

Community Plan

TOWN OF PHILPSBURG

Final Draft

April 29, 2022



Client Commitment



Empowered Employees



Quality Solutions

TOWN OF PHILIPSBURG

Community Plan

FINAL DRAFT
April 29, 2022

Prepared for the:
Town of Philipsburg

Prepared by:



TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	4
INTRODUCTION	7
POPULATION	8
ECONOMY	9
LOCAL SERVICES & PUBLIC FACILITIES	11
HOUSING	20
LAND USE	21
RESIDENT OUTREACH	35
ACTION PLAN	36
SOURCES OF INFORMATION	39

List of Maps

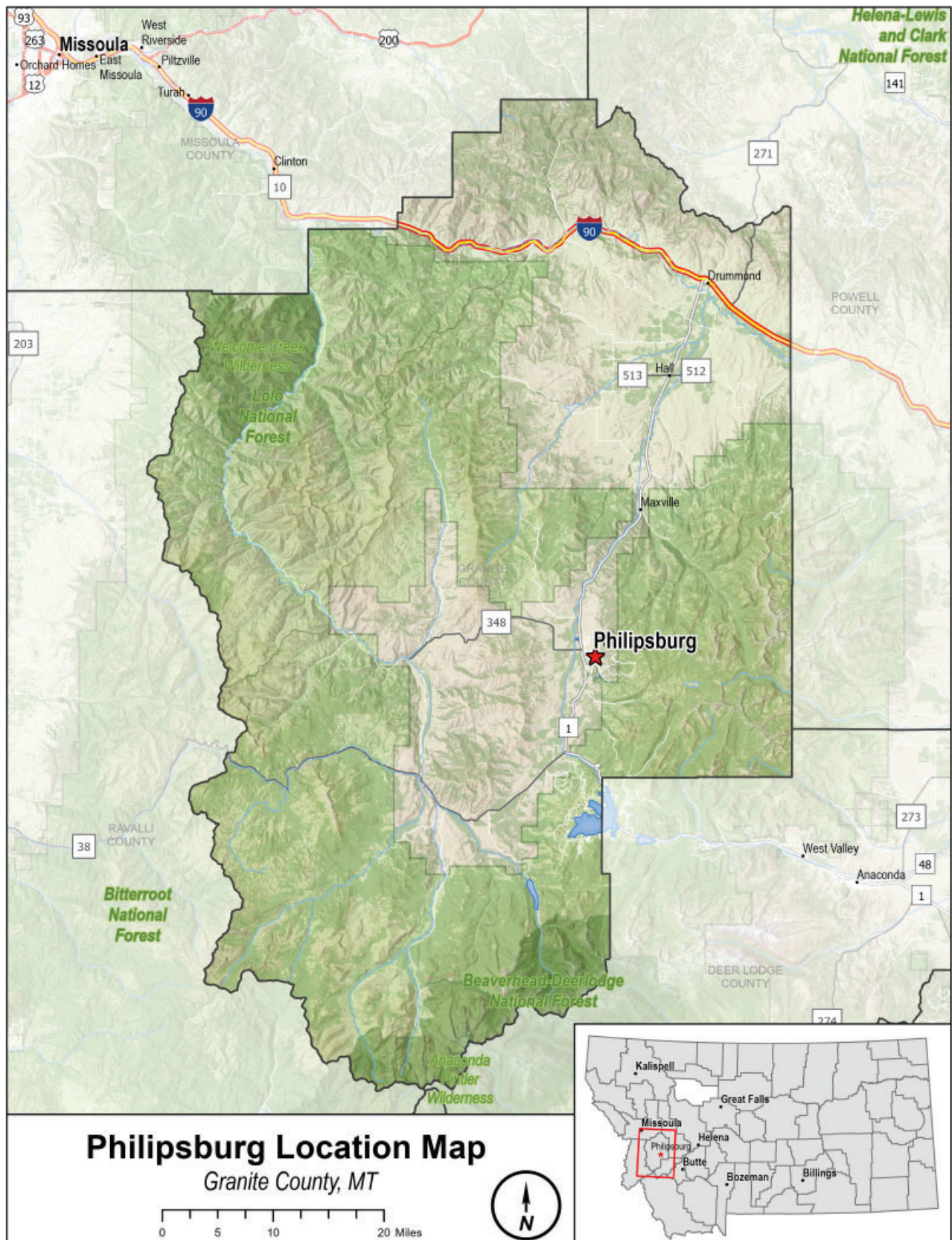
<i>Map 1 - Location of Philipsburg</i>	1
<i>Map 2 - Features of the Town</i>	13
<i>Map 3 - Trail System Around the Town</i>	15
<i>Map 4 - Town Sewer Lagoons</i>	17
<i>Map 5 - Town Water Source</i>	18
<i>Map 6 - Town Streets</i>	19
<i>Map 7 - Existing Land Use in the Town</i>	22
<i>Map 8 - Property Ownership</i>	23
<i>Map 9 - Gravel Pits in and Near the Town</i>	32
<i>Map 10 - Portion of the Current Flood Insurance Rate Map for the Town</i>	33
<i>Map 11 - Wildfire Hazard for the Town</i>	34

List of Figures

<i>Figure 1 – Population Age Breakout by Gender for Town of Philipsburg, 2019</i>	8
<i>Figure 2 - Components of Personal Income, Granite County, Montana 1970-2019</i>	9

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

▼ Map 1 - Location of Philipsburg



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Philipsburg (PBurg) residents take pride in their community, sharing a unique history based on natural resource development common to the west. Today the community is maintained through tourism and recreational amenities. Life in the Town fluctuates widely depending upon the time of year, from the bustling summer season to the slower winter season. A camaraderie between residents has developed over time and is maintained by an oral tradition of shared successes and a strong track record of overcoming community challenges. The self-starter mentality of residents has created a culture of cooperation to accomplish common goals. At the same time the community faces many challenges, including the loss of natural resource jobs, needed infrastructure improvements, and significant changes in the national economy. Like any community, people come and go, but everyone who visits or stays recognizes the unique value and character of the community. The goals expressed in this plan are intended to strengthen and support these shared values as residents of the Town look to the future.

This new Plan is meant to help the Town Council and residents make decisions regarding the economy, infrastructure, local services, and land use. The update should help Town residents achieve specific goals instead of reacting to individual events and applying short-term fixes year after year. Issues of concern to Town residents range from providing local services and improving infrastructure (water-sewer) to deciding if land use regulations are appropriate within the Town.

This document contains nine sections that provide the rationale for understanding and achieving the goals listed in this document. These sections include:

- **Goals and Objectives:** Taking advantage of opportunities and overcoming challenges does not happen by chance. Town residents must be willing to set practical and achievable goals to make things happen.
- **Introduction:** A description of the Town, its location, features, and history.
- **Population:** A brief description of the Town population and demographics.
- **Economy:** A description of the Town's current economic situation and a vision for addressing issues and capitalizing on economic opportunities and challenges.
- **Local Services and Public Facilities:** A description of the Town's revenues and expenditures and its infrastructure and services, including those that the Town is responsible for operating and maintaining.
- **Housing:** A description of the current housing opportunities in the Town.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **Land Use:** A description of land use in the Town including future growth, the impacts of flooding and wildland fire, historic preservation efforts, the potential for new land use regulations such as zoning and the administration of subdivision regulations.
- **Resident Outreach:** This section describes the process used to gather advice and guidance from Town residents on issues of importance to them.
- **Action Plan:** A description of the actual steps the Town may take to achieve the Goals and Objectives in this document.



▲ Courtesy of Western Mining History.com

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The following are the goals and objectives that Town residents would like to achieve to address the opportunities and challenges identified in this plan. The specific actions that the Town will take to achieve these goals and objectives are found in the Action Plan section of this document.

ECONOMY

The Town's residents need economic opportunities to prosper in a constantly changing global economy. Therefore, the Town will work to strengthen and diversify its economy.

Goals	Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none">E-1: Ensure the Town provides a welcoming environment for economic development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Engage the Chamber of Commerce and business owners to identify practical steps the Town can take to encourage business retention and development.Minimize regulatory hurdles to business.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">E-2: Better understand the drivers of the Town's economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Gather and analyze business trends and data to identify strengths, weakness, and opportunities.Use identified trends and data to develop guidance for how the Town and partners can improve the business climate in the community.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">E-3: Support the responsible development of natural resources in Granite County.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Encourage the state legislature, governor, and congressional delegation to permit responsible resource development on public lands in Granite County and western Montana.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">E-4: Provide residents and visitors with easily accessible information regarding Town governance, projects and services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Update the Town website to provide timely news and information.Use other communications methods to share Town Council news such as news articles and social media posts as appropriate.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Well maintained infrastructure is necessary to ensure the health and safety of Town residents and help promote economic growth. Infrastructure managed by the Town can range from streets and buildings and water and sewer to equipment such as loaders, trucks, and computers.

Goals	Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none">IPF-1: Improve the Water System.	<p>Complete the following projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Install a short-term filtration system.Replace Fred Burr Transmission Main.Replace Silver Springs Transfer Pumps.Replace E. Broadwater Street Main.Replace Fred Burr Waterline access road.Install backup Power at Booster Station.Improve Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) System.Identify and develop an alternative water source(s): i.e., well(s), spring(s).Consider the development of hydropower generation.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goals	Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IPF-2: Improve the Wastewater System. 	Complete the following projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove and dispose of sewer lagoon sludge. Install third lagoon and treatment systems.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IPF-3: Improve the Stormwater System. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual culvert installation and replacement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IPF-4: Improve the Street System. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete an overall street, road and pedestrian system evaluation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IPF-5: Minimize the cost of infrastructure improvements to residents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to pursue grant funding and low interest loan options to pay for infrastructure projects.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IPF-6: Continually review and adjust infrastructure priorities, costs and schedules. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and annually update the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IPF-6: Understand regulatory standards that affect the Town's provision of water and wastewater treatment systems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain regular communications with regulatory agencies (DEQ/EPA) and the state's Nutrient Working Group.

LOCAL SERVICES

Quality of life for Town residents depends upon many things, particularly the provision of services such as law enforcement, fire protection, healthcare, education, emergency services, senior services, and solid waste disposal.

Goals	Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LS-1: Provide residents and visitors with easily accessible information regarding Town governance, projects and services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the Town website to provide timely news and information. Use other communication methods to share Town Council news and information such as news articles and social media posts as appropriate. Hold a "State of Town" event at the beginning of each fiscal year.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LS-2: Ensure a wide range of services are provided to Town residents and visitors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve communication and cooperation between community service providers.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LS-3: Manage deer herd within the Town limits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a deer management plan in cooperation with MT FWP.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LS-4: Provide safe and cost-effective recreational and public facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade and maintain existing recreational facilities within the Town. Improve and expand trails and connectivity of walking/biking corridors through Town. Examine the potential to provide public restrooms in downtown.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

LAND USE

To be successful, the Town will need to work to attract new residents and businesses, and the Town's regulatory environment must be predictable and fair. Any potential land use codes such as zoning must provide residents with a review process that is clear, concise, and predictable and ensure new development becomes an asset to the Town. New development should occur in areas with limited natural hazards such as flooding and wildfire and where it is efficient for the Town to provide services.

