unless the parks are brought into full compliance with the code. The City has also tried to prevent renewing the State license of mobile home parks unless they comply with City codes. This get very complex, because of the overlapping jurisdictions, statutes, and fair and equitable housing policies and issues.

The areas designated as Agricultural and Rural Residential on the Land Use Plan Maps are areas outside the City limits that would be costly to serve with municipal utilities and are not likely to be annexed in the near future. While these areas are outside the regulatory jurisdiction of the City, the City should support the City-County Planning Board not approving land divisions and development that would be likely to result in septic system failures or have inadequate potable water supply. The area should generally be reserved for agricultural production and large-lot rural residences. Minimum lot sizes should be five acres.

General Residential Development Guidelines

- (a) Preserve the quality and property values of existing residential neighborhoods.
- (b) Plan for the expansion of housing development in the west side of the City as the primary residential growth area. Eventual residential development may also occur west of Highway 47 north of the interstate.

(c) Attract more middle-income single-family housing in order to achieve a greater proportion of market-rate non-subsidized housing relative to publicly-assisted housing.

(d) Modify the City's Zoning Ordinance to allow rural residences with opportunities for having horses within the City limits for those areas unsuitable for private wells and septic tank treatment systems..

(e) Require residential developers to provide paved streets, sidewalks, parks, and public utilities at the time land is platted. The improvements may be phased corresponding to market demand and absorption of lots. Extensions and exceptions to this policy may be granted at the discretion of the City Council.

(f) Require residential developers and land dividers to provide for the extension of streets and utilities to serve future adjoining development parcels.

(g) Require residential developers to provide paved streets and public sidewalks at the time that residential lots are platted.

(h) Continue to seek State and Federal funding to provide affordable housing in the community.

(i) Continue to enforce residential property building codes and maintenance standards.

(j) Maintain a policy of requiring annexation or a waiver of opposition to annexation as a precondition for receiving municipal utilities.

(k) Officially map future streets and drainageways and require new subdivision plats and surveys to reflect the mapped corridors.

C. HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL PLANNING AREA

The Highway Commercial Planning Area consists of the commercial sites oriented toward I-90 and frontage sites on Crawford Avenue, 14th Street (Center Avenue), north of the interstate along the west side of Highway 47. Businesses in this area include a number of fast-food restaurants, service stations, motels, and casinos.

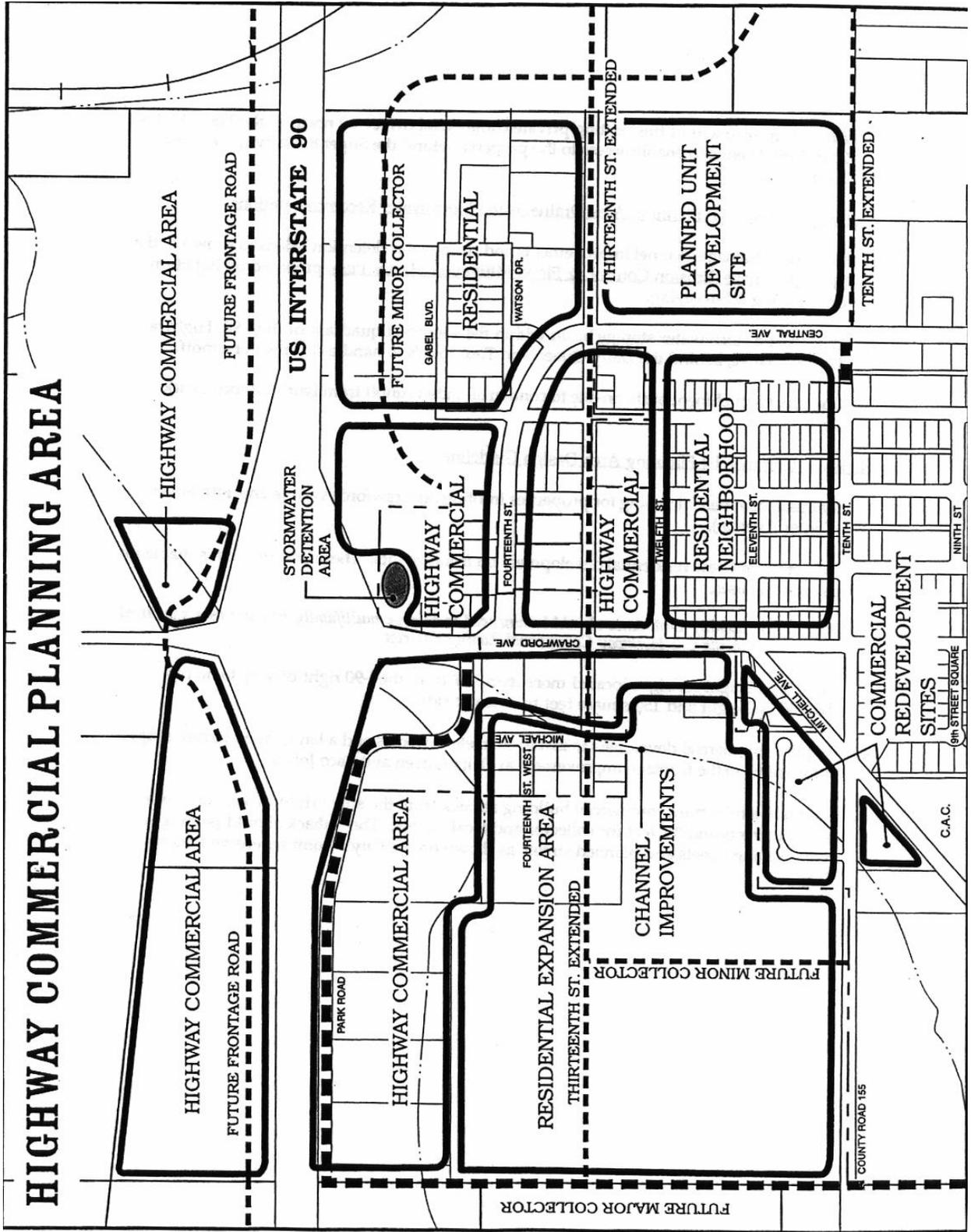
In the future, it is anticipated there will be additional highway-oriented commercial development on the northwest and northeast quadrants of the Highway 47 interchange. At the present time, the north side of the interchange is outside the City limits and does not receive municipal services. The number and size of the highway-oriented businesses near the I-90/Highway 47 interchange are expected to increase over the next decade.

The east interchange at Old Highway 87 is on the Crow Indian Reservation. Future business development at this location is uncertain in part because of jurisdictional and taxation issues, and lack of community service infrastructure. Although a majority of the tourist traffic approaches the Hardin area from the east, the I-90/Highway 87 interchange is not expected to become as well developed as the 1-90/Highway 47 interchange.

Highway Commercial Planning Area Development Guidelines

- (a) Maintain at least a 150-foot separation between commercial driveways in order to maintain safe and efficient traffic movement on 14th Street (Center Avenue, Crawford Avenue, and Highway 47 north of the interstate. Where feasible, encourage shared driveways and access from existing side streets.
- (b) Maintain 300' driveway and street intersection setbacks from the 1-90 access ramps for all new driveway and street access permits; this also reflects Montana Highway Department policies.
- (c) Pave all driveways and parking areas with bituminous asphalt or other comparable hard surface material.
- (d) Reconstruct the Mitchell Avenue and Crawford Avenue intersection to create a 90-degree intersection as shown in the Hardin Street and Highway Master Plan prepared by Leigh, Scott & Cleary. The improvements that have been done to this intersection, i.e., making Mitchell Avenue the through street and stopping Crawford at Mitchell, will probably be the extent of foreseeable improvements to this intersection.
- (e) Reserve sufficient right-of-way for the future extension of 12th Street west of Crawford Avenue as an east-west through-minor collector street.
- (f) At the time public streets are reconstructed, install curbs and boulevard sidewalks.
- (g) Allow improvement of the existing private commercial driveway north of the Pizza Hut on Crawford Avenue to enable access to the property behind the Super 8, Dairy Queen, and Taco John's.
- (h) Construct drainage channel improvements and stormwater detention basins as shown in the City's Storm Drainage, Erosion Control, & Flood Mitigation Master Plan.
- (i) Construct a stormwater storage basin within the southeast quadrant of the 1-90/Highway 47 Interchange behind the Dairy Queen and Taco John's to handle stormwater runoff.

- (j) Construct a catchment basin on-site to contain oil-laden runoff from Broadway Flying J Truck Stop.
- (k) Maintain commercial zoning for properties fronting on Crawford Avenue and 14th Street (Center Avenue), and institute it along the west side of Highway 47 north of the interstate.
- (l) Do not permit new residential development on frontage lots.
- (m) Limit sign height for signs located more than 300' from the 1-90 right-of-way to no more than 30 feet in height and 150 square feet in area per side.
- (n) Require commercial developers to install concrete curb cuts and a landscaped terrace strip, comparable to the frontage improvement at Dairy Queen and Taco Johns.
- (o) Maintain a minimum commercial building setback from the street right-of-way of 50 feet on arterial streets and 30 feet for collector and local streets.



D. INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS

One of the City's primary strategic goals has been to broaden the industrial base of the Hardin area. The City has extensive areas zoned for industrial use, and the former Holly Sugar Refinery site located one mile north of Hardin is being redeveloped for heavy industrial users. Industrial users coming into communities typically look for sites that are "ready to go" and do not require either extensive site work or utility extensions. There are four distinct industrially-zoned areas in the Hardin area, each offering varying types of site characteristics requiring different marketing and servicing approaches.

(1) Two Rivers Port Authority Site (The TIF District)

This area has been referred to in previous Hardin planning documents as the Holly Sugar Refinery Industrial Site. In deciding to make this area a first class industrial park, Hardin created a port authority under State statute and annexed 800 acres of land including a small parcel south of the interstate highway and in the very northeastern part of the community; the rest of the area lies north of the interstate and east of State Highway 47. As a method of funding improvements and administering the taxes for the Park, the City created a tax increment finance industrial district (TIFD) as provided in Statute. The TIFD freezes the taxes in the Park at the time it was formed, and all subsequent improvements made in the Park—and the taxes over and above the base amount at the TIFD creation--within the TIFD go into the Park development coffers. (Statute does require a set amount to also go the local school district.) The Park already contains the Rocky Mountain Power Generation Plant, an asphalt plant, and space for an ethanol production facility. Although these industries are more than are found in most new industrial parks, there is still a lot of additional area for expansion and new business.

The area has been zoned Heavy Industrial. The City has provided trunk water and sewer main, the start of a park-wide, on-site, storm drainage system, and a paved transportation network for the central park area (Sugar Factory Road and Power Plant Avenue). It is planned to have complete sidewalk, curb and gutter, and lighting as well as a sound landscaping standard for the park to insure its long-term attractiveness to modern industries. The lighting will be part of a Lighting Special Improvement District that will construct, energize, maintain, and administer the lights. The latter will find the planned, central wireless distribution facility that is in place particularly useful. The City-owned Telecommunications Pathway System will be located within the Park so as all businesses will be within 1.5 miles of the high-speed network provider.

There is a power substation just to the north of the power plant with room for expansion that has the capacity to serve any new industries in the park. South of the interstate is served by the Hardin Substation. Power service in the area is flexible in that either provider can go underground and across the interstate where the railroad presently crosses.

Part of the Two Rivers Site lies south of the interstate in the northeast part of the community. The most visible feature of this area is the Detention Facility located on Slammer Avenue directly northeast of the IGA Store and served by the recently paved extension eastward of 13th Street. This Facility consists of 92,000 square feet of a standard construction prison on 40 acres. When it opens it will employ 105 persons making approximately \$2.6 million, with total operational income estimated at \$8.9 million. Not only will these monies turn over several times in the local economy, the food services will be out-sourced, generating even more jobs and positive impact.¹

Water for use in the Park comes from the City's two wells and water rights from the Bighorn River. In 1982 a new raw water intake facility and pump station were constructed by Hardin that added to the original 1920 facilities located about 300 feet east of the new construction along the river. The water treatment plant consists of two sedimentation basins with a combined capacity (with existing pumps) of about two million gallons per day (gpd). When planned new, high-speed pumps are installed, the capacity is expected to increase to about three or four million gpd. Most of the City's distribution system consists of 66,136 lineal feet (lf) of six-inch asbestos cement pipe. There is also 22,794 lf of eight-inch, 5069 lf of ten inch, and 1, 461 lf of 12 inch. In addition to the asbestos cement pipe, there are 716 lf of 12-inch PVC and 14,364 lf of 16-inch PVC. Although the entire water distribution system holds 340,000 gallons of potable water, the City's actual finished storage consists of two 500,000-gallon storage reservoirs located west of the City—connected to the distribution system by two 16-inch transmission mains.

In the Industrial Park, the City has the option of hooking into RMP's water treatment plant which produces 125 to 150 gpm. (RMP has two water rights on the river.) This is not enough to fully develop the Park plus provide for fire flow but remains an option for the Authority. RMP has requested the City purchase a raw water intake and treatment plant.

Engineering models of the water flow available from RMP coupled with a 500,000-gallon reservoir show that the RMP treatment plant could address day-to-day use within the Park; however, a major fire (3,000 gpm for a three-hour duration fire) would deplete the supply and come up short about 13,000 gallons—and this is assuming no water use elsewhere in the Park during the fire.

The City has constructed a 12-inch water main from the existing water treatment plant south of the interstate with a ten-inch loop main opening up the central part of the Park as part of its main road construction; portions of this new construction will also serve that portion of the Park south of the interstate—probably for multi-family housing. This water main will serve projected Park needs and fire flow for a couple of decades.

¹Ted Lewis, Assistant Warden, Two Rivers Regional Detention Facility, 1015 N. Lessard Avenue, Hardin, Montana

The Two Rivers Authority Industrial Park will utilize Hardin’s sewage system, the latter which consists of collection, lift station, and treatment. The City completed a Facility Plan for wastewater in 2003 which showed sufficient capacity in the existing treatment plant for flows generated by the Industrial Park. In addition the City constructed a new 12-inch force main from the main lift station to the treatment facility in 2004. The Facility Plan did not detail Park population projections—only development of the power and ethanol plants. Population figures were developed in the 2006 Hardin Industrial Park Master Plan based on trip generation analysis of anticipated, developed land uses in the Park. The minimum flow was estimated at 15 gpm, the maximum at 208 gpm, and the average design daily flow at 50 gpm—based on a Park population of 6000, including motel/hotel guests, workers, etc.). Although collection mains must be designed to accommodate design flows, the Park’s estimated build-out is 50 years. The City must balance desired design demand with premature over-building.

Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad built and extended to the old Sugar Factory site in the Park a Multi-Modal Transportation Facility from the railroad mainline on the south side of Hardin. This rail spur has been purchased by Rocky Mountain Ethanol (RME) and is to be reconstructed to serve the future plant; it will also be available to other industries in the Industrial Park. RME plans a large circular siding with storage and loading and unloading facilities for complete unit trains.¹

Hardin is on the El Camino Real International Highway (and the Industrial Park is adjacent thereto) envisioned to connect Canada across the U.S. to Mexico as part of the original North American Free Trade Agreement plans. In the Park, Sugar Factory Road intersects Highway 47 a half-mile north of the interstate and extends east through the center of the Park. It is a paved 24-foot wide driving surface road that eventually ends at the East Hardin Interstate Interchange. County Road 157 runs east-west in the north Park area, intersecting Highway 47 about 1.5 miles north of I-90. Land south of the interstate in the Park is accessed by 13th Street East about a quarter mile east of North Center Avenue.

Highway 47, which currently carries 800 vehicles per day (cpd) is planned for reconstruction by the State Department of Transportation. Such reconstruction of this important access road will adequately serve the Industrial Park well into its expected 50-year build-out plan. However, as the Park does fill up, traffic is expected to reach to the 19,000 vhp range, and the Authority needs to look at securing and planning for at least four lanes of traffic on Highway 47 plus turning lanes before the land builds-up along the roadway. Traffic on I-90 measured just west of its connection with I-94 east of Billings currently measures about 7,000 vpd with 3,800 vpd measured at Lodge Grass. The difference is probably those at Hardin and an estimated 800 vpd going east on U.S. 212.

¹ Greg Smith, Economic Development Director, City of Hardin; interview

The size, location, existing and planned improvements, and administration of the Two Rivers Authority Industrial Park is a credit to the City and an attractive, competitive opportunity in industrial siting.

(2) South Hardin Industrial Park

The area south of the BNSF Railroad tracks on the east side of South Center Street (County Road 216) is in the City and zoned for industrial use. The area consists of approximately 45 acres owned by several different property owners. There are several older structures used for light industrial and storage purposes. This area is suitable for a variety of light industries and agribusinesses.

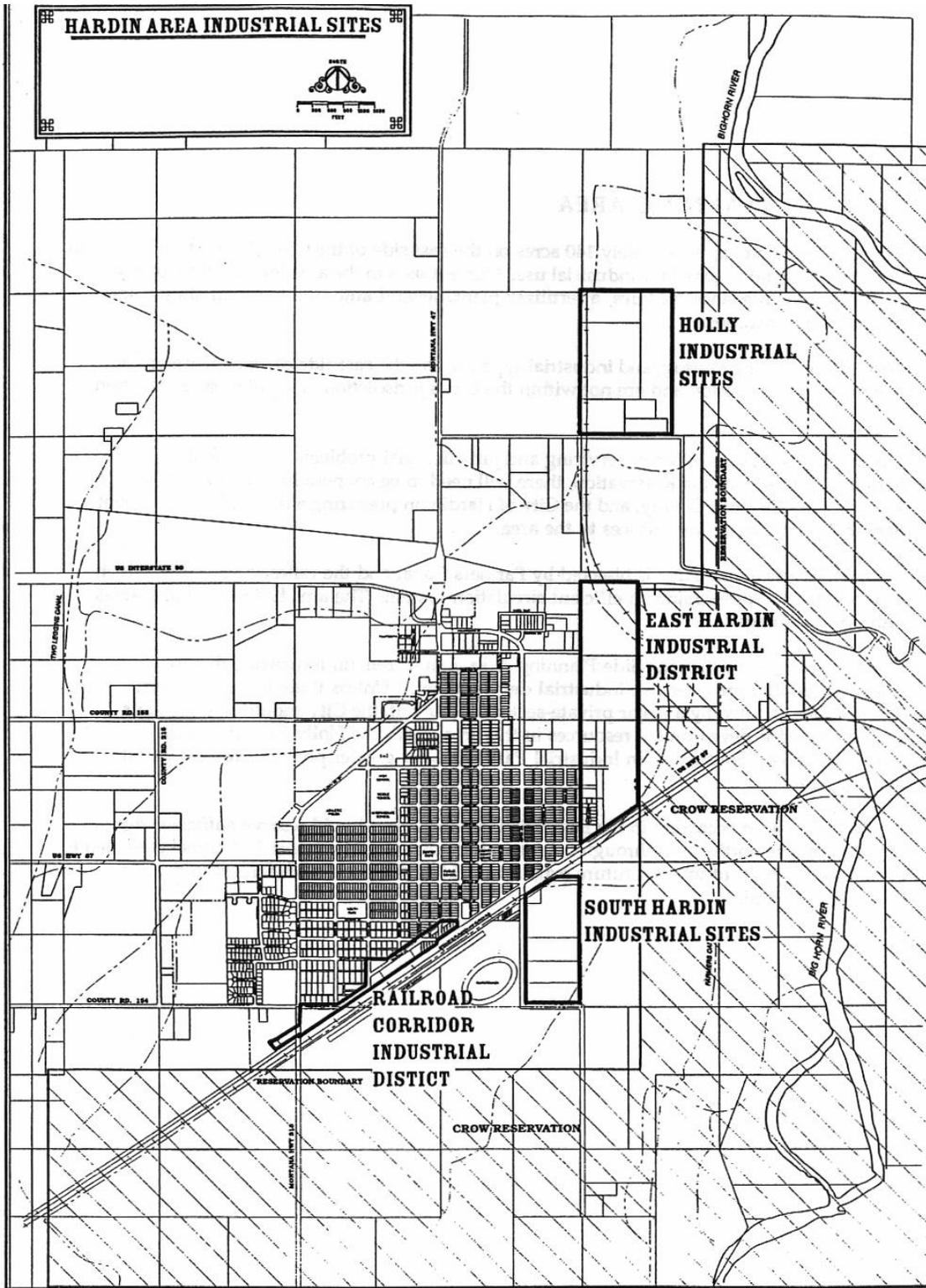
To maximize the potential use of the entire site, the area should be master planned and served by a looped road (the location to be specified in the master plan). This road would not have to be built at the initial phase of development, but a right-of-way of at least 60' should be reserved for future construction. It also needs to be noted that the County Fair Board is looking to revitalize the Fairgrounds area, and any future planning in the neighborhood needs to be coordinated with the Fair Board, land owners, the County, etc. to maximize effort and reduce confusion and wasting of funds.

In order to make the area more marketable, the property should be served with municipal utilities and preliminarily platted as a light industrial park with lots averaging five acres in size. The lots could be combined or divided into smaller lots, pending industrial commitments. This area is second in importance to the Two Rivers area, and the community's focus, until the Two Rivers site fills up, will be that area north of the interstate. However, the City should work with any private landowners wanting to develop the area and even the use of a second TIFD is possible, such as Billings is and has been using to develop blighted areas of that city. As with the Holly Site, however, the use of TIF should be conditioned on the commitment of a private investment of sufficient magnitude to justify the project costs.

(3) Railroad Corridor Industrial Area

The BNSF Railroad corridor has historically been the site for industries and agribusinesses dependent on rail access. While rail dependency has declined for most of the businesses in this area, uses along Railway Street remain industrial or heavy commercial.

There is relatively little land available for additional industrial uses in this area unless the existing industrial sites are redeveloped. The City should retain the current industrial zoning but should not rezone any land to expand this district northward into predominantly residential neighborhoods.



HARDIN • MONTANA

E. FUTURE LAND USE PLANNING

Hardin can expect commercial and industrial growth to occur west of Highway 47 north of the Interstate, although, with the incentive of fully developed industrial sites being available in the Two Rivers Industrial Park, the latter area should be more attractive than land outside of it. The City should do what it can to control commercial and industrial development outside the area of City services. This area west of Highway 47, further west of the road development corridor itself, will also see residential subdivision development, and, again, the City should influence land uses through the extension of services and inclusion in the City limits.

When the new County Airport develops, the City needs to work with the County to limit commercial and industrial development around the Airport to aviation oriented enterprises. Otherwise the existing commercial areas in the City and industrial sites will suffer. Likewise, Tenth Street needs to be zoned west of the developed area of town to prevent strip development such as occurs along Grand Avenue in Billings. Allowing such commercial activity to creep out along this street adversely impacts adjacent residential areas, requires more community services than its lineal tax base justifies, and adversely impacts existing and planned commercial areas elsewhere in the City.

The areas north and south of Tenth Street immediately west of the developed area of the City are the future prime residential growth areas of the community, and as these lands develop this potential must be kept in mind. Hardin needs well designed and served residential subdivisions, and such standards need to be carefully weighed and enforced during proposed subdivision review processes.

The City should encourage infill in vacant and dilapidated areas of the community as described earlier in this Plan. This includes the City-owned property north of the Detention Facility and the old trailer park. No other major areas of growth or activity are anticipated over the next five years.