Goals	Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none">LU-1: Maintain the historic character of Philipsburg.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ensure that the current boundaries (maps) of the Historic District and the existing historic buildings accurately reflect reality in the Town.Identify mechanisms to protect the historic character of the Town that are supported by residents, i.e., incentives, regulations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">LU-2: Maintain and improve the appearance of the Town.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Consider creating a program to help residents clean up debris and junk.If appropriate, consider the use of regulations such as zoning.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">LU-3: Ensure any future annexation of lands into the Town are easily provided with services and become a benefit to other residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify locations for new housing where services can most economically and efficiently be provided.Map the most appropriate areas for potential annexation into the Town.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">LU-4 Provide Subdivision Regulations that comply with state statute and meet the practical needs of residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop and adopt Town Subdivision Regulations to comply with state statute and best practices.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">LU-5: Encourage new residential and commercial development in areas with minimal hazards such as flooding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">New subdivisions will not be approved within flood prone areas of the Town.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">LU-6: Improve parking within the Town.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify vacant Town owned properties that could be converted to additional parking spaces.

HOUSING

Safe and maintained housing is essential for the well-being of each Town resident. The Town will work to identify ways to provide housing options for all residents.

Goals	Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none">H-1: Provide housing options for all of the Town's residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Support well planned efforts to provide housing options for all residents.Better understand the Town's housing market and resident's housing needs.Identify lots within the Town that have the potential to be developed with housing.Identify funding sources available to developers for the construction of low to moderate income housing.Support grant and loan applications for the rehabilitation of existing housing units.Minimize regulatory barriers to developing safe and efficient housing.

INTRODUCTION

LOCATION

The Town of Philipsburg is located in western Montana within the Rocky Mountains and almost equidistant between the cities of Missoula and Butte. In 2019, the Town had an estimated population of 768 people. Philipsburg serves as the County seat for Granite County.

CLIMATE

The climate of the Town is considered Continental with cold and dry winters, cool and moist springs and falls, and hot and dry summers. The average daily high and low temperatures for Philipsburg from 1955 to 2016 are displayed below.

(1955-2016)	Average Daily Temperatures at Philipsburg Ranger Station
▪ January	▪ High: 33.2 degrees F ▪ Low: 13.6 degrees F
▪ July	▪ High: 80.3 degrees F ▪ Low: 42.6 degrees F

(Western Regional Climate Center, 2021)

Like most of Montana, the Town of Philipsburg's climate can be one of extremes but is mild and dry. The average annual precipitation at the Philipsburg Ranger Station was 14.57 inches between 1955 and 2016, with most of the precipitation falling between April 1st - October 30th and May and June being the wettest months of the year.

POPULATION

Since 2010, the Town has experienced a gradual decrease in population. In 2010 the Town population was estimated at 925 people, and by 2019, it was estimated to have decreased by almost eight percent to 768 people.

In 2019, the median age of Town residents was 42.9 years of age. This was a significant decrease from 2010, when the median age was estimated at 51.6 years. With regards to age and gender, since 2010, the Town has seen an increase in the number of people in the age group 18-34 years and 35-44 years, which grew by an estimated 52 and 44 people respectively. Conversely, the age group 45-64 saw a decline in the number of people by an estimated 210 people since 2010. These changes explain the decline of the Town median age over the last ten plus years.

The Town should monitor the demographics of residents over the next few years. Significant changes in any age group may affect the ability of the Town to provide services to seniors, ensure adequate education and recreational facilities for children, and ensure a stable and experienced workforce for the Town's businesses.

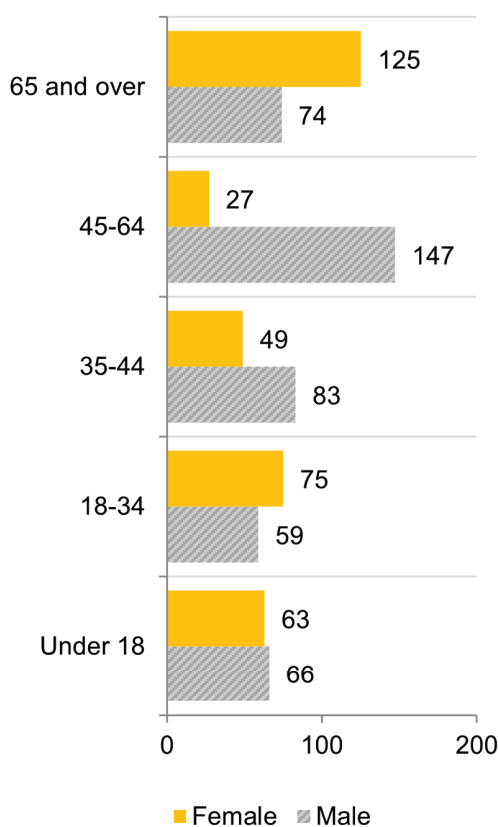


Figure 1 – Population Age Breakout by Gender for Town of Philipsburg, 2019
Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2019
Washington, D.C., as reported in Headwaters Economics' Economic Profile System (headwaterseconomics.org/eps)

Granite County Courthouse



ECONOMY

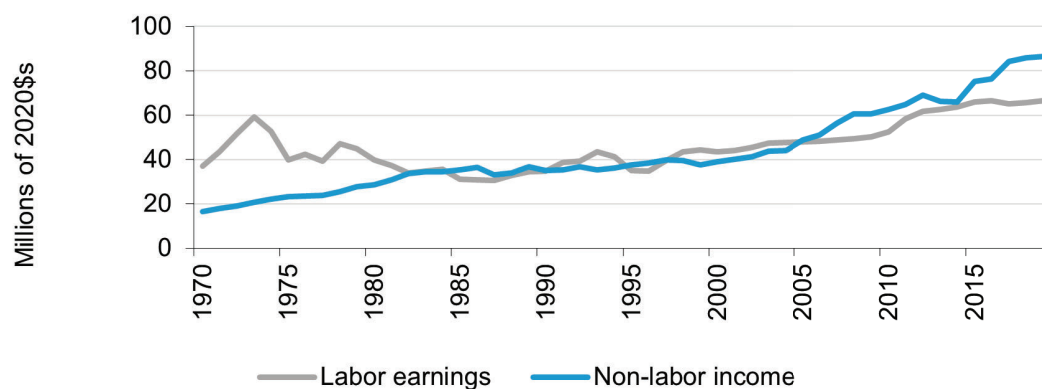
Estimates from the U.S. Census Longitudinal Employment Housing Dynamics show that from 2012 to 2019, the Town had a significant increase in total jobs. In these eight years, total jobs in the Town increased by over 20 percent, or about 71 jobs being added. It is important to note that the Census data show a significant drop in the number of jobs in the Town from 2014 to 2018 and then a significant increase to 2019. In 2017 jobs were estimated at 377, and by 2018 they had declined to 330. In 2019, jobs within the Town accounted for over 45 percent of all jobs in all of Granite County. The remaining 55 percent of jobs were dispersed throughout Granite County.

The Town exhibits a fairly diverse economy in terms of job sectors. In 2019, the largest job sectors were Public Administration/Government (over 16 percent of jobs), Accommodation/Food Service (13.6 percent), Educational Services (12.6 percent) followed by Arts/Entertainment (12.4 percent), Healthcare (11.9 percent) and Retail Trade at (9.7 percent) of the total.

PERSONAL INCOME

Personal income is a measure of the various earnings received by working individuals in a community. Personal income is the total amount of money derived from wages, salaries, investment enterprises, and other sources. Personal income data is collected at the county level and can be compared as farm, and non-farm categories. Specific data for the Town of Philipsburg is difficult to obtain through Census data, but Granite County data is readily available and serves as a good proxy for the Town.

From 2000 to 2019, personal income in the entire County increased from over \$82 million to over \$152 million, or over an 85 percent change. The 2019 figure was made up of labor earnings (43.5 percent) and non-labor income (56.5 percent). Non-labor income includes income dividends, interest, rent, and transfer payments (i.e., government retirement and disability insurance benefits, medical payments).



▲ Figure 2 - Components of Personal Income, Granite County, Montana 1970-2019

U.S. Department of Labor. 2019. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, Washington, D.C., as reported in Headwaters Economics' Economic Profile System (headwaterseconomics.org/eps).

TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES

Based on figures from the Montana Department of Revenue, the market value of real property in the Town has increased steadily, while the taxable value has remained stable.

In 2014, the market value of all real property in the Town of Philipsburg was over \$34 million. By 2021 this figure had increased to over \$100 million, a 194 percent increase. During the same timeframe, taxable values in the Town only increased from over \$800,000 to \$1.4 million.

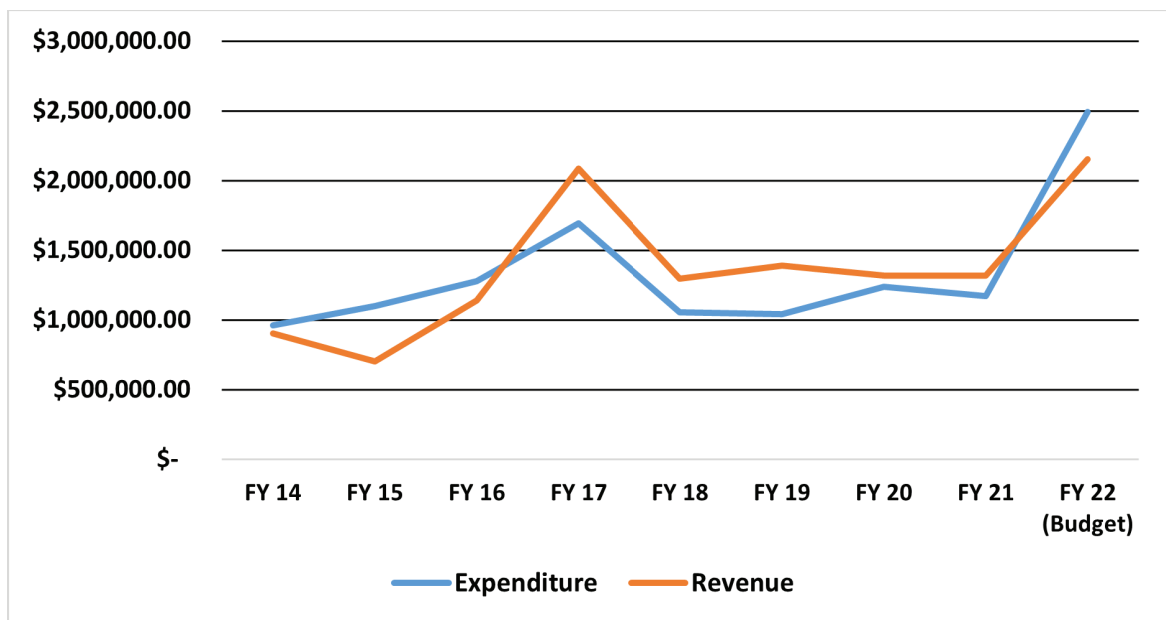
LOCAL SERVICES & PUBLIC FACILITIES

REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES

Providing services and maintaining reliable, affordable infrastructure is the primary function of the Town of Philipsburg. Services provided by the Town include but are not limited to law enforcement and emergency services, street maintenance, and providing drinking water and sewage treatment other infrastructure that the Town is responsible for maintaining includes buildings, streets, parks, and equipment such as loaders, trucks, and computers. Providing these services, infrastructure and equipment requires the Town to collect enough revenues to cover its costs.

Based upon accounting data provided by the Town, expenditures and revenues for the community have seen a dramatic increase since FY 2014. Expenditures went from approximately \$964,000 in FY 2014 to almost \$2.5 million in FY 2022 and revenues in FY 2014 went from just over \$906,000 to \$2.1 million in FY 2022.

The increases in expenditures and revenues are attributable to the fact that the Town has undertaken significant infrastructure improvement projects, which have been funded through large grants, loans, and American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) funds. Since 2014, shortfalls between expenditures and revenues have been covered by the use of the Town's cash reserves.



(Town of Philipsburg)

LOCAL OPTION TAX

The potential of establishing a local option tax such as a resort tax within the Town has been a topic of conversation that has come up periodically over the last several years.

Because the Town experiences significant economic activity related to tourism a local option tax such as a resort tax may be an option to fund infrastructure and service needs. Such a tax would need to be approved by residents and the tax may only be levied on certain goods and services and luxury items. The purpose of the tax would be to provide funding for the Town's infrastructure and other services by collecting taxes from visitors to the Town. In addition to funding infrastructure and services, any potential resort tax proceeds must be used for municipal property tax relief.

The Town Council may consider pursuing a resort tax in the future if there is enough support by Town residents.

LOCAL SERVICES & PUBLIC FACILITIES



STRATEGY FOR INFRASTRUCTURE

The Town of Philipsburg has a capital improvements plan (CIP) that was adopted in 2020 to guide the operation and maintenance of the Town's infrastructure and equipment. The CIP prioritizes the Town's capital improvements and equipment, provides a schedule for completing projects or purchasing equipment, and lists options for funding the construction or acquisition. The adopted CIP serves as the Town's strategy for the maintenance and replacement of its infrastructure.

RIDDICK FIELD AIRPORT

The airport is located one mile south of Town and is owned by Granite County. The airport is at an elevation of 5219 feet. There are two (2) runways #16 and #34 and the average annual use over 33 weeks is 59% local general aviation, 35% transient general, 6% air taxi. The airport has modest hangers and the runway surface asphalt is in rough condition and in need of repair. The County is currently contracted with an engineering firm to consider plans for upgrades.

BROADBAND INTERNET

Broadband internet is available in the town. Blackfoot Telephone is currently the only service provider for town. Competition by other service providers may help lower the price of broadband in the future.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL-AMBULANCE SERVICES

Philipsburg Volunteer Ambulance Association is a County chartered entity. The Association's active members constantly changes. The Association has an ambulance building where ambulances and equipment is stored and dispatched from, and the Association is funded by the County. The Association's main challenge is maintaining and keeping a qualified and trained staff of volunteer responders. There is also a private company, Eagle Ambulance, which provides services to the Town and the County. It is based out of the community of Hall, which is 20 miles away from the Town.

LOCAL SERVICES & PUBLIC FACILITIES

PHILIPSBURG VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Department was established in 1876 and is located at 505 Hamilton Ct. The Department provides fire protection and emergency services and also responds to medical emergencies, motor vehicle accidents and incidents involving hazardous materials. They currently have 26 active members in the Department. The Fire Department's effectiveness is reflected in the fact that the Department has an ISO Rating of a 5, which dramatically lowers the cost of homeowners insurance within the Town.



▲ Philipsburg Firehall

HOSPITAL/PUBLIC HEALTHCARE

Granite County Medical Center located in the Town, is Granite County's single critical access, and provides a clinic, emergency department and long-care facility with 20+ beds. The hospital is managed by Granite County and operates within an established Hospital District administered by a board of directors. The hospital is one of the largest employers in the Town and the number of employees at the hospital varies between 50 and 60.



LAW ENFORCEMENT

Law enforcement for the Town of Philipsburg is provided by Granite County through a contractual arrangement. Granite County Sheriff/Coroner's Office is located in the Town. The Sheriff's Office patrols 1733 square miles, including contracted services for the incorporated limits of Philipsburg. The Sheriff's Office also contracts with the Town of Drummond, population 314. Unincorporated communities covered by the Office include Georgetown Lake, Hall, Rock Creek and Maxville.

There are currently six sworn personnel, the Sheriff, Undersheriff and four Deputies. Six dispatchers/detention officers operate 911 services for the County. Calls for service from 2019-2021 doubled. Philipsburg specifically, a "destination" community has seen a substantial increase in tourism in the summer months, often congesting the downtown area, creating parking and safety issues for pedestrians.

As growth continues, affordable housing for additional staff will most definitely be a concern. The Sheriff's Office has already lost personnel due to the shortage of affordable housing.

LOCAL SERVICES & PUBLIC FACILITIES

The County Jail, constructed in 1896 is currently the oldest operating jail in Montana and houses the 911 center. Despite being 125 years old, the building currently still meets the needs of the community. Nonetheless, upgrading or replacing the building will need to be addressed at some point in the future.

PHILIPSBURG PUBLIC LIBRARY

The library provides services for the entire community. These include books, DVD's and audio books available for check out, copying, scanning and faxing services, free Wi-Fi, desktop computers open for public use, meeting space open for public use, after school programs for kids, fitness programs for seniors, adult evening programming, and so much more.

Future plans for the library include:

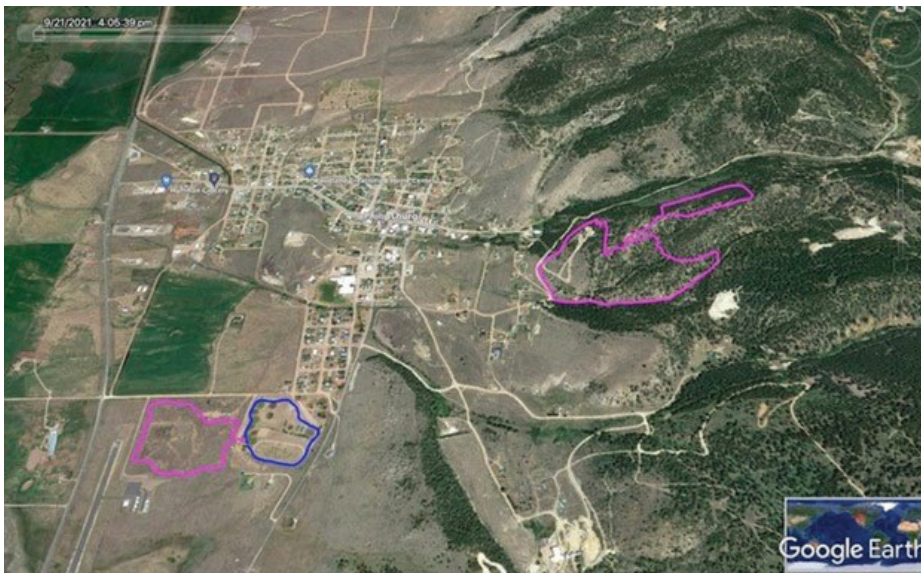
- Develop outdoor space (courtyard) into something that better meets the community needs better.
- Make the downstairs ADA accessible in order to expand useable space. Currently, the only access to downstairs space is via stairs.
- Continually adjust materials and programs to meet community needs.
- Explore solar options for the building.
- Upgrade mechanical infrastructure of the facilities (plumbing/heating etc.) to be more energy efficient.

PARKS, RECREATION AND TRAILS

The Town manages and operates numerous recreational facilities. These include the Winninghoff Park (skating rink/ampitheater) right in the heart of the Town and Town Park located at the south end of the community. Town Park has a ballfield, tennis courts, basketball courts and a running track. Town Park is located on land owned by the State of Montana, but is leased to the Town. Residents would like to focus on upgrading and maintaining existing recreational facilities rather than taking on the added responsibility of developing new facilities.



▼ Map 3 - Trail System Around the Town



LOCAL SERVICES & PUBLIC FACILITIES

The Flint Creek Trails Association, a local organization, is working to enhance and maintain local trails to provide outdoor exercise and recreation opportunities for residents and visitors. The Association provides information on accessing trails and also organizes work days to complete needed trail maintenance.

SENIOR CENTER AND PROGRAMS

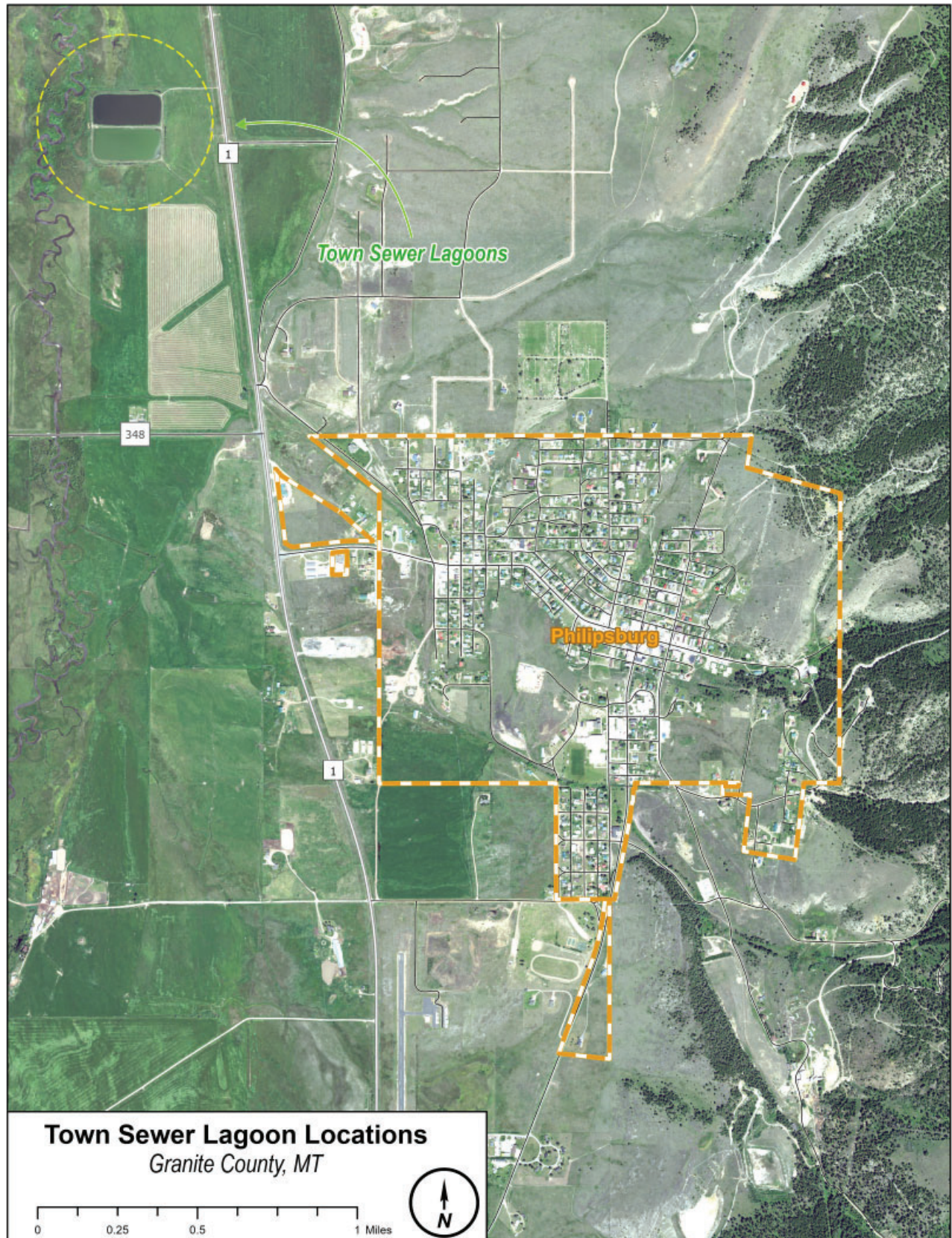
The Philipsburg Senior Center was established in 1972. Currently the Center's primary purpose is to provide meals to seniors either in-house or via delivery. For example in March of 2022, the Center provided 405 meals. The Center has paid staff to prepare and deliver meals, but volunteers play a key role in the operation of the Center. In addition to providing meals, the Center is also used as a meeting facility.