6. TRAFFIC CIRCULATION

A. FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATIONS

The roadways in the Hardin area are categorized into four basic functional classes:

- Arterials
- Major Collectors
- Minor Collectors
- Local Streets

1-90 constitutes a special category of roadway that greatly influences development in the area but is not managed or controlled by the local government. There are no current plans for significant modifications or changes to 1-90 or the interstate interchanges.

(1) Arterial Streets

Arterial streets are defined as major traffic-carrying roadways that carry through-traffic over relatively long distances—generally over one mile. The arterial street system in Hardin consists of the roadways on the Montana Highway System and includes:

- State Highway 47 (Center Avenue -14th Street north of Third Street)
 - Extending from Third Street in the Downtown to north of 1-90
- Old Highway 87 (Third Street)
- Montana Highway 313 (Mitchell Avenue)

Arterials in urban areas generally require 80' to 120' of right-of-way and should be designed to enable future widening to four lanes with additional turn lanes, as needed. Driveway access points and other sources of “traffic friction” should be reduced in order to maintain traffic movement efficiency.

(2) Major Collectors

Major collectors are the heavily traveled “spine” streets that serve as through-streets connecting residential neighborhoods and business districts with the arterial street system. In business and industrial areas, the major collectors need to be designed to handle truck traffic. The roadways classified as major collectors include:

- (a) North-South Major Collectors
 - Crawford Avenue
 - Center (south of Third Street)
 - Power Plant Avenue

(b) East-West Major Collectors

Railway Street
Third Street South
10th Street/VanZandt Road/County Road 155
Park Road (Frontage Road)
Sugar Factory Road

Center Street south of the railroad tracks and Third Street South extended west of Mitchell Avenue are currently lightly-traveled roadways constructed to a rural road standard. County Road 215, located west of Hardin, should be considered a major collector in terms of long-range development planning. As development occurs on the periphery of Hardin, these roads should be considered part of the “spine system” of major collectors and upgraded to urban collector status.

Generally, major collectors should have a minimum right-of-way of 80' and a minimum roadway width of 36 feet. Most major collectors require a roadway width sufficient to accommodate at least two lanes of moving traffic, curbside parking, and turn lanes at major intersections.

(3) Minor Collectors

Minor collectors are a second class of collectors that function primarily as neighborhood through-streets. Designated minor collectors should be designed to maintain a continuous access corridor linking residential neighborhoods with major collectors and arterials. Offset intersections and sharp corners should be avoided, where feasible, in designing minor collectors.

In Hardin, the major deficiencies in the street system are associated with discontinuities in the minor collector system. The City needs to place greater emphasis on requiring continuous collector streets through newly developing neighborhoods. The roadways classified as minor collectors include:

(a) North-South Minor Collectors

Heimat Road
Miles Avenue
Crow Avenue
Custer Avenue
Cheyenne Avenue

(b) East-West Minor Collectors

Rangeview Drive
1st Street

8th Street
13th Street

Rights-of-way for minor collectors range from 60' to 80', depending on the type and volume of traffic, with a minimum roadway width of 26'. Minor collectors should not be terminated in cul-de-sacs or have severe curvature that would impede continuous traffic movement unless such design is unavoidable due to topographic constraints.

B. FUTURE THROUGH-STREETS

The following is a list of future through-streets that are identified on the Circulation Plan. The rights-of-way for these roads should be reserved at the time that areas are platted or surveyed.

(1) Future North-South Through Streets

- Future East Side Major Collector
- Future Minor Collector (10th Street to 13th Street, west of Grandview Campground)
- Future West Side Major Collector (Mitchell Avenue to Park Road)
- Heimat Road (extended north to County Road 155)
- Future Westside Minor Collector (County Road 154 to Highway 87--west of Dorn Subdivision)

(2) Future East-West Through Streets

- 13th Street (west of Crawford Avenue and east of Center Avenue)
- 12th Street (west and east of Center Avenue)
- 11th Street (west and east of Center Avenue)
- 10th Street (between Custer and Center Avenue, east of Center Avenue), west to new airport via VanZandt Road, County Road 155
- 8th Street (east of Center Avenue)
- 5th Street (east of Mitchell Avenue)
- 1st Street (west of Heimat Road to County Road 215)
- 2nd Street South (west to County Road 215)

C. FRONTAGE ROADS

New minor collector frontage roads on the north side of the 1-90/Highway 47 interchange.

D. LOCAL STREETS

The remainder of the public streets in Hardin are considered local streets. The construction standard for these streets is a minimum of a 50' right-of-way on level land with 24' pavement width. Cul-de-sacs are permitted provided a minimum turning radius of 40' is designed.

In Hardin, the major deficiency in the local street system is that the City has accepted a number of public streets without complete paving or curb, gutter, and sidewalk improvements. In some cases, this practice has resulted in the costly and complicated process of creating Special Improvement Districts (SID's) after the homes are already in place to complete the street and sidewalk infrastructure. The City should require performance bonding to insure completion of uncompleted streets and sidewalk infrastructure prior to the filing of the final subdivision plat.

E. GUIDELINES FOR CITY ACCEPTANCE OF LOCAL STREETS AS PUBLIC STREETS

1. Completion or performance bonding for completion within a fixed time frame of all streets and infrastructure to minimum municipal design standards.
2. Construction of curb, gutter, and boulevard sidewalks at the time of initial street construction. The municipal design standards should be amended to reflect current curb, gutter, and sidewalk construction practices by simple reference to currently accepted State of Montana construction standards. There should be uniformity in the design of these improvements.
3. Where feasible, local streets should be designed for future extension to adjoining parcels. Right-of-way for future extension should be reserved and dedicated at the time of platting.
4. Local streets designed as permanent cul-de-sacs should have paved cul-de-sacs constructed and improved to the City's design standard at the time of acceptance as a public street or, if a new subdivision, prior to the filing of the final plat (or with a performance bond provided if the construction is not complete).
5. Local streets should be platted and designed to avoid "dog-legs" or off-set alignments.
6. The minimum spacing between local streets intersections should be 150 feet.

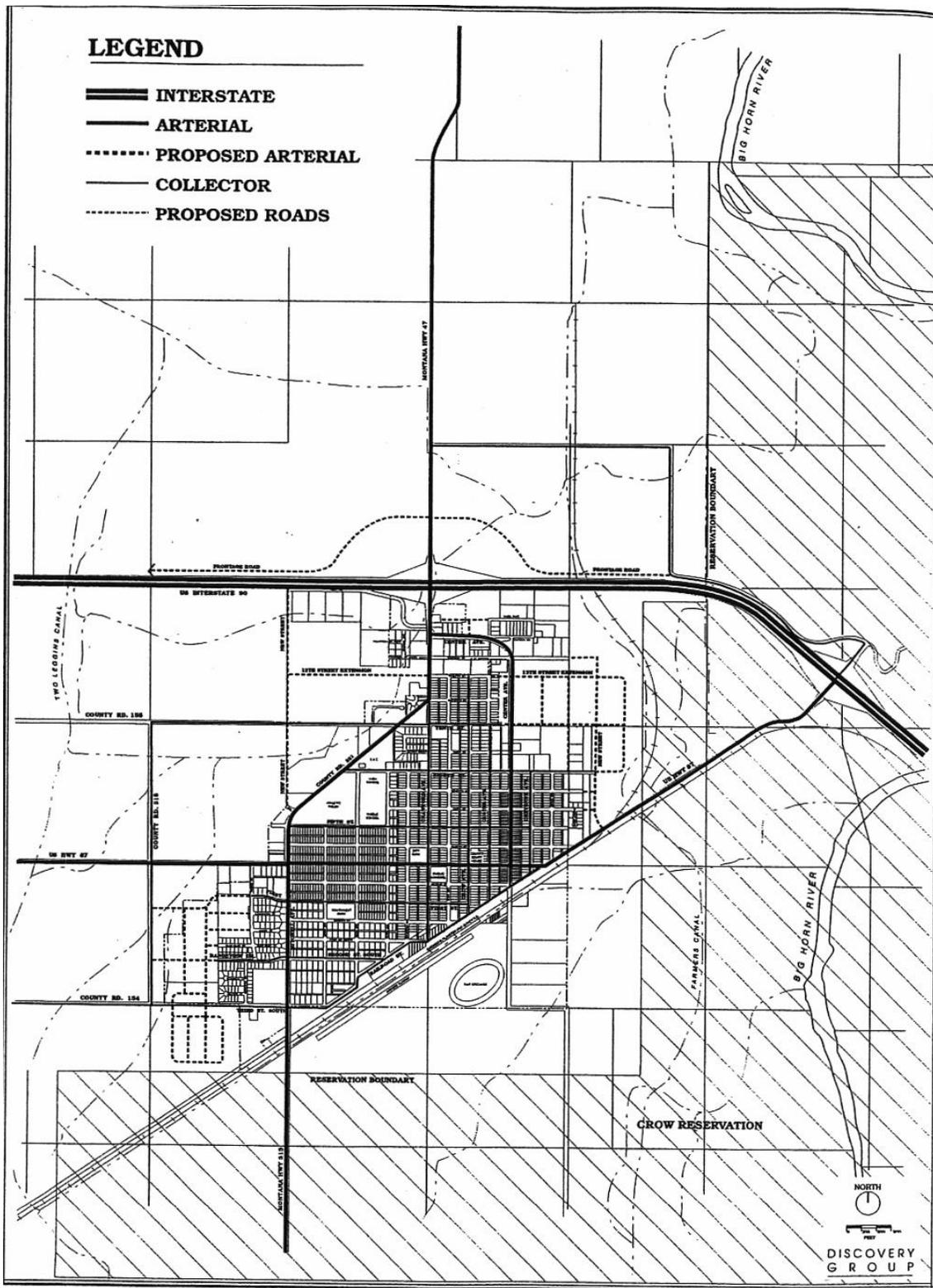
7. The City should not accept cul-de-sacs longer than 500 feet unless there are exceptional topographic features that would make a looped street or a shorter cul-de-sac unfeasible.

6.F. PRIORITY ARTERIAL AND COLLECTOR STREET SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

The City of Hardin Department of Public Works has been diligently upgrading the street system in accordance with the Street and Highway Master Plan prepared in 1986. This plan has served as a good guide for improvements and should continue to be followed as funding allows.

As the Two Rivers Industrial Site continues to grow and fill in, interest in the land to the west of Highway 47 will increase. At the time this land develops, Hardin must obtain arterial right-of-way widths. With the successful in-fill of the Two Rivers Industrial Site, Sugar Factory Road will grow into an arterial and will require widening as traffic increases. Highway 47 currently carries about 800 vehicles per day near the Industrial Park. Montana Department of Transportation has slated Highway 47 here for reconstruction based on a 20-year traffic volume expectation of 1000 vehicles per day. This does not include the traffic expected to be generated by the Industrial Park.¹ A complete traffic analysis along with various land use trip generation scenarios is included in the Master Plan of the Industrial Park.

¹ Hardin Industrial Park Master Plan, January 2006, Interstate Engineering, Inc.



HARDIN, MONTANA

Hardin Growth Management Plan 2009: TRAFFIC CIRCULATION

The following list of recommended improvements is a priority list of projects that have either not been fully implemented or represent traffic and circulation problems that have arisen since the preparation of the 1986 plan:

1. Preserving Collector Street Rights-of-Way in the Southwest Residential Neighborhood

The most important priority is for the City to require all landowners and subdividers to adhere to the Street and Highway Master Plan, particularly with respect to preserving sufficient right-of-way for the collector streets identified in the plan. All building permits should reflect the legal setbacks that would be required with the completion of the proposed collector streets.

The preservation of the right-of-way is particularly critical in the developing neighborhoods in the Southwest Planning Area. The rights-of-way for Rangeview Drive, South 2nd Street, 1st Street, and Heimat Road should be preserved. The concept map for development of this part of the City included in this Growth Management Plan illustrates a potential street alignment that would preserve the collector street corridors.