The Senior Center is pursuing the construction of a new multi-use building that can be used for providing meals, as well as holding continuing education classes and social events. The Center has received a donation of land for a new facility and is currently in the process of completing preliminary architectural work for the proposed center. Funding the construction of the new facility will be pursued via a variety of sources including grants and donations.



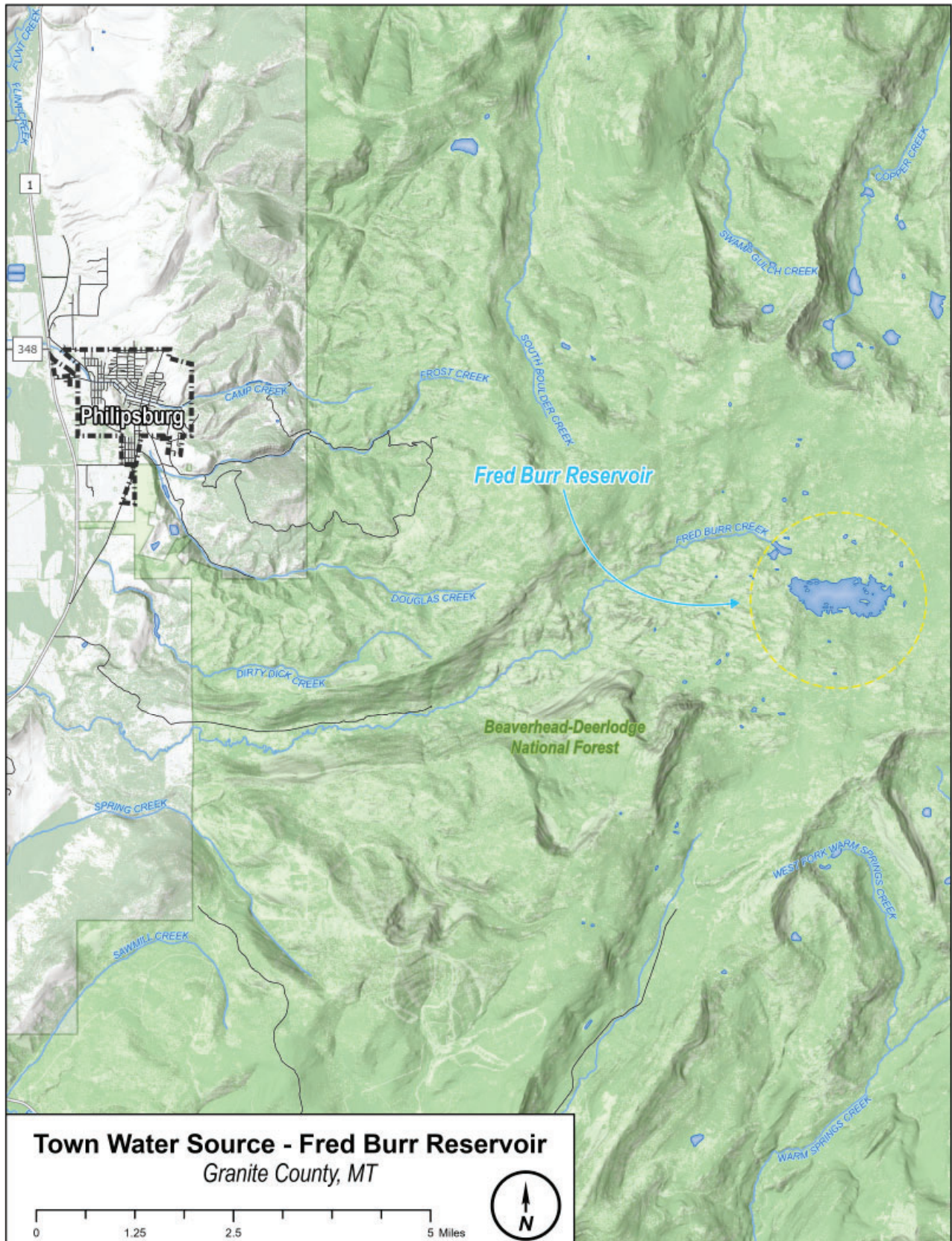
LOCAL SERVICES & PUBLIC FACILITIES

▼ Map 4 - Town Sewer Lagoons



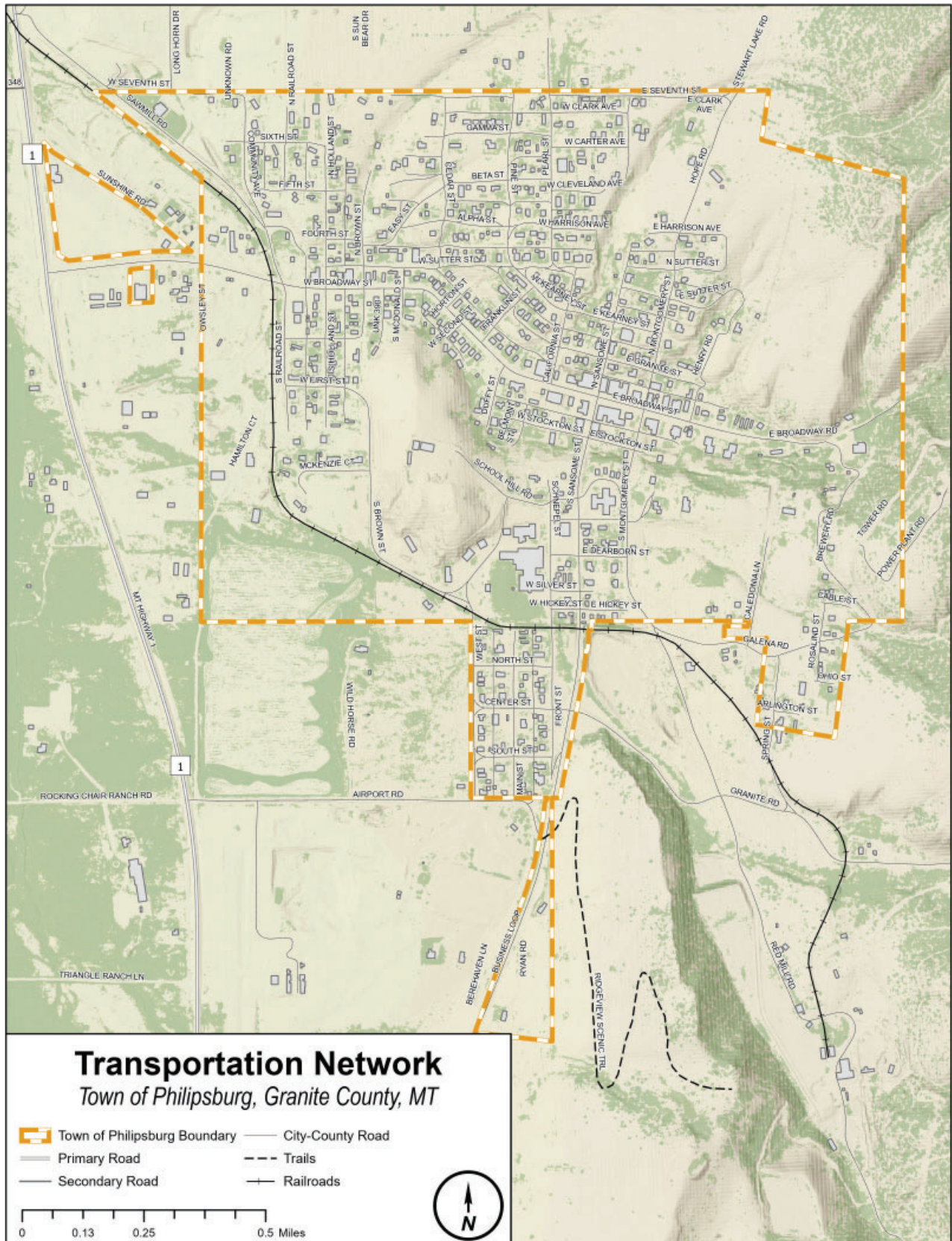
LOCAL SERVICES & PUBLIC FACILITIES

▼ Map 5 - Town Water Source



LOCAL SERVICES & PUBLIC FACILITIES

▼ Map 6 - Town Streets



HOUSING

In general, the houses in Philipsburg are older homes, but well maintained. In a couple of sections of the core area of Town, the housing is very old and needs repair or replacement. Most of the housing in the platted area consists of conventionally built single-family units with scattered mobile home development.

Data from the Census Bureau American Community Survey, estimated that there were 414 residential housing units in 2019. Of the total number of residential structures identified in 2019, 82 were built between 1940 and 1970, and 168 were built before 1940.

Age of Residential Structures in the Town of Philipsburg (2019) (American Community Survey)		
Year Built	Number of Units	Percentage
2010 or later	8	1.9%
2000 to 2009	25	6.0%
1990 to 1999	32	7.7%
1980 to 1989	18	4.3%
1970 to 1979	81	19.6%
Older than 1969	250	60.5%

The older a home is, the more maintenance and upkeep it requires. Older homes are also often less energy efficient, and the increased cost to heat them in the winter can add to the overall cost of housing. Low-income families are more likely to live in older homes as they have a lower market value. Thus, increased costs for maintenance and utilities can be a significant economic burden for them.