2. 13th or 12th Street Extension (East of Crawford Avenue)

13th Street has been mapped as a major east-west collector on nearly all previous planning documents. The street has recently been improved between Crawford and 14th Avenues (Center Avenue). As both the Northwest and Northeast Planning Areas develop, 13th Street should be extended west of Crawford Avenue and east of 14th Avenue (Center Avenue) as shown on the Circulation Plan Map in this report

The recent construction of the Far West has put into question the feasibility of extending 13th Street west of Crawford Avenue. An alternative to extending 13th Street would be the designation of 12th Street as the major east-west collector serving the Northwest Planning Area. This approach would require the acquisition of the right-of-way west of Crawford Avenue. The parcel needed for right-of-way is presently for sale as a commercial development site.

3. Reconstruction of the Mitchell and Crawford Avenue Intersection

The Mitchell and Crawford Avenue intersection at the Town Pump is a dangerous “Y” intersection with poor traffic visibility. The intersection should be reconstructed so that Crawford Avenue intersects Mitchell Avenue at a 90-degree angle, as shown in the Street and Highway Master Plan prepared by Leigh, Scott & Cleary. This is a high priority improvement due to the safety hazard that is currently present at this intersection.

4. Intersection Improvement at Crawford and 14th Street (Center Avenue)

The intersection of Crawford Avenue and 14th Street (Center Avenue) is the busiest intersection in the City and is the “point of entry” for most visitors to Hardin. Most

residents of Hardin believe the intersection is a safety hazard. It is also very confusing for out-of-town visitors to find the way into the Downtown area from the 1-90/Highway 47 Interchange.

At the request of the City, the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) has conducted a traffic study to determine if current conditions warrant intersection improvements, such as channelization or signals. At this time, MDT has not found sufficient traffic volume or accident rates to warrant State-financed improvements.

The City has the option of locally financing improvements using either general revenues or special assessments against commercial property owners in the highway commercial district.

Using local financing sources, the City should implement the channelization plan drawn by Leigh, Scott & Cleary as part of the Street and Highway Maser Plan. Signalization at this time is probably not necessary but should be considered as traffic volumes increase.

5. Adopt an Access Control Ordinance for Arterial Streets

A major contributor to congestion and unsafe traffic movement in Hardin is an excessive number of driveway entrances onto the arterial streets, particularly on Crawford Avenue between Mitchell and Interstate 90. The City and Big Horn County should adopt an Access Control Ordinance that limits the number of driveway entrances. Because of the irregular jurisdictional boundaries the requirements would need to be applied to areas both within and outside the City limits in order to be effective.

The following corridors require access controls:

- 14th Street (Center Avenue)--Crawford Avenue to 10th Street
- Crawford Avenue /Mitchell Avenue (Highway 313)--Interstate 90 to RR
- Third Street--east City limits to Interstate 90 Interchange

6.G. HIGHWAY SIGNAGE AND ENTRY FEATURE RECOMMENDATIONS

Interstate 90 Signage

The City should petition the Montana Highway Department to install signs on Interstate 90 for both eastbound and westbound traffic indicating the exits for “Historic Downtown Hardin.” The signs should be standard historical marker signs, which typically have a brown background.

Entry Features

The Chamber of Commerce should install landscaped entry signs indicating the direction to “Historic Downtown Hardin.” The signs should be designed to reflect the Historic

Downtown Hardin logo and should match the colors and design themes used in the Downtown streetscape furnishings. Consistent use of the same sign design, logoture and lettering is extremely important in this type of promotion.

The entry feature signs should be located at the following locations:

- 14th (Center Avenue) and Crawford Avenue (faced toward southbound traffic coming from I-90)
- Mitchell Avenue (Highway 313) and Third Street South (facing toward northbound traffic on Highway 313)
- Third Street and Railway Street (facing toward westbound traffic coming from I-90)

6.H. TWO RIVERS TIFD MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES¹

The old Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad used to serve the sugar factory area and all the way north to Custer. About two miles of that rail line is still there, cutting up through the center of the Industrial Site. What remains is owned by Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad. It is a part of the Two Rivers planning that Rocky Mountain Ethanol will purchase and reconstruct the remaining spur for production service to and from the ethanol facility. The owners of the latter plan to build a large circular rail siding to the west of the rail spur for storage and loading/unloading of complete train units, and this facility will be available to other industries in the site.

¹ Hardin Industrial Park Master Plan, January 2006, Interstate Engineering, Inc.

7. UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC FACILITIES

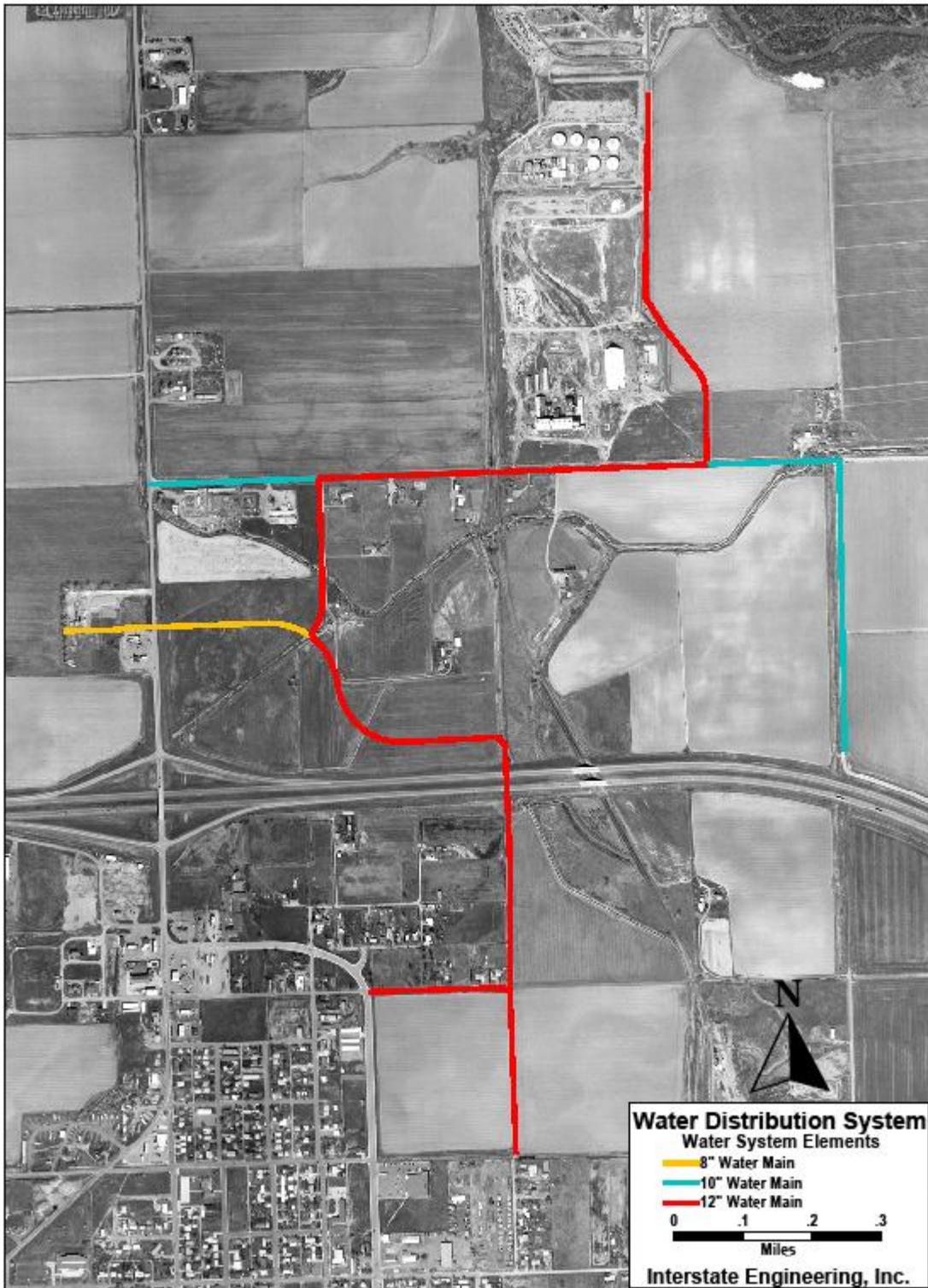
The City's 1986 Comprehensive Master Plan (Volumes I through V) remains the basic long-range facility planning document. The following section identifies priority projects that have either not been fully implemented or are projects that address new problems that have arisen since the completion of the 1986 plan. The City Public Works Department has the ability to produce the maps herein at larger scale.

No attempt is made in this Plan to reproduce the utility improvements the City has completed in the Two Rivers Industrial Site, because the area has a separate Master Plan already adopted by the City. At some time in the future when more planning dollars are available, a comprehensive community-wide planning document can be prepared.

A. STORMWATER AND DRAINAGE MANAGEMENT

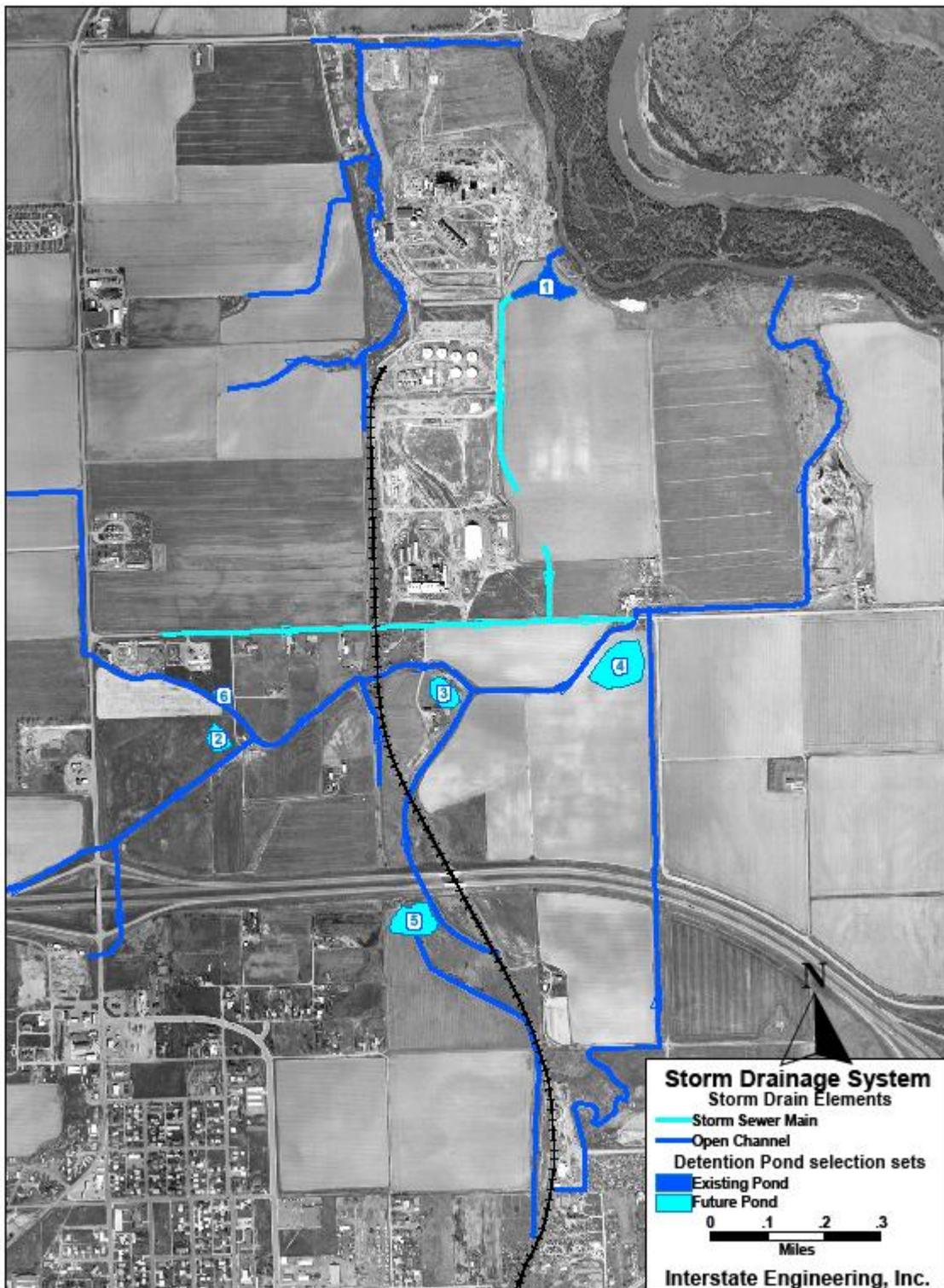
The Storm Drainage, Erosion Control & Flood Mitigation Master Plan prepared in 1986 by Big Horn Engineering & Surveying is the basic stormwater and drainage facility planning report of the City of Hardin. The recommendations and prioritization of projects listed below supplement the findings of the 1986 report and are based on recent development trends and facility needs that have not been fully addressed since the completion of the 1986 plan.

A key problem identified in the Storm Drainage, Erosion Control & Flood Mitigation Master Plan is the lack of a unified agency responsible for stormwater and drainage management in the Hardin area. Many of the severe drainage problems in Hardin result from drainage and irrigation practices outside the City and require coordination between rural and urban interests.



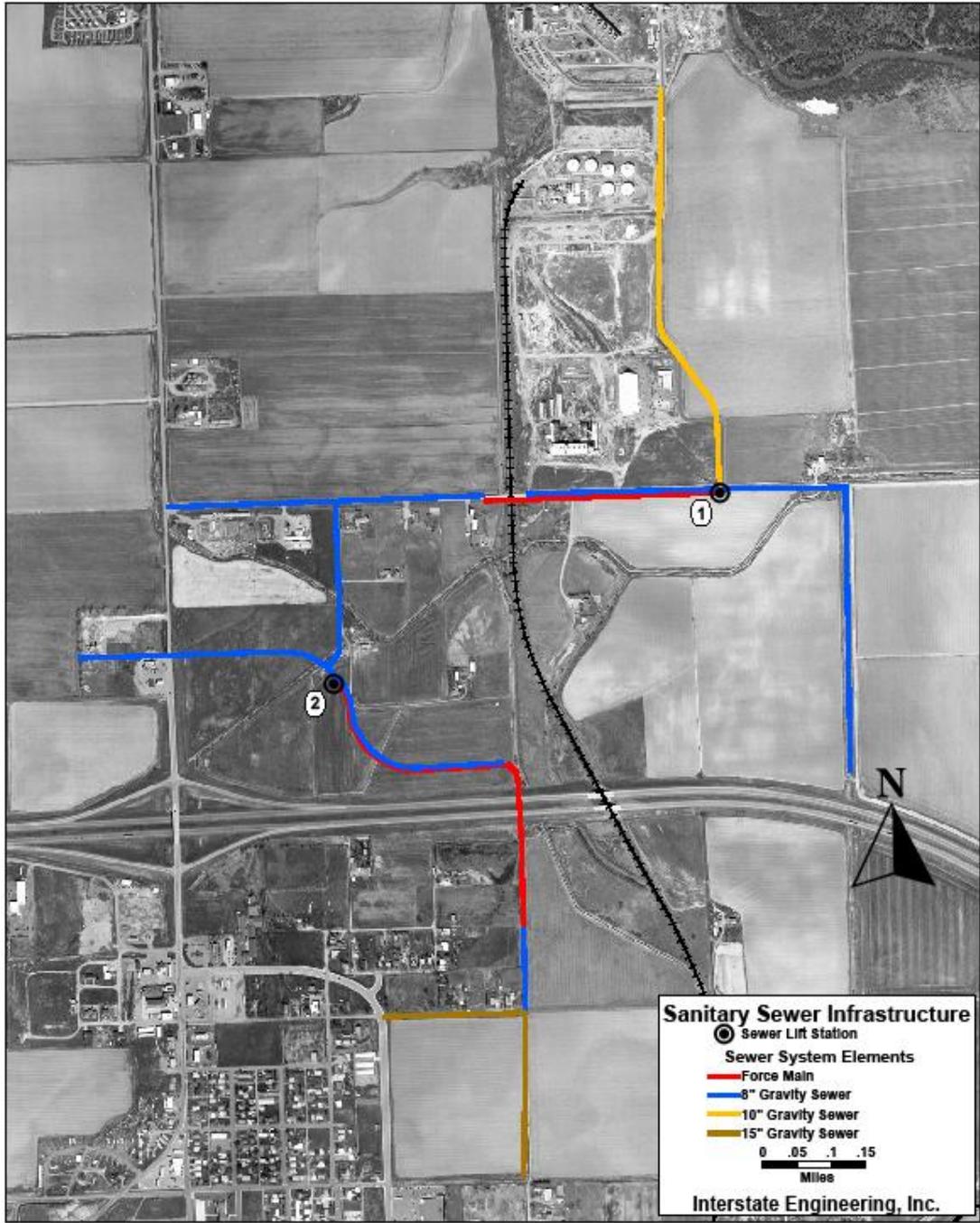
Waterlines



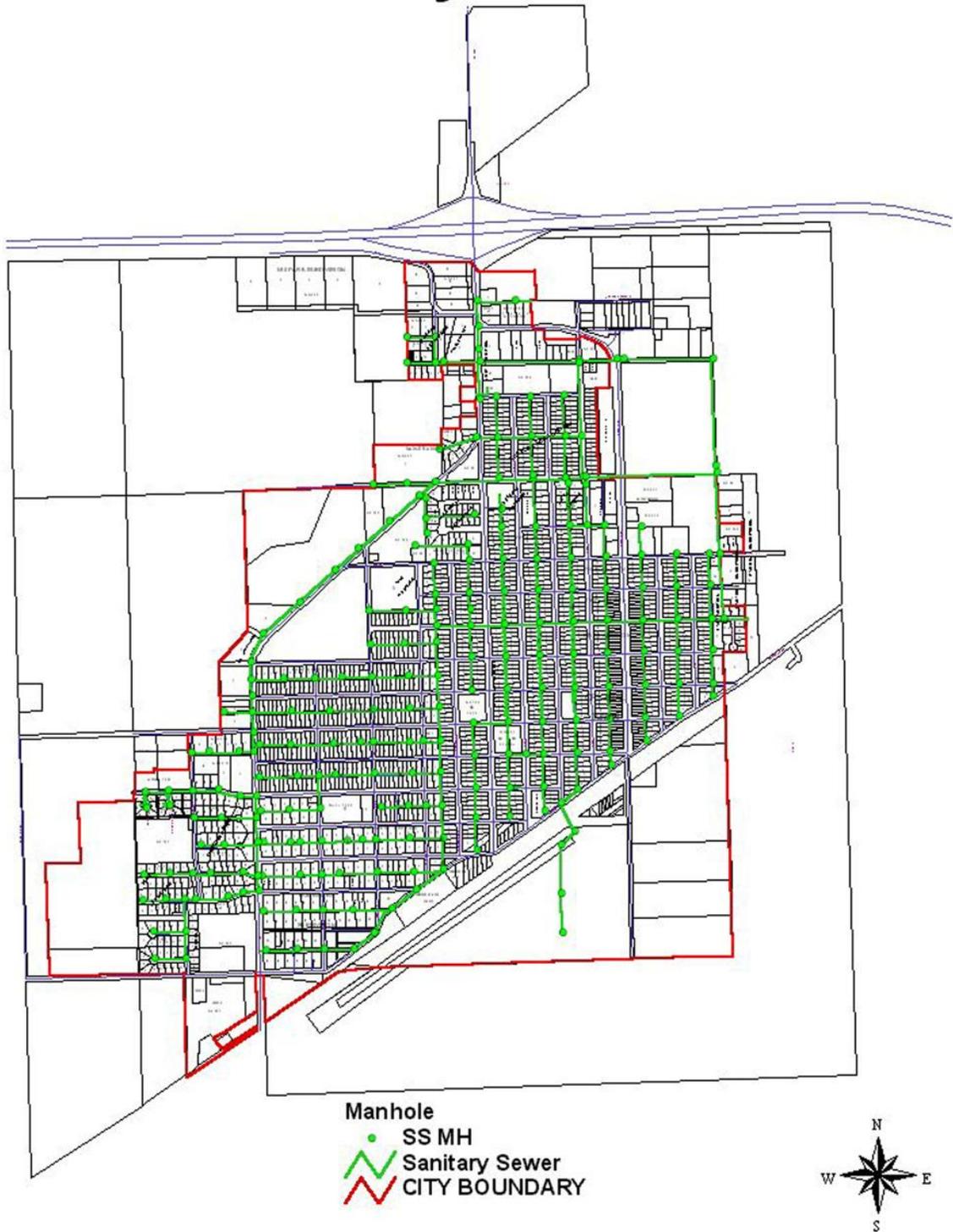


Storm Sewer





Sanitary Sewer



In the absence of effective regional drainage controls, the City needs to place greater emphasis on preserving and maintaining stormwater detention or retention basins in or near the City and reserving sufficient channels for efficient movement of stormwater through the City. The best opportunities for reservation of stormwater storage areas are at the time land is platted or surveyed into lots. The City needs to adopt local stormwater regulations so that these reservations are a required part of the platting process.

Where problems already exist or where there is a need for a basin-wide stormwater facility, the City should consider creating Special Improvement Districts (SID's) to finance stormwater management and drainage facility improvements.

Stormwater Management Priority Projects

1. Coordinate the control and maintenance of major culverts and drainage ditches and flood channels through drainage districts.
2. Adopt a City Stormwater Management Ordinance.
3. Construct stormwater detention basins as recommended in the Storm Drainage, Erosion Control & Flood Mitigation Master Plan.
4. Reserve the natural wetland and floodplain west of Mitchell Avenue, across from the Community Activity Center and High School Athletic Fields, as a permanent stormwater storage basin. The site should also function as a wetland/conservancy educational project for the school system. This will become more important as this area develops residentially with new City growth.

B. PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY AND SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM

The Water and Sanitary Sewer Master Plan prepared by Big Horn Engineering & Surveying in 1986 remains the City's long-range planning document for the municipal sanitary sewer and public water supply systems, particularly with respect to facility upgrades and design issues. The recommendations in this section refer primarily to financing policies and service areas.

Hardin's water collection and treatment facilities are closely monitored by the City and by agencies such as State Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Such facilities constantly need upgrading because of new standards or technology or because of factors caused by increased demand or age. A Comprehensive Performance Evaluation was made of the water treatment plant in October 2007 by Montana Rural Water Systems (MRWS) and DEQ. Engineering consultant, Interstate Engineering, Inc. also prepared an

update of the Treatment Plant in June 2008. The consulting engineer estimated the costs of addressing his findings at \$680,000 to \$1,200,000.¹

In reviewing the current condition of the Water Treatment Plant, the Facility Operator notes the biggest needs are for more settling time for water from the intake--to reduce turbidity and sedimentation without overloading the present capacity of equipment; the need for additional, better filters, and the need for larger filters. The centrifugal pumps at the Water Plant need to be replaced with submersible ones. (The existing pumps are getting so old that replacement parts are impossible to get.) The Facility Operator also indicated that there are many more issues with the water treatment system than just the major ones listed here. He feels that not addressing these needs now will greatly impact the City's ability to deal with future growth.²

A key issue with respect to public water and sanitary sewer service is clarifying the policy with respect to expanding the service areas. Because of the physical conditions of high ground water and poor groundwater quality, it is desirable to minimize the use of private septic systems and private wells for domestic water use. Most of the Hardin area is rated as having "severe limitations" for private septic systems in the Big Horn County Soil Survey.