Of the total housing units in the Town in 2019, 153 or 37 percent of all units were identified as being vacant. Compared to many other communities in Montana, this is a relatively high vacancy rate.

HOUSING ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

There is an expressed need for additional housing options in the Town. In order to better understand all of these issues and opportunities, the Town should consider working with the Montana Department of Commerce CDBG Program to fund the development of a detailed housing assessment and plan. Such an analysis could identify the types of housing residents need, potential partnerships, resources, goals, and objectives to address housing availability and affordability.



LAND USE

ANNEXATION

While some new development will occur via the construction of homes and businesses on existing vacant land within the Town boundary, inevitably the annexation of new land into the Town may be necessary. From a topographic, floodplain, and provision of water and sewer service, new annexations will be considered in the following locations adjacent to Town:

- The area around the intersection of West Broadway and Highway 1.
- South of Town on South Sansome St/Highway 10A Business Loop

It will be important for new annexations to be reviewed to ensure that they become an asset to Town residents and to determine what their effect will be on the Town's ability to provide services, including fire protection, water, sewer, stormwater drainage, and street maintenance. Typical requirements for the annexation of property include a plan describing how Town services such as water and sewer will be installed and how other streets and stormwater will be addressed.

The Town of Philipsburg does not have an annexation policy to provide a formalized and predictable process for annexing new properties. Developing and adopting such a policy and procedures is something the Town may consider in the future. It is important to note that if the Town is proposing to annex property that will also be subdivided, the Town Council must officially annex the properties before deciding whether to approve a subdivision application.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

In 1986, Philipsburg's original 87-acre townsite was placed on the U.S. National Register of Historic Places [Smithsonian No. 86002791]. The designation followed a successful local effort to catalog some 154 contributing buildings to the district.

Ironically, in the 36 years since the community earned that federal designation, not a single local government regulation has been created to protect the integrity of this district. This is worrisome because the restoration of the structures in that district, accomplished and/or funded by private capital, has led the relatively intact 19th century downtown structures to become of significant value to Philipsburg's "brand" as an historic Western mining town.

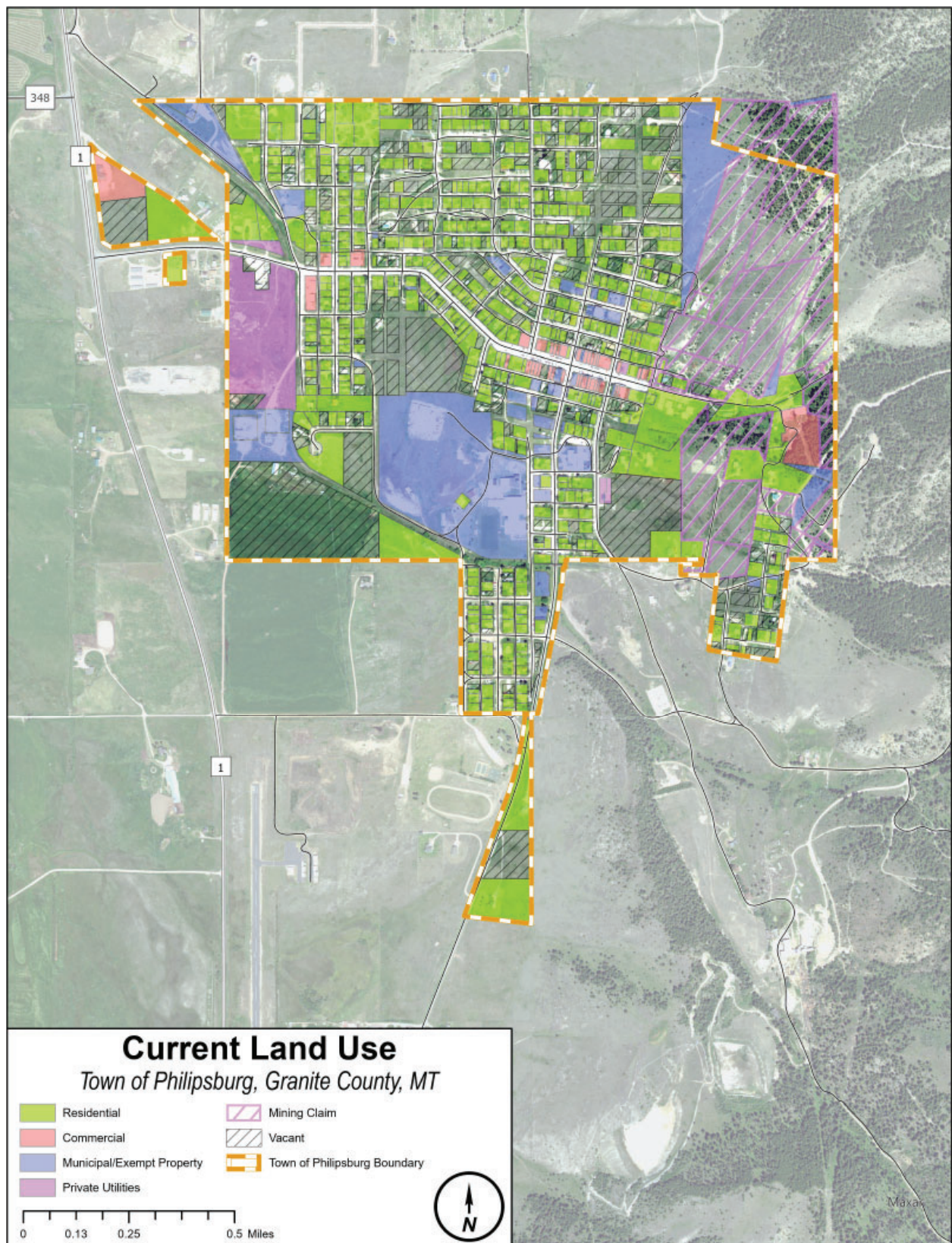
Recent new structures, built by absentee landlords without regard for the historic nature of their neighbors, have caused deep concern among owners of nearby historic properties as well as citizens who love the vibe of the three block long historic downtown. Simply put, it will not take too many new structures that do not match historic architectural patterns to diminish how Philipsburg looks. This concern goes far beyond aesthetics. Historic preservation is now a dollars and sense issue for the many building owners who have restored and preserved buildings and whose equity could be diminished if even the most basic protections do not exist to prevent modern eyesores rising in the downtown.

The Town has had repeated incidents over several decades where residents have expressed strong support for historic protections. To date none of that support has led to government action with the notable exception of new, historic street signage. As many old buildings



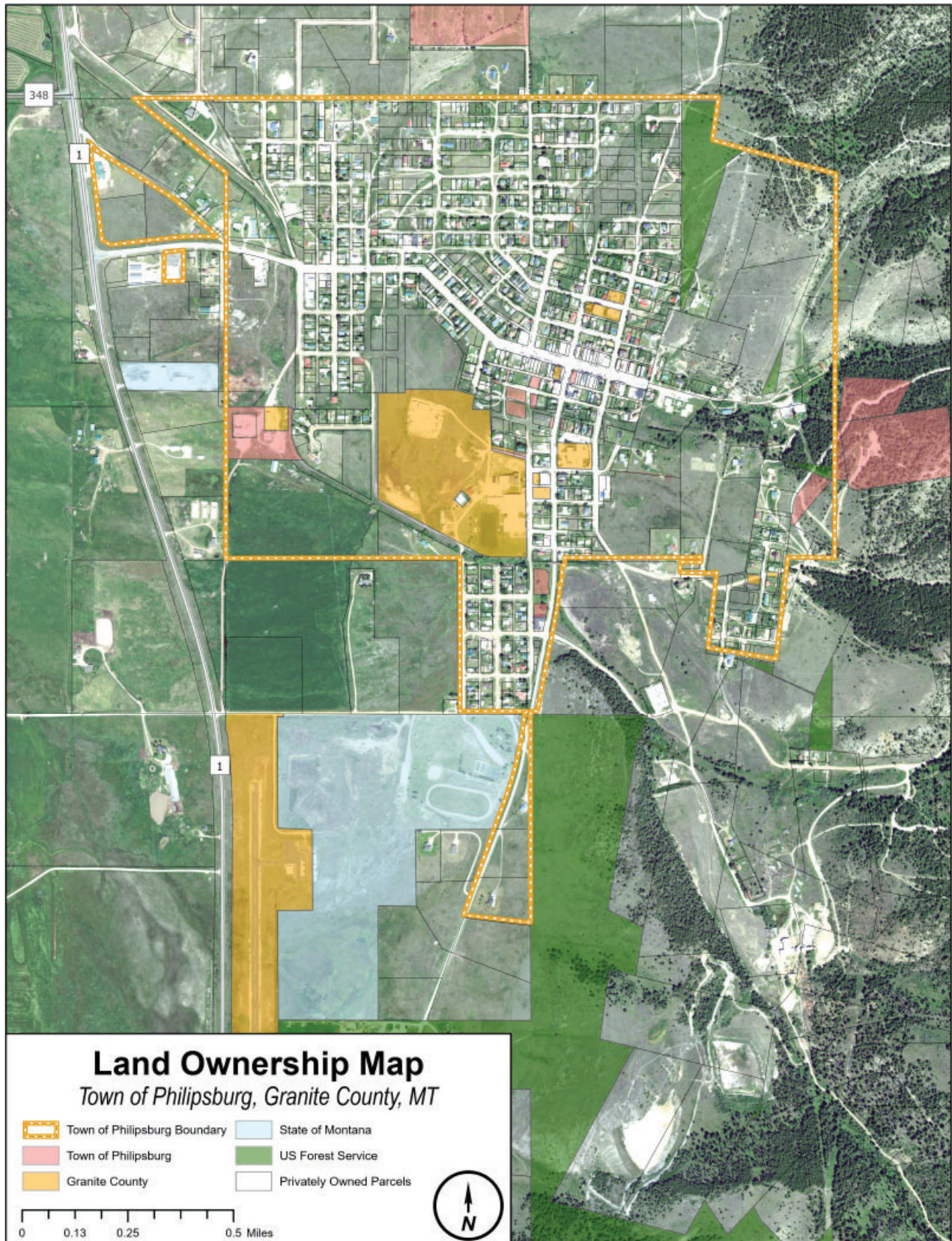
LAND USE

▼ Map 7 - Existing Land Use in the Town



LAND USE

▼ Map 8 - Property Ownership



LAND USE

have recently changed hands for seven figures it is long overdue for the town to preserve the integrity of the historic district with reasonable protections. At the very least the town should create a standing committee that, with or without specific regulatory powers, is dedicated to explaining the importance of Philipsburg's historic architectural standards to newcomers. Without a stronger commitment to this idea the "brand" of historic Philipsburg, and the value of its restored downtown, will always be just one bad owner away from disaster.

The Town will be pursuing an indepth analysis and inventory of the Historic District and this information will be added to the Plan as an appendix at a later date.

ZONING REGULATIONS

The Town does not currently have a zoning code that governs land use. In recent years residents have discussed the potential of developing such a code in order to address various issues that have come up over the last few years. Some of those issues include

- Maintaining the historic character of the downtown area.
- Managing short-term vacation rentals in the Town.
- Community decay and/or junk vehicles.