The City has received numerous requests for utility service extension. As a public policy, the City has not extended service unless the serviced properties annex or enter into a waiver agreement with respect to opposition to future annexations. With the exception of connections allowed at the time easements were granted for the Westside water storage facility, all utility extensions have been financed by the private property owners or developers.

The reason for the policy requiring annexation is to preserve and enhance the tax base of the City. Without annexation, the City's tax base will deteriorate, and the City will be unable to continue to support needed services and facility expansions. This principal applies to nearly every city. Where immediate annexation is not feasible due to lack of contiguity to the City and intervening unincorporated areas, waivers of objection to annexation should continue to be required.

The financing policy requiring private financing of water and sewer line extensions is also the only equitable means to finance utility service line extensions. It would be neither fair nor practical for the City to expect existing taxpayers living within the City to shoulder the burden for extensions. The costs of these improvements should be borne by the benefiting property owners and/or developers, unless State or Federal funding is made available to address specific problem areas or unless a tax incremental financing district is created to provide services to prospective industries.

With both of these policies in mind, the City should nevertheless anticipate future service area expansion to accommodate new development, particularly in the planned industrial areas and the

¹ William G. Enright, PE, Interstate Engineering, Inc., Technical Memorandum No. 2, Update of Items Completed, Hardin Water Treatment Plant, June 4, 2008

² Tony Maxwell, Water Treatment Plant Supervisor, interview

1-90/Highway 47 interchange area. The City should actively encourage landowners in these areas to annex into the City.

Public Water and Sanitary Sewer Service Area Priorities

1. Continue to support the Two Rivers Industrial site by further extension of City services.
2. Provide for long-range development by extending utility services south of the BNSF Railroad tracks to serve the proposed South Hardin Industrial Park. *Note: Providing this area with sanitary sewer service will require a lift station.*
3. Work with residential developers as the area along Cemetery Road/VanZandt Road grows in response to the development of the new County Airport.

7.C. OTHER PUBLIC AND SEMIPUBLIC FACILITIES

City Hall, Water Utility, and City Garage

The municipal administrative and public safety facilities are concentrated in the vicinity of the City Hall on the east side of the Downtown district. In the Downtown Plan this area is referred to as Hardin Municipal Center. The City should continue to locate municipal facilities into this area. Having clustered municipal and other public services is efficient from an administrative perspective and provides better citizen service. Maintaining these facilities Downtown also helps maintain the customer base for Downtown businesses.

There is ample area in the vicinity of the existing City Hall to accommodate the City's future building expansion and parking needs.

New Fire Station Construction



The City should proceed with construction, as needed, of a new fire station on the property acquired for this purpose on the northeast corner of 5th Street and Cheyenne Avenue. The site of the existing Fire Department facility should be reserved for future City Hall expansion and/or municipal parking.

Airport

The current Hardin Airport is owned by Big Horn County and located Fairgrounds south of the BNSF Railroad tracks east of Center Avenue on 64 acres of ground. Hangers,

Fairground structures, above ground fuel storage tanks, and grain elevators have all encroached on the airspace of the Airport.

The pavement at the Airport was chip sealed in 1986. Runway 04/22 is approximately 60 feet wide and 3,542 feet long with a gross weight rating of 15,000 pounds for single wheel and 23,000 pounds for dual wheel configurations. Displaced thresholds consist of 224 feet on Runway 04—without lighting--and 168 feet on Runway 22. (The information concerning both the existing and planned airports is taken from Morrison-Maierle's *Hardin Airport Relocation, Environmental Assessment Report, December 2006.*)

The Airport is classified by the Federal Aviation Commission (FAA) as Airport Reference Code (ARC) A-1 but does not meet those standards. Issues that affect the rating—and the non-compliance with FAA Standards include, but are not limited to, inadequate setbacks from the centerline of the runway for everything from buildings to power poles, lack of adequate taxiways and the locations of the existing taxiways, and grass growing on the runways. Recently a new cell tower was constructed which enters the Airport's Horizontal Surface Zone, an FAA-required, protected airspace. Furthermore, any future expansion of this site is restricted by existing facilities and roadways.

The Airport is an uncontrolled facility for Visual Flight Rules (VFR) use only and is mainly used by area agriculture, small business, and some pleasure flying. Existing amenities at the Airport include a lighted wind indicator, airport beacon (currently out of service indefinitely), Unicom (122.80), and a non-standard runway-edge lighting system. Among the ten sites reviewed by the airport engineering consultants, the existing Airport location is the worst. The closest airline carrier is at Billings' Logan International Airport.

The *Environmental Assessment* for the new airport states:

“The need for development of a new airport is largely based on safety issues and not the need for additional capacity. Ultimate development of the airport will allow for a larger variety of aircraft resulting in potential increase in the number of operations. However, such an increase in operations without an increase in local economic drivers would likely be small so as to be negligible.

Big Horn County desires to provide safe and adequate aviation services and facilities to serve the existing and future needs of the flying public as well as being able to accommodate the area's economic development and growth. The current airport location, with its numerous airspace obstructions, cannot meet that criteria.”

The new airport (the I-90/Fairview Cemetery Site) is planned approximately 2.5 miles west of where Highway 47 crosses I-90 and will be at an elevation of 3050 feet above sea level. The primary runway (75-foot wide by 4,950-foot long) will be a little less than a

quarter mile south of and parallel to I-90. It will provide an aircraft turn-around area at each runway end (or partial parallel taxiway), aircraft parking apron, runway and taxiway edge lights, airport beacon, Precision Approach Path Indicator, wildlife perimeter fence, hangar access taxi lane, and entrance road—all in compliance with FAA Standards. The new airport will be designed to handle small airplanes with less than ten passenger seats. No crosswind runway is planned; the planned runway will catch 93.45 percent of the wind.

St. Vincent Health Care/Hardin Clinic

The Hardin Clinic, located on the southwest side of Hardin, needed additional land area for clinic expansion and parking. A proposed expansion area consisting of the eastern 140 feet of South Park was approved by voter referendum.

At the time the clinic facility is built, a sufficient landscape buffer should be constructed on the west side of the parking area to buffer the remaining portion of South Park from the clinic and parking areas. A chain link fence separates the Clinic property from the ice skating areas.

8. PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES

The City's park system consists of three developed park sites, a partially developed playground, and an undeveloped site at the corner of Mitchell Avenue and 10th Street used for materials storage.

The Community Activity Center (CAC) is a state-of-the-art School District-owned community recreational facility with an Olympic-sized indoor swimming pool, wading pool, hot tub, weight room, and running track. This facility is exceptional for a community the size of Hardin. There are approximately two acres north of the CAC that are an improved open space with landscaping and pedestrian paths.

The High School and Middle School Athletic Fields and Tennis Courts and the Kid's World Playground at the Primary School on Third Street supplement the City's recreational resources.

The Big Horn County Fairgrounds located south of Downtown Hardin contains two baseball diamonds and ample parking.

8.A. COMMUNITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD PARK NEEDS

Park Service Standards

Recommended park service standards for smaller communities typically range from 8 to 12 acres of improved parkland per 1,000 population. There are two broad categories of parks—neighborhood parks, which serve a specific residential neighborhood, and community parks, which serve the entire community.

Generally, neighborhood parks are equipped with playground equipment and enough room for informal field games. Neighborhood parks typically have a service area with a radius of 1/4 to 1/2 mile. Community parks usually have improved athletic facilities, play field, basketball courts, and tennis courts. Generally, community parks have a service area with a radius of one to two miles. With the inclusion of the athletic facilities at the High School and Middle School and the Big Horn County Fairgrounds, the City meets the general service standards in terms of overall park and recreational facility acreage.

The only existing neighborhood in Hardin lacking adequate neighborhood park access is the residential neighborhood east of Center Avenue. This residential neighborhood is relatively small and it would be difficult to justify a full-sized municipal neighborhood park of two to six acres in this part of the City. However, as vacant lots become available, this neighborhood would be a suitable location for a small neighborhood playground with some open play area and playground equipment. Such a neighborhood playground would

be a good project for either service organizations such as Kiwanis or neighborhood parent groups.

Future Neighborhood Parks

Additional neighborhood parks may be needed as the Southwest Planning Area, located between Highway 87 and County Road 155, and the Northwest Planning Area, located north of County Road 155, as these areas are more fully developed as residential neighborhoods. The acreage for each of these neighborhood parks should be approximately four acres.

Typically, these types of neighborhood recreational facilities are acquired through land dedications at the time of platting. State and local subdivision law require each subdivider to dedicate a specific amount of land per dwelling or an equivalent fee-in-lieu-of-land to finance future park improvements. Many communities are also charging additional “developer impact fees” to finance future neighborhood park improvements.

8.B. SPECIFIC PARK IMPROVEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

The following specific park recommendations should be considered by the City:

Custer Park (City Park)

Custer Park is an excellent central park that is fully improved and approximately 2.1 acres in size. When combined with the Kid’s World Playground and the facilities at South Park, the central residential neighborhood is well-served.

Custer Park was dedicated on June 25, 1921, the 45th Anniversary of the Battle of the Little Bighorn. The granite monument has a bronze tablet on one side bearing General Custer’s military record. On the other side is a bronze medallion bearing his likeness. Montana Governor Joseph Dixon gave the dedication address. Other notables present were 7th Cavalry Veterans—including General Godfrey and Custer’s Crow Scouts—along with the former mayor of Monroe, Michigan (Custer’s home town). While Hardin was eulogizing General Custer, Monroe dedicated a bronze of his military record for his equestrian statue on the same day. The dedication was a huge undertaking for the City of Hardin, which had been founded 14 years earlier. Adjacent Third Street was once part of the Custer Battlefield Highway which originated in Omaha, Nebraska and ended in Glacier National Park.¹

The major improvements needed at Custer Park are modernization of the playground equipment to meet current recreational equipment standards.

¹ Carla Colstad, former member, Hardin Centennial Committee; correspondence

South Park (Southwest Park)

South Park is a 3.80-acre neighborhood park serving the Highland Park Addition and Southwest Addition part of the City. South Park contains playground equipment, picnic facilities, decorative security lighting, restrooms, and ice skating area.

St. Vincent Healthcare has purchased approximately 0.86 acres of the park fronting on Miles Avenue for a proposed clinic and parking. The remaining 2.94-acre park will be of sufficient size to serve the neighborhood, providing the facilities are well-designed and maintained.