In the future depending upon the status of existing Town Codes and available resources, the Town Council may decide to examine the potential for developing and adopting a zoning code, following the statutory requirements found under 76-2-301 of the Montana Code Annotated.

SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS

Subdivision regulations are meant to address issues related to the division of land for new residential and commercial development. These include ensuring accurate surveying, providing legal and physical access, provision of water, sewer and utilities, parkland requirements, right-of-way location and mitigating hazards such as flooding.

Philipsburg uses the Granite County Subdivision Regulations to review subdivisions within the Town boundaries. In addition, Philipsburg, the Town of Drummond and the County use a joint Planning Board to review new subdivisions, thus planning issues in the County and the Town are coordinated. The County Planning Department also provides subdivision review services to both Towns.

State statute requires that every municipality and county in the state develop and adopt its own subdivision regulations. Thus, the Town will consider creating its own subdivision regulations in the near future.

BUILDINGS FOR LEASE OR RENT REGULATIONS (BLR)

The Town currently has up to date regulations for the leasing or renting of buildings.



▲ Granite County Jail



FLOODING AND FLOODPLAIN REGULATIONS

Flooding is a fact of life in the Town of Philipsburg. The floodplain for Camp and Frost Creeks impact large parts of the Town.

In 2016 new floodplain studies were completed for the following locations within the Town:

- Camp Creek (through Philipsburg): detailed study for 2 miles (previously mix of approximate and detailed study)
- Frost Creek: detailed study for 1.75 miles (previously mix of approximate and detailed study)

Following the completion of the updated floodplain studies, the Town Floodplain Regulations were updated in 2016 and were based upon the State of Montana's Model Floodplain Regulations. Thus, the regulations comply with state statute and federal requirements.

The updated Hazard Mitigation Plan (2021) for Granite County and the Towns of Drummond and Philipsburg contains further information on the flooding issues within Philipsburg.

SAND AND GRAVEL RESOURCES

Access to sand and gravel is important for the construction and maintenance of streets and roads as well as the construction of new homes and businesses. According to the Montana Department of Environmental Quality Open Cut Mining Program, four (4) permitted gravel pits are located within six (6) miles of the Town of Philipsburg. There are currently no local regulations governing the development of sand and gravel operations within the County and none are being considered at this time.

WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE

The Town's municipal water source, Fred Burr Lake and Fred Burr Creek could be severely impacted by future wildfires in the watershed. The lake is located approximately seven (7) miles east of the Town and at about 7,637 feet in elevation

LAND USE

(about 2,357 feet above Town). Water drains from the Lake to a 200,000-gallon concrete storage tank located east of Town.

The entire Fred Burr watershed is located with the wildland urban interface (WUI) and large portions of the watershed are identified as having a moderate to high potential for wildfire. It is important to note that the watershed is owned and managed cooperatively by the Town of Philipsburg and the United States Forest Service. Should a large wildfire impact the watershed, it could lead to significant erosion and sedimentation and thus potentially contaminate or limit the water supply for the Town.

With regards to regulations meant to mitigate potential impacts from wildfire, the Town has subdivision regulations, but does not have specific regulations such as a zoning code that specifically addresses mitigation of potential wildfire impacts.

The Town will be conducting a wildfire risk assessment for the Town and the surrounding areas and the assessment will be added to the Plan as an appendix at a later date.

SUBDIVISION REVIEW

The Montana Code Annotated requires that the Town Council provide a statement in this plan explaining how they will:

- define the review criteria found in 76-3-608 (3) (a) M.C.A. i.e., impacts upon agriculture, local services, public health, and safety etc.; and
- evaluate and make decisions regarding proposed subdivisions with respect to the criteria in 76-3-608 (3) (a) M.C.A.

DEFINITION OF 76-3-608 CRITERIA:

The Town of Philipsburg will use the following definitions as found in the current Granite County Subdivision Regulation for each of the review criteria listed below. These definitions may change when the Town adopts its own standalone subdivision regulations.

- **Agriculture Means:** All aspects of farming or ranching including the cultivation or tilling of soil; dairying; the production, cultivation, growing, harvesting of agricultural or horticultural commodities; raising of livestock, bees, fur-bearing animals, or poultry; and any practices including, forestry or lumbering operations, including preparation for market or delivery to storage, to market, or to carriers for transportation to market.
- **Agricultural Water User Facilities:** Those facilities that provide water for irrigation or stock watering to agricultural lands to produce agricultural products. These facilities include, but are not limited to, ditches, headgates, pipes, and other water conveying facilities.



LAND USE

- **Local Services:** Local services are defined as all services that local governments, public or private utilities are authorized to provide for the benefit of their citizens.
- **Natural Environment:** The physical conditions which exist within a given area, including land, air, water, mineral, flora, fauna, sound, light and objects of historic or aesthetic significance.
- **Public Health and Safety:** The prevailing healthful, sanitary condition of the community at large. Conditions that relate to public health and safety include but are not limited to disease control and prevention; emergency services; environmental health; flooding, fire, or wildfire hazards, rockfalls or landslides, unstable soils, steep slopes, and other natural hazards; high voltage lines or high-pressure gas lines; and air or vehicular traffic safety hazards.
- **Wildlife:** Those animals that are not domesticated or tamed, or as may be defined in the Town Plan/Growth Policy.
- **Wildlife Habitat:** The place or area where wildlife naturally lives or travels through.

EVALUATION OF SUBDIVISIONS BASED UPON 76-3-608 REVIEW CRITERIA

The review of subdivision applications by the Town will include documentation and an analysis as to whether or not the proposed subdivision will impact agriculture, agricultural water user facilities, local services, the natural environment, wildlife, wildlife habitat, and public health and safety.

The Town will evaluate each subdivision with regard to the expected impacts upon each of the criteria, and the degree to which the subdivision applicant proposes to mitigate any adverse impacts. This evaluation will be based upon the subdivision application, staff review, reports and the information gathered from public hearings and other sources of information as deemed appropriate.

Upon completion of its review and evaluation, the Town will render a decision on the proposed subdivision with respect to the requirements of the Granite County Subdivision Regulations (Town Subdivision Regulations in the future), the Town Plan (Growth Policy), and the Montana Subdivision and Platting Act.

EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR EFFECTS ON AGRICULTURE

- a. How many, if any, acres of land would be removed from livestock or crop production?
- b. Are any of the lands taken out of production irrigated?

EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR EFFECTS ON AGRICULTURAL WATER USER FACILITIES

- a. Will the subdivision interfere with any irrigation system or present any interference with agricultural operations in the vicinity?
- b. Will the subdivision comply with water rights requirements set forth in 76-3-504(1)(i) and (j) MCA?

EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR EFFECTS UPON LOCAL SERVICES

- a. Will the subdivision connect to central water and sewer systems? Who will pay the cost of connecting to the central system?

LAND USE

- b. What, if any, increased costs for maintenance and operation will be incurred, and what approximately will be those costs? Will the lot buyers pay regular water and sewer charges?
- c. If the subdivision will use an on-site water supply and sewage disposal, has Granite County (Town of Philipsburg) and the Department of Environmental Quality approved the sanitation facilities?
- d. Which agencies will provide law enforcement, fire protection, and ambulance services? Will providing these services to the subdivision create increased costs to any of these agencies or Granite County (Town of Philipsburg)? Approximately how much will the subdivision increase agency costs? Will the subdivider or subsequent lot buyers bear those increased costs, or will the taxpayers and/or rate payers bear the costs?
- e. At an average of eight vehicle trips per day per lot, how many average vehicle trips per day will the subdivision generate? Will extension of public streets or roads be needed and, if so, who will bear the costs? Will the subdivision increase the costs or road maintenance and, if so, by approximately how much? Will the subdivider/lot buyers or the public bear those increased costs?
- f. At an average of 1.5 school-age children per lot, how many elementary and high school students will be added to public schools? What net financial effect would these additional students have for the public schools?
- g. How much does the land affected by the proposed subdivision currently pay in local property taxes? After the subdivision is fully developed, how much will the land and improvements be expected to pay in local property taxes, at current mill levies?

EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR EFFECT ON NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- a. Will the subdivision increase stormwater run-off: interfere with natural drainage ways, or cause or increase erosion? Has the Road Foreman/Town Public Works Director determined that the size, location, and installation of any culverts meet design standards? Will the terrain create significant surface run-off problems? Will the grading and drainage plan minimize run-off and adverse impacts?
- b. Is the subdivision expected to adversely affect native vegetation, soils, or the water quality, or quantity of surface or ground waters? Will areas disturbed by cutting, filling, and grading be reseeded in the same season to minimize erosion?
- c. Are weed control measures proposed to prevent the proliferation of weed growth within the subdivision and on areas disturbed by construction?

EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR EFFECT ON PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

- a. Is the subdivision subject to potential natural hazards such as flooding, snow or rockslides, high winds, wildfire, or excessive slopes, or potential man-made hazards such as high voltage power lines, high pressure gas lines, nearby industrial or mining activity, or high traffic volumes? If so, what measures has the subdivider proposed to minimize those hazards?

EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR EFFECT ON WILDLIFE AND WILDLIFE HABITAT

- a. Will the expected effects of pets and human activity generated by the subdivision significantly affect wildlife?
- b. Will the subdivision be located in an area of significant wildlife habitat or in any critical wildlife area?

PUBLIC HEARING PROCEDURE-SUBDIVISIONS

The City-County Planning Board conducts its meetings open to the public following the public notice requirements as prescribed by state code. Major subdivisions and those minor subdivisions treated as major subdivisions are subject to public hearings.

The City-County Planning Board shall provide public notice of proposed subdivisions following the notice requirements as prescribed by statute. Public hearings are required for major subdivisions and subsequent minor subdivisions. Hearings are not permitted for first minor subdivisions.

Public hearings held by the Planning Board shall use the following format:

1. The planning board president opens the hearing and summarizes the proposal. The planning staff (or consultant or an assigned planning board member) will present a report that provides background information and describes the key technical points of the application and the proposal's relationship to the plan, other plans, any land use regulations, and the draft Findings of Fact.
2. The subdivider or representative may present information and testimony relating to the proposed subdivision. Planning board members are permitted to direct any relevant questions to staff or the applicant.
3. Any written comments submitted prior to the hearing will be noted and made available to the public upon request. The president may read correspondence aloud. If the president deems that the written comments are numerous or voluminous, he may request that the written comments be summarized.
4. Members of the audience will be given an opportunity to comment on the application or proposal. Comments should be factual and relevant to the proposal. A reasonable time will be allowed each speaker. Each person speaking must give his or her name, address, and nature of interest in the matter.
5. After public comment is complete, the subdivider or representative may respond briefly.
6. Planning board members may voice other considerations and may pose any relevant questions through the president.
7. The president closes the hearing on the subdivision proposal.

COORDINATION WITH GRANITE COUNTY

As the County seat, the Town Council for Philipsburg engages in frequent conversations with the County Commission. The Town enjoys a good if not great relationship with the current Commission. The County provided a portion of its "Covid" funds to help upgrade the Town's drinking water system, which was much appreciated by Town residents.

The Town of Philipsburg will coordinate its efforts to implement this Plan with Granite County in the following ways:

- a. Continued participation on the County Planning Board.
- b. Regular communication with the County Commission on common issues and needs.

COORDINATION WITH STATE AND FEDERAL ORGANIZATIONS

Philipsburg has relationships with various state and federal agencies. These relationships range from regulatory i.e. Montana DEQ to locally based agencies such as the Forest Service. These relationships are not always obvious to members of the community. Following is a brief list and description.

Pintler Ranger District of the USFS Beaverhead-Deer Lodge National Forest is located just outside of the southern boundary of the Town and consists of an office and headquarters for the District's field operations. The District facilities include a few houses for employees, but most employees live off site. The Ranger District is served by public drinking provided by the Town. The Ranger District is an important employer in the area and the employees are valuable community members. The District's workforce is generally younger in age and tends to bring school age children into the Town.

A small Natural Resources and Conservation Service (USDA) office is located within the Town and the office is shared with the Granite County Conservation District.

The Town has important relationships with a number of State of Montana agencies, primarily the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). The DEQ regulates both the Town's sanitary sewer and lagoon system. The DEQ also regulates the Town's public drinking water system. The Town leaders have been working closely with the DEQ for several years now to improve the systems. The Town was issued an Administrative Order of Consent by the DEQ for the discharge into Flint Creek, which is still in place, and will be until the system is improved, which is in play with the assistance of several large grants. Great West Engineering is the current engineer on the sewer project. Pioneer Technical, and Sanderson Stewart have also worked on the system in recent years.

On the drinking water side, the DEQ also regulates the Town's public water supply. DEQ has issued the Town a waiver for the filtration of surface water, which is still in place and likely to remain so until the Town obtains the financial resources to install a filtration system.

The Montana Department of Natural Resources (DNRC) is also active with Philipsburg Volunteer Fire Department, providing some training and equipment. The DNRC can provide assistance in planning for both potential flooding and fire events.



▲ Philipsburg School

LAND USE

The Montana Department of Administration provides important feedback to the Town on its financial matters which are regulated by State Law, including audits and annual financial reports. The Department of Revenue is the agency that calculates taxes within the Town and is the provider of information on property taxes.

COORDINATION WITH NON-GOVERNMENTAL/GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Philipsburg School District includes the Town of Philipsburg within its boundaries. The school is one of the largest employers in Town and is a central hub of activities for community members.

The Philipsburg Chamber of Commerce represents the retail businesses of Philipsburg, and is an active organization representing town businesses for special events and problem solving.



▲ Philipsburg Town Hall

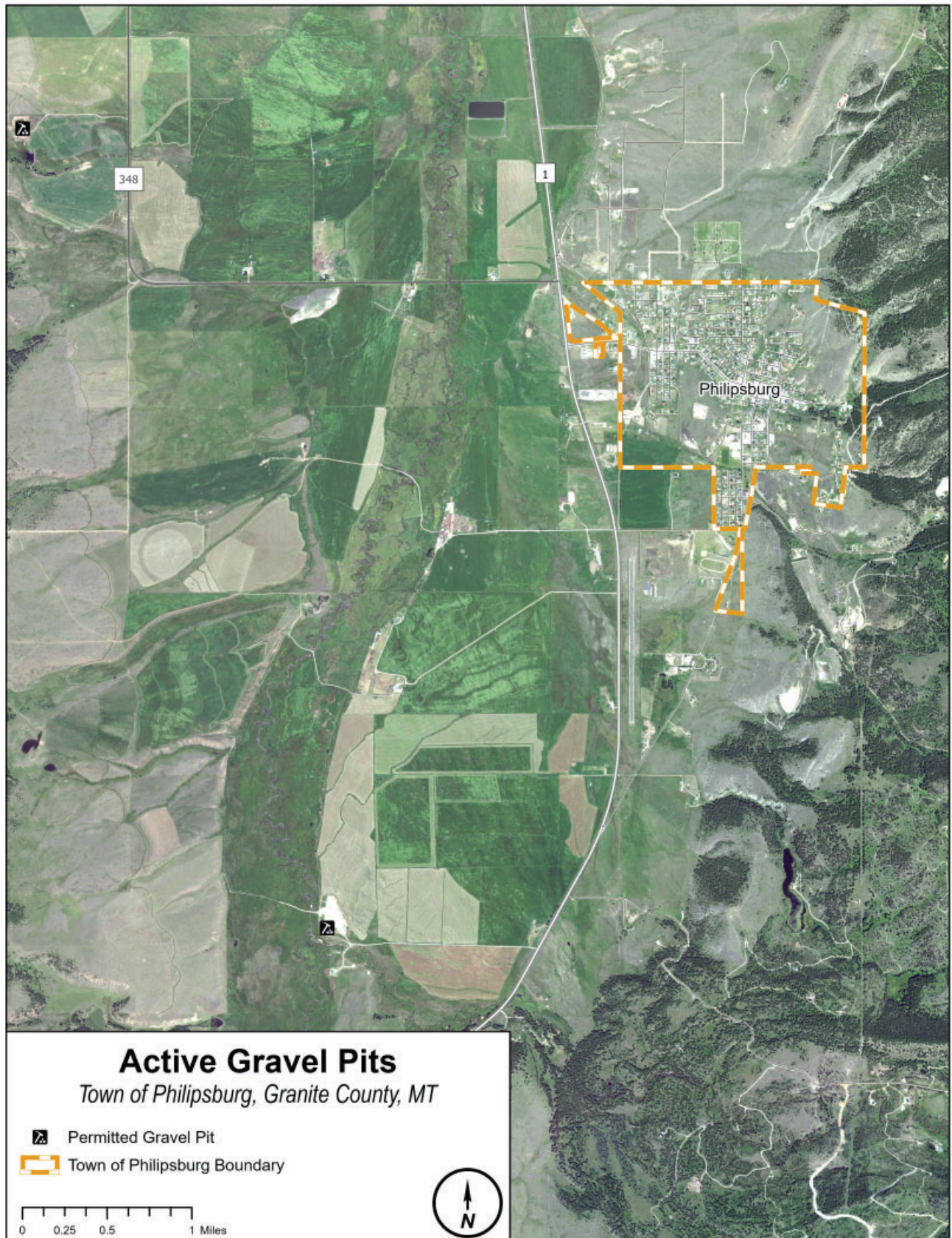
CONDITIONS AND TIMING FOR REVIEW AND REVISION

The document will be reviewed every five years from the date of its adoption. The City-County Planning Board will be responsible for reviewing the Plan and making any recommendations regarding revisions or changes to the Town Council. Future reviews will include an evaluation of every section of the Plan. It is anticipated that a full update of the Plan will be necessary within ten years of its original adoption.

The Plan may also be revised when a situation or issue has been identified by the public that necessitates changes or when changes are deemed to be in the public interest by the Planning Board or the Town Council. It is also possible that Legislative changes to the Plan statutes may require significant amendments or changes. Finally, amendments to the Plan may also be necessary when litigation elsewhere in Montana sets a legal precedent that is contrary to the stated goals, objectives, or implementation strategies in the Plan.