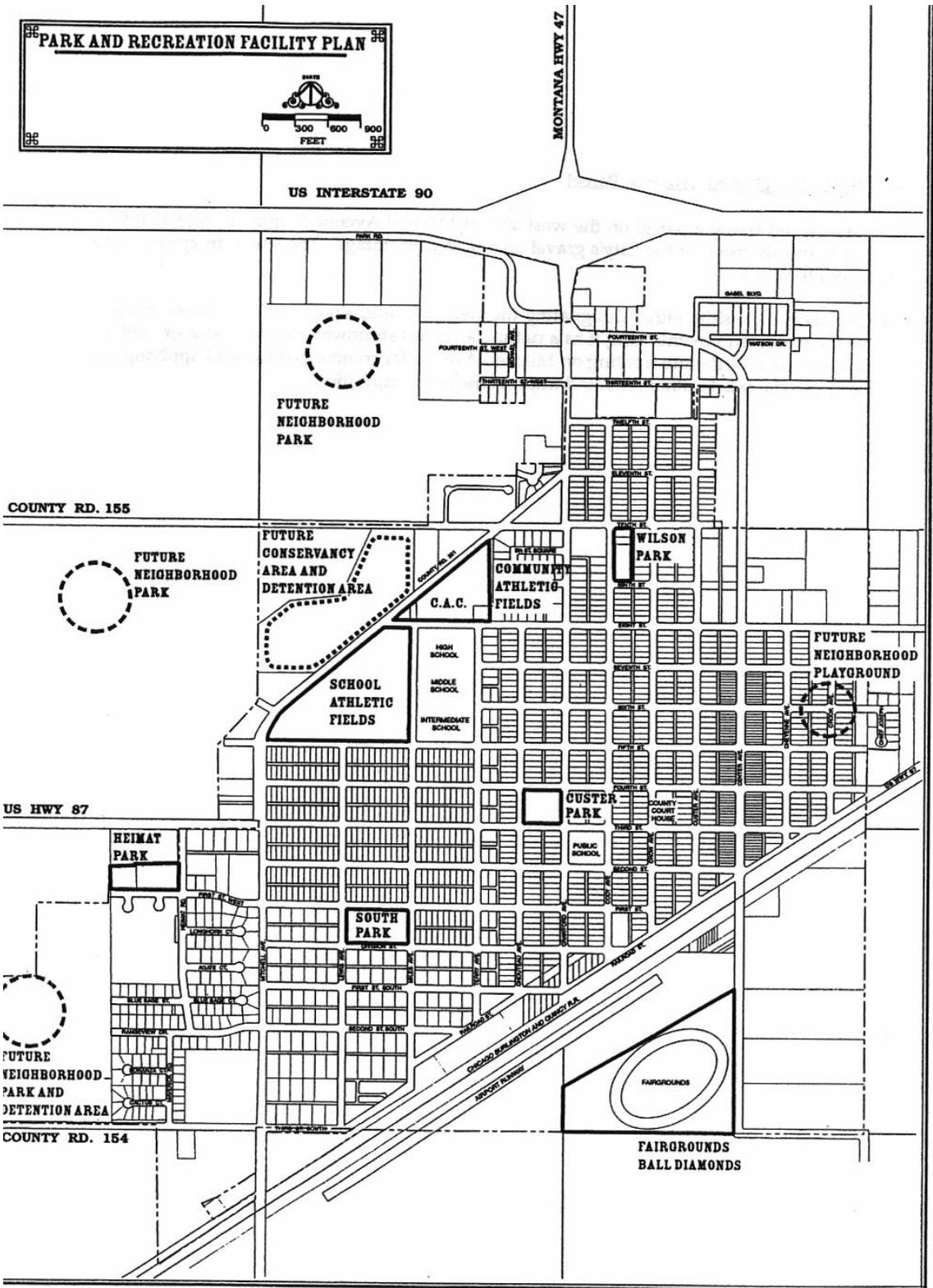
Other recommended improvements to South Park include installation of sidewalks on First Street and Lewis Avenue and modernizing the playground equipment.

Heimat Park

Heimat Park is a 2.25-acre neighborhood park with an additional 1.31-acre parcel to the west planned for future park improvements. The park adjoins land planned for a future extension of First Street westward. Existing improvements at Heimat Park include playground equipment and landscaping. Most of the park is maintained as a mowed open area.

Recommended improvements include planting a row of buffer trees along the north property line and installing sidewalks along Heimat Avenue. Sidewalk should be installed along First Street when it is extended west.

PARK AND RECREATION FACILITY PLAN



HARDIN • MONTANA

Hardin Growth Management Plan 2009: PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES

The lowland property to the west of Heimat Park should be acquired as a stormwater management area and maintained as either open mowed areas or a natural area.

Wilson Park

Wilson Park is a 1.5-acre neighborhood park with wooden playground equipment and a basketball court serving the neighborhood northwest of Downtown Hardin. No improvements are needed in this park.

Community Activity Center

The open space area to the north of the CAC. The low area at the north end of the triangle should be maintained in native vegetation as a stormwater storage area. A split rail fence, matching the fence around other school property on Mitchell Avenue, should be installed around the CAC open space area. A walking path, picnic tables, and trees are in place.

Proposed West Side Conservancy Area

The large natural wetland and floodplain area on the west side of Mitchell Avenue across from the CAC and the High School Athletic Fields should be maintained as a conservancy park and outdoor environmental education laboratory. The area needs to be reserved for stormwater storage and could serve multiple functions as a recreation/educational/stormwater storage area. The area should be accessed by nature trails and boardwalks and maintained in natural wetland vegetation.

9. IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

The City will need to consider a variety of implementation measures to incorporate the recommendations included in this Growth Management Plan and its Goals and Objectives. As with all municipal plans of this nature, implementation will not occur immediately. Many of the recommendations are long-range objectives that will be implemented incrementally as development occurs and as funding is available. Many of the recommendations in this document require coordination between multiple units of government and between the public and private-sectors.

9.A. MUNICIPAL ORDINANCES AND POLICIES

The City's main role in implementing the land use and development recommendations of this plan are through developing appropriate land use regulations and ordinances, so that as development occurs it will contribute to the overall well-being of the community.

Most of the administrative responsibility for implementing these regulations and policies currently rests with the Hardin-Big Horn County City-County Planning Board.

9.B. INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION AND ADMINISTRATION

A key issue that the City of Hardin and Big Horn County need to address in the near future is achieving more effective coordination in the areas of land use and development regulation. While the City-County Planning Board serves as the City's planning agency with respect to administering the zoning and subdivision ordinance, the ultimate authority with respect to approvals lies with the Common Council.

If the City-County Planning Board continues to function as the primary planning body for the City, the City staff, specifically the Zoning Administrator/Building Inspector, the Superintendent of Public Works, and the Community and Economic Development Director, need to function as support staff to the Planning Board. Likewise, the County Sanitarian, who helps administer the Subdivision Regulations, needs to closely coordinate his efforts with City officials.

While at a personal level there appears to be excellent cooperation and communication between individual staff members, the job descriptions and official responsibilities of each of these officials do not reflect the level of coordination required. In most communities the size of Hardin, City departments or appropriate staff provide report analysis to the Planning Board on all significant zoning and land division applications to assure that the Planning Board makes its decisions based on sound technical input. This practice should be adopted in Hardin and may require the Planning Board Secretary or other staff to request review of zoning, subdivision, and similar growth or change development applications much in the same way the County Sanitarian/Subdivision Coordinator presently requests input for new subdivisions in the whole County area.

9.C. LAND USE REGULATION AND ORDINANCE CHANGES

In addition to administrative coordination, there are a number of specific municipal ordinance changes that the City should consider to modernize the ordinances and bring them into compliance with MCA 76-1-601 through 76-1-606, the State-mandated growth policy laws. The following are specific ordinance recommendations that the City should consider to implement this Growth Management Plan.

1. The Zoning Ordinance needs substantial revision to bring it up to modern standards. As an alternative to piece-meal amendment of the existing Zoning Ordinance, the City should consider adopting the Model Municipal Zoning Ordinance prepared by the Montana Department of Commerce, with modifications to fit local situations in Hardin. This model is technically strong and meets all of the Montana statutory standards.

The Zoning Ordinance needs specific amendments or new language in the following areas:

a. The City and County need to establish the extra-territorial jurisdictional area for zoning around the City. State statute allows extra-territorial zoning administration for third class cities such as Hardin to regulate, with the County's permission, zoning out one mile from its municipal limits. The City already does this but not to the full extent. Exploration of zoning enforcement in the area east of the City on the Reservation should also be explored with the Crow Tribe.

b. The City needs to appoint a Board of Adjustment that will serve as an appeals board for disputed zoning issues; criteria for determining "hardship" should be incorporated in the appeals process. The City-County Planning Board can act as a Board of Adjustment if so designated and if the membership thereof complies with statute. The City Council may also want to limit the jurisdiction of such Board of Adjustment to dimensional or non-land use issues, and reserve the latter to itself with recommendations only coming from the Planning Board.

c. Creation of a new Rural Residential (RR) District that would allow homeowners to maintain horses and other large domestic animals on large City lots. The Rural Residential District should require a minimum lot size of three acres, plus one acre for each additional large animal kept on the premises. *(For example, a homeowner wishing to maintain three horses would require three acres for the first animal and two additional acres for second and third horse.)*

d. Requirements for commercial and industrial yards and setbacks should be included in the Zoning Ordinance.

e. The Zoning Ordinance should establish site plan review provisions for all commercial, industrial, and multifamily developments.

f. The commercial sign requirements should be made more restrictive to reduce the "sign clutter" in the C-2 Highway Commercial District.

g. Historic preservation design guidelines should be incorporated into the regulations for a "core historic area" in Historic Downtown Hardin.

- h. Multifamily residential uses should be excluded from the C-2 Highway Commercial District.
- i. Conditional use provisions should be incorporated as a means of allowing conditional approvals for certain specific uses that have nuisance potential.
- j. The City should work with the County to establish a Community Entryway Zone providing for setbacks or other control of billboards and other unsightly development along the interstate beyond the one-mile jurisdiction out from the City. The City and County should encourage landowners to grant open-space easements that would keep the view along such an entryway open and in current ranching and farming uses. (Such easements may provide tax incentives for donors.)
- k. The City and the County should adopt an ordinance to control new communication tower expansion with a provision that new cell towers can not be located within one mile of existing cell towers. The use of the interim zoning provisions in State statute would be useful in this instance.
- l. Modify the existing Zoning Ordinance to encourage development near existing services, in or adjacent to the City, and on less productive land and in consideration of the existing flood plain in Hardin and those areas of wet soils or surface water; also encourage cluster development, affordable housing, landscaping, and energy conservation. Discourage strip commercial development and development in undesirable locations on prime agricultural land, wildlife habitat areas, and on floodplains and wetlands.

2. The subdivision review area around Hardin in which proposed developments are reviewed is The City-County Planning Board Jurisdictional Area is the land area around Hardin in which the Big Horn County Commissioners have designated the City-County Planning Board to review new developments such as subdivisions. The Planning Board reviews such developments, holds public hearings if necessary, and makes recommendations to the appropriate local government. The Jurisdictional Area extends to the Reservation boundary on the east and south, approximately two miles north (specifically including Sections 8, 9, 10, 11 and the west ½ of 12), approximately three miles west (specifically including Sections 8, 17, 20, and 29), and includes all of Sections 28 and 29 to the southwest. This is also the area to which the mill levy is applied for planning funds.

3. All subdivisions proposed in the City-County Planning Board Jurisdictional Area are reviewed per 76-3-604 MCA, must be in compliance with this Growth Management Plan, and in accordance herewith as per 76-1-606 MCA.

4. The City has adopted subdivision regulations based on the State model thereof—modified to address. The biggest issue in subdivision administration is the lack of coordinate processing of subdivision applications; a situation complicated by the subdivisions outside the Hardin Planning Jurisdictional Area being administered by the County Health Department, the area within the City being administered by the City Public Works Director, and the area outside the City but in the Planning Jurisdictional Area being in a kind of a grey area. Add to this the fact that, every two years, the applicable laws change from the State Legislature. It should be noted that both the County Health Department and the City Public Works are trying hard to address the

coordination issue. A planning consultant currently advises the two governments involved on the subdivision review process.

Nobody likes to do subdivision administration because it is complicated, somewhat exacting, and can get local governments in a lot of trouble if not done properly. Two areas are especially important. One is that standards for development, such as paved roads, sidewalks, central water and sewer systems, etc., must be enforced uniformly. The second is the requirement for enforcing the first problem. Currently a subdivision improvements agreement is being used to list all required improvements, who is responsible for construction thereof, when the improvements are to be constructed—and when. The only enforcing authority short of court that local governments have in applying standards is the withholding the filing of the final plat (and therefore the transfer of any land in the subdivision) until all its requirements are met. The only flexibility to encourage proper installation of improvements is allowing delays in construction (such as might be based on number of houses sold), requiring the initial landowners to sign a waiver that he/she will not protest any improvement districts being formed by the City to pave the roads (for example), and the posting of performance bonds by the developer guaranteeing the promises made by the subdivider or approval conditions required by the City.

5. The City needs to adopt Access Control Restrictions for Collector and Arterial Streets, as recommended in the 1986 Street and Highway Master Plan.

6. The City should adopt a Stormwater Management Manual and Stormwater Management Ordinance as recommended in the 1986 Storm Drainage, Erosion Control and Flood Mitigation Master Plan. The Master Plan recommends adoption of the City of Billings Stormwater Manual as a model.