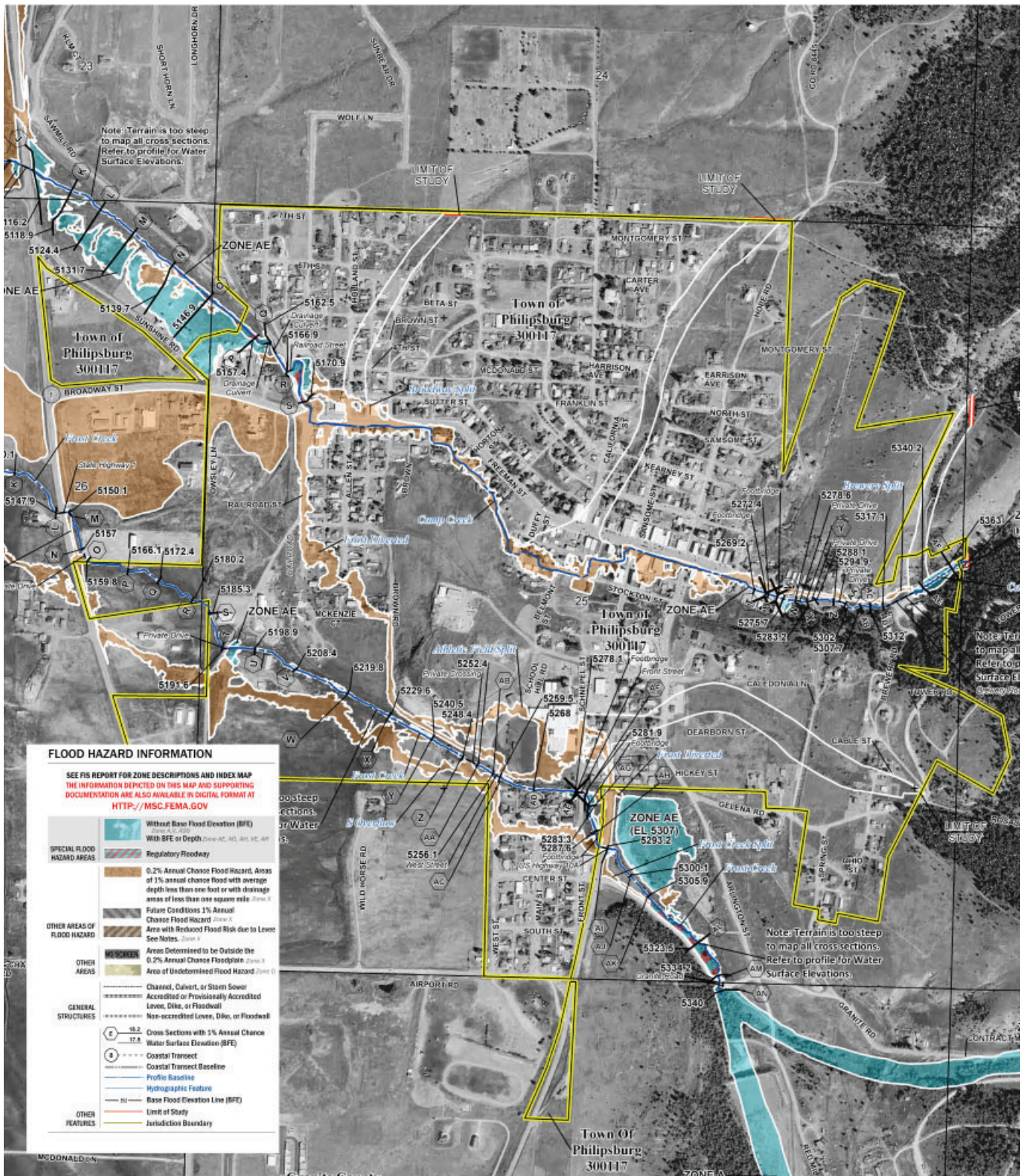
LAND USE

▼ Map 9 – Gravel Pits in and Near the Town



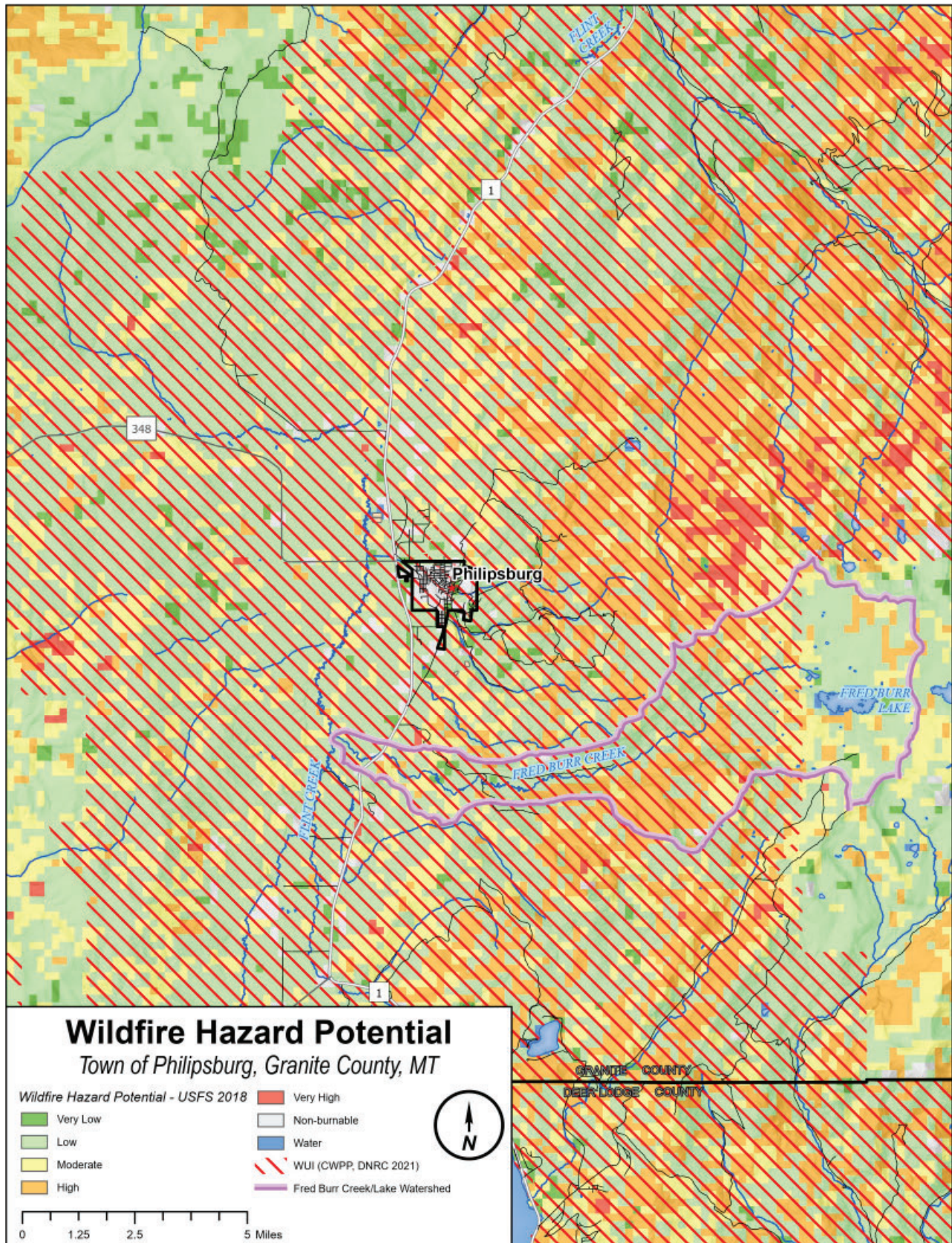
LAND USE

▼ Map 10 – Portion of the Current Flood Insurance Rate Map for the Town



LAND USE

▼ Map 11 – 2014 Wildfire Hazard for the Town



RESIDENT OUTREACH

The creation of the Town Plan has been based upon the advice and guidance of Town residents over the last eight (8) months.

The Town created a community survey to assist in gathering advice and guidance from residents about what opportunities and issues were their priority. The survey was available to residents in a hardcopy format and online. One hundred and seventy-seven (177) people participated in the survey.

Some of the more notable results of the survey showed the following:

- Respondents like the Town's quality of life, rural lifestyle, safety, historic character and recreational opportunities.
- The top five (5) most important issues that respondents thought should be improved included
 - infrastructure,
 - providing more dining options,
 - improving housing options,
 - limiting short-term vacation rentals, and
 - consider adopting a zoning code.
- Given the choice a majority of respondents felt that the Town should focus on infrastructure improvements over any other issue.

In addition to the community survey, the Town held an open house on November 18, 2021, to gather additional advice and guidance from residents. Approximately sixty (60) people participated in the open house.

The Town Council held four (4) work sessions to work through and discuss the various drafts of the Town Plan. Each work session was publicly noticed, and varying numbers of Town residents participated in each session

The County Planning Board held a hearing on Thursday, May 2, 2022 to gather resident input on the Plan creation and recommend adoption of the Plan to the Town Council. The Town Council held a public hearing on Tuesday, May 17, 2022 to consider the Planning Board's recommendation. The Council voted on May ??, 2022 to formally adopt the Board's recommendation.

ACTION PLAN

Achieving the goals identified in this Plan will take time and resources. Most importantly, it will require a serious commitment by residents and the Town Council to follow through on the guidance provided by the document. Implementing this plan will range from considering how to protect the historic character of the Town, evaluating the potential need for a zoning code, updating the Town's Subdivision Regulations, ensuring cooperation between the Town and Granite County, the upgrade of infrastructure and providing day to day services. The objectives listed in each of the following tables correspond with the objectives identified by topic in this plan's Goals and Objectives section.

ECONOMY			
Objective	Action	Responsibility	Schedule
▪ E-1.a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create a working group of business owners and the Town Council to discuss ways to encourage business development. ▪ Work with the MT Dept of Commerce Tourism Grant Program to fund projects that enhance tourism. 	Town Council and Chamber of Commerce	2023
▪ E-1.b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Examine any potential regulations to understand the impacts upon business operations. 	Town Council and Town Attorney	2023-2024
▪ E-2.a-b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with the UM Institute for Tourism & Recreation Research or similar entity to understand the Town's economy and determine how to improve. 	Town Council, Chamber of Commerce and Business Owners	2023
▪ E-3.a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lobby the state legislature and congressional delegation to support resource extraction. 	Town Council, Mayor and Consultants	Ongoing
▪ E-4.a-b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regularly update the Town website with news and information. 	Town Clerk and Assistant Clerk	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use the newspaper and social media to communicate with Town residents. 	Mayor	Ongoing

ACTION PLAN

INFRASTRUCTURE			
Objective	Action	Responsibility	Schedule
▪ IPF-1.a-g	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace Fred Burr transmission main. Replace Silver Springs transfer pumps. E. Broadwater Street main replacement. Replace Fred Burr waterline/access road. Install backup power at booster station. Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) Improvements. Identify and develop an alternative water source: i.e., well(s), spring(s). 	Town Council and Town Public Works	Ongoing
▪ IPF-2.a-b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sewer lagoon sludge removal. Treatment system improvements. 	Town Public Works and Consulting Engineers	Ongoing
▪ IPF-3.a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual culvert installation and replacement. 	Town Public Works and Consulting Engineers	Ongoing
▪ IPF-4.a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete a street and pedestrian system evaluation and plan. 	Town Council, Town Public Work and Consulting Engineers	2024
▪ IPF-5.a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to pursue grant funding and low interest loans. 	Town Council and Consultants	Ongoing
▪ IPF-6.a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the Town Capital Improvements Plan for budgeting and prioritizing projects. 	Town Council	Ongoing
▪ IPF-7.a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain effective communication with regulatory agencies and Nutrient Working Group. 	Mayor, Town Council and Town Public Works	Ongoing

LOCAL SERVICES			
Objective	Action	Responsibility	Schedule
▪ LS-1.a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly update the Town website with news and information. 	Town Clerk and Assistant Clerk	Ongoing
▪ LS-1.b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the newspaper and social media to communicate with Town residents. 	Town Clerk and Assistant Clerk	Ongoing
▪ LS-1.c	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schedule and hold an annual “State of the Town” event. 	Mayor	Annually at beginning of fiscal year
▪ LS-2.a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a working group of community service providers to meet on a quarterly basis. 	Town Council, County Commission and Local Non-Governmental Organizations	2023
▪ LS-3.a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact MT FWP to initiate discussions about how to better manage the Town’s deer population. 	Town Council	2023-2024
▪ LS-4.b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct an inventory and assessment of the Town’s recreational facilities in order to prioritize projects. 	Town Council, Town Parks Committee and School District	2023

ACTION PLAN

LAND USE			
Objective	Action	Responsibility	Schedule
▪ LU-1.a	▪ Complete an inventory and assessment of the historic buildings in the Town and identify appropriate boundaries for a new historic district.	Town Council and Consultants	Summer 2022
▪ LU-1.b	▪ Consider developing a zoning code focused solely on historic preservation in the historic district.	Town Council	2024
▪ LU-2.a	▪ Create an incentive program to help residents cleanup and maintain their properties.	Town Council and Town Public Works	2023
▪ LU-3.a	▪ Create a potential annexation map for the Town.	Town Council and Town Attorney	2024
▪ LU-3.b	▪ Create and adopt a formal annexation policy, plan and procedures for the Town.	Town Council and Town Attorney	2024
▪ LU-4	▪ Develop and adopt Town Subdivision Regulations to comply with state statute.	Town Council and Town Attorney	2023-2024
▪ LU-5	▪ Use the Town's floodplain mapping and regulations to protect new development from potential flood damage.	Town Council	Ongoing
▪ LU-6	▪ Complete an inventory of Town owned properties to identify those locations that might be converted to additional parking for residents and visitors.	Town Council and Consultants	2024-2025

HOUSING			
Objective	Action	Responsibility	Schedule
▪ H-1.a-f	▪ Develop a housing inventory, assessment, and plan for the Town.	Town Council and Consultants	2025

SOURCES

Introduction

1. Town of Philipsburg
2. National Weather Service
3. United States Census Bureau

Population Characteristics

1. United States Census Bureau

Economy

1. Town of Philipsburg
2. Montana Department of Administration
3. Montana Department of Revenue
4. United States Census Bureau

Local Services & Public Facilities

1. Town of Philipsburg
2. Granite County

Housing

1. United States Census Bureau

Land Use

1. Town of Philipsburg
2. Montana Department of Environmental Quality
3. Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
4. Montana Department of Revenue
5. Montana State Library
6. Granite County



Water/Wastewater

Grant Services

Planning

Natural Resources

Transportation

Solid Waste

Structural

Bridges

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