**GOALS AND OBJECTIVES--
IMPLEMENTATION**

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	RESPONSIBILITY:		TOOLS:				TIMING:	
	CITY	COUNTY	ZONING	SUB REGS	GEN REVIEW	BLDG CODES	CIP	
1. Accomplish the collection, treatment, and disposal of wastes in a safe, efficient, economical, and nuisance-free manner.	X	X					X	CURRENT
2. Provide adequate facilities to permit the maintenance of necessary and efficient levels of emergency services.	X	X		X	X		X	CURRENT
2. Encourage the continual and orderly development of the wastewater treatment plant commensurate with the growth of sanitary and industrial waste requirements	X						X	CURRENT
3. Minimize pollution of air and water by industrial wastes.	X	X			X			CURRENT
4. Recognize the importance of agriculture to the economic base of Hardin.	X	X	X	X	X			CURRENT
5. Prevent the spread of blight and deterioration within existing residential areas and encourage the removal of all blighted and deteriorated structures within the planning area.	X	X				X		CURRENT/ I YEAR

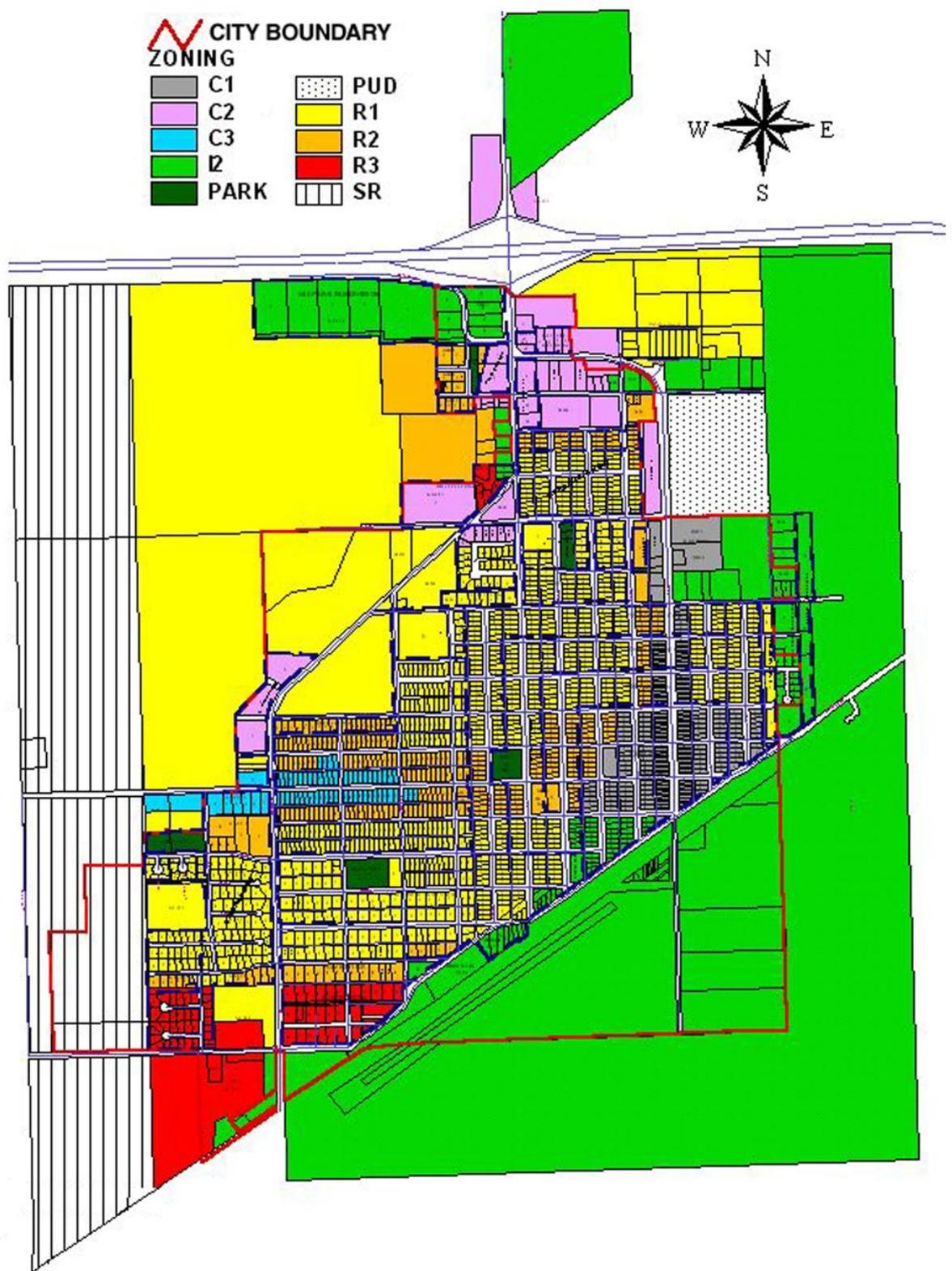
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	CITY	COUNTY	ZONING	SUB REGS	GEN REVIEW	BLDG CODES	CIP	TIMING
6. Discourage the indiscriminate placing of mobile homes on an isolated basis among inconsistent land uses and encourage well-designed and located mobile home parks.	X	X	X	X				CURRENT
7. Preserve the character of Hardin as a hard-working "western" community.	X	X	X			X		CURRENT
7. Require residential developers and land dividers to provide for the extension of streets and utilities to serve future adjoining development parcels.	X	X		X		X		CURRENT
8. Coordinate land use planning and development with Big Horn County.	X	X	X	X	X		X	CURRENT
9. Plan the west I-90 interchange area as a prime location for highway commercial businesses, such as service stations, restaurants, drive-ins, entertainment, and lodging.	X	X	X	X				CURRENT

10. Commercial areas characterized by proper location, adequate sites, sufficient parking and service areas, good design, and visual attractiveness.	X	X	X	X	X	X	CURRENT
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GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	CITY	COUNTY	ZONING	SUB REGS	GEN REVIEW	BLDG CODES	CIP	TIMING
11. Provide for the proper location of industrial uses according to the demand they generate for transportation, personnel housing, utilities, and public facilities.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	CURRENT
11. Provide a park and recreation system with a sufficient diversity of areas and facilities to serve effectively a population with varied characteristics, needs, and interest, and minimize incompatible uses bordering park and recreation areas.	X	X		X				CURRENT
12. Protect the agricultural economy by adequate control of leap-frogging urban development.	X	X	X	X				CURRENT
13. Plan school sites relatively free from such external disturbing factors as heavy traffic, excessive noise, offensive odors, and in-compatible land uses.	X	X	X		X	X	X	CURRENT
14. Promote cooperation and coordination between the City of Hardin and the Crow Indian Reservation.	X				X			1 YEAR

15. Support properly designed industrial subdivisions to reduce site costs, promote efficient use of land, and minimize any adverse effects upon adjacent non-industrial uses.	X	X		X	X	X	CURRENT
16. Neighborhood integrity should be maintained and not disturbed by the creation of additional traffic corridors or the intrusion of incompatible uses.	X	X	X	X			CURRENT
17. Coordinate between the planning and development of water resources and land use planning.	X	X	X	X	X		CURRENT
18. Promote economically viable uses of upper levels of downtown buildings.	X					X	1 YEAR
19. Encourage the development of underground utilities before the construction of streets and highways.	X			X			CURRENT
20. Develop residential areas having a full complement of public and private facilities adequate in quantity, quality, design, and location to meet the service and social needs of Hardin residents.	X			X		X	CURRENT

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	CITY	COUNTY	ZONING	SUB REGS	GEN REVIEW	BLDG CODES	CIP	TIMING
21. Develop a strong central core that functions as the administrative, financial, cultural, and major commercial center of the urban area and the surrounding region with adequate parking facilities and a functional transportation network designed to increase its efficiency.	X		X			X	X	CURRENT
21. Plan government administrative facilities, through location, design, and appearance to contribute to civic and community identities.	X	X			X	X	X	CURRENT
22. Discourage strip commercial development.	X	X	X	X		X		CURRENT
23. Protect existing and proposed industrial lands from encroachment by residential and other incompatible development.	X	X	X	X	X			CURRENT



9.D. ANNEXATION AND UTILITY EXTENSION POLICIES

The City should formally adopt policies that will clearly indicate the City's policies with respect to annexation and financing utility extensions. The issue of utility extensions is going to be an ongoing concern due to the physical conditions of the Hardin area that affect water quality and limit the use of private septic systems.

It is recommended that the City continue to require annexation, or signature of waivers of opposition to annexation, as a precondition to receiving municipal services. All utility line extensions should be financed by the property owners and/or developers unless a State or Federal grant is received for the expressed purpose of serving an area or the area is part of a tax incremental finance district formed to promote economic development

 The amendment of the Zoning Ordinance to create a Rural Residential District in the City which would allow homeowners to keep horses and other large animals would remove a major impediment to annexation which is keeping many landowners from coming into the City. (See *Zoning Ordinance recommendations on previous page.*)

9.E. BUILDING CODE INSPECTION AREA--EXPANSION

The City and County should cooperate on the expansion of the building code inspection program to include the zoning jurisdictional area.

10. EVALUATION AND REVISION PROVISIONS

After review and approval by the City-County Planning Board, this Growth Management Plan will be forwarded to the City and County governments for adoption. It is expected that such adoption will be completed by July 2002. Should local conditions change due to major development impacts, such as that from the construction of an electrical generation plant, this GMP will be reviewed for continued applicability or needed revision. If no such major development occurs that triggers review of this GMP, it will be reviewed again in January 2006.

11. INTERLOCAL GOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

Cooperation between Big Horn County and the City of Hardin is premised on the creation of the joint City-County Planning Board officially called The Hardin-Big Horn County City-County Planning Board. This cooperative arrangement allows the City of Hardin to review developments such as subdivisions in the jurisdictional area around the City and to make recommendations to either the City, if within the municipal limits, or to the County if within County lands.

For subdivisions, the basis for the local government's decision to approve, conditionally approve, or disapprove shall be based on whether the preliminary plat of the subdivision, its environmental impact assessment, the public hearing therefore, and City-County Planning Board's recommendation meets the requirements of the Subdivision Law; other issues may also be considered if the Planning Board or local governments feel the information is pertinent to making good decisions.

The local government shall issue written findings of fact after reviewing the impact on the following primary criteria, the information for which must be provided by the development being reviewed as part of the application process: agriculture, agricultural water user facilities, local services (such as the provision of water, sewer, police, education, and fire services), the natural environment, wildlife and wildlife habitat, and public health and safety. Further review specifics are detailed in the City-County Subdivision Regulations.

Through the Planning Board and local government public hearing and development information review process, the local governments must weigh the information provided, the recommendation of the Planning Board, and public hearing input. It must make its decision based on the cumulative evaluation of all information and its impact on the primary criteria listed in the preceding paragraph and for the public good. The public hearings for proposed subdivisions will be advertised in the local newspaper of general circulation in the County not less than 15 days prior to the date of the hearing. The subdivider, each property owner of record, and each purchaser under contract for deed of property immediately adjoining the land included in the plat must be notified of the hearing by registered or certified mail not less than 15 days prior to the date of the hearing.

At the public hearing, the City-County Planning Board will officially open the public hearing and ask for a presentation by the developers of the proposed subdivision; other proponents of the development may then also speak after identifying themselves along with their addresses for the record being kept by the Planning Board Secretary. After the proponents have spoken, any opponents will be allowed to speak, again after providing identification and address. After any opponents to a development have spoken, the developers have a right to rebuttal, after which the public hearing shall be closed. The Planning Board may then discuss the proposed development and decided whether to table their recommendation decision until the next regularly scheduled meeting, to approve, to approve subject to conditions, or to deny the development. Their decision must then be transferred in writing to the appropriate governing body and to the developers.

