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Glossary of Terms

AC: Asbestos Cement

ADT: Average Daily Traffic

Aggregate: The sum of the values for each of the elements in the universe. For example, aggregate household income is the sum of the income of all households in a given geographic area. Aggregates are frequently used in computing mean values (mean equals aggregate divided by universe count).

asl: Above Sea Level

BFEs: Base Flood Elevations

BFI: Browning-Ferris Industries

bgs: Below Ground Surface

BIA: Bureau of Indian Affairs

BID: Business Improvement District

BLM: U.S. Bureau of Land Management

BOCC: Lake County Board of Commissioners

CBZD: Central Business Zoning District

CDBG: Community Development Block Grant

CFR: Code of Federal Regulations

CIP: Capital Improvements Plan. A process used to identify all capital projects in excess of \$25,000 and equipment needs in excess of \$5,000. Capital projects and equipment needs are prioritized and budgeted over a five year period.

CIZD: Commercial/Industrial Zoning District

COE: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Conservation Easements: A restriction placed on a piece of property to protect its associated resources. The easement is voluntarily donated or sold by the landowner and constitutes a legally binding agreement that limits certain types of uses or prevents development from taking place on the land in perpetuity.



Corridor Preservation: A means of coordinating transportation planning with land use planning and development. Its goal is to prohibit or minimize development in area(s) which are likely to be required to meet transportation needs in the future.

CSKT: Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes

CTEP: Community Transportation Enhancement Program

cu: Cubic

Density Bonuses: An incentive program to encourage developers to build affordable ownership and rental housing. For every affordable unit that a developer promises to build, the developer may build a calculated number of market rate units greater than would otherwise be allowed. There are usually limits on both the zones where density incentives can be earned, as well as a limit on the number of density bonuses allowed.

DEQ: Montana Department of Environmental Quality

DNRC: Montana Department of Natural Resources

DPHHS: Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services

Earnings: The term earnings is defined as the algebraic sum of wage or salary income and net income from self-employment. Earnings represent the amount of income received regularly before deductions for personal income taxes, Social Security, bond purchases, union dues, Medicare deductions, etc.

EDA: Economic Development Administration

EIS: Environmental Impact Statement

Employed: Employed includes all civilians 16 years old and over who were either (1) "at work" -- those who did any work at all during the reference week as paid employees, worked in their own business or profession, worked on their own farm, or worked 15 hours or more as unpaid workers on a family farm or in a family business; or (2) were "with a job but not at work" -- those who did not work during the reference week but had jobs or businesses from which they were temporarily absent due to illness, bad weather, industrial dispute, vacation, or other personal reasons. Excluded from the employed are people whose only activity consisted of work around the house or unpaid volunteer work for religious, charitable, and similar organizations; also excluded are people on active duty in the United States Armed Forces. The reference week is the calendar week preceding the date on which the respondents completed their questionnaires or were interviewed. This week may not be the same for all respondents.

EPA: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

ESA: Endangered Species Act



Family: A group of two or more people who reside together and who are related by birth, marriage, or adoption.

FEMA: Federal Emergency Management Agency

FIIP: Flathead Indian Irrigation Project

FLBS: Flathead Lake Biological Station

ft: Feet

FWP: Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks

GO: General Obligation

Gross Rent: The amount of the contract rent plus the estimated average monthly cost of utilities (electricity, gas, and water and sewer) and fuels (oil, coal, kerosene, wood, etc.) if these are paid for by the renter (or paid for the renter by someone else). Gross rent is intended to eliminate differentials which result from varying practices with respect to the inclusion of utilities and fuels as part of the rental payment.

HCZD: Highway Commercial Zoning District

HOME: Montana Home Investment Partnerships Program

Household: A household includes all the people who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence.

Housing Unit: A house, an apartment, a mobile home or trailer, a group of rooms, or a single room occupied as separate living quarters, or if vacant, intended for occupancy as separate living quarters. Separate living quarters are those in which the occupants live separately from any other individuals in the building and which have direct access from outside the building or through a common hall. For vacant units, the criteria of separateness and direct access are applied to the intended occupants whenever possible.

km(s): Kilometer(s)

LATAs: Local Access and Transport Areas

LCRD: Lake County Roads Department

LCSD: Lake County Sheriff's Department

LRZD: Low Density Residential District

m: Meters



MBI: Montana Board of Investments

MBMG: Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology

MBOH: Montana Board of Housing

MCA: Montana Code Annotated

MDOC: Montana Department of Commerce

MDT: Montana Department of Transportation

Mean: This measure represents an arithmetic average of a set of numbers. It is derived by dividing the sum of a group of numerical items by the total number of items in that group. For example, mean family income is obtained by dividing the total of all income reported by people 16 years and over in families by the total number of families.

Median: This measure represents the middle value (if n is odd) or the average of the two middle values (if n is even) in an ordered list of data values. The median divides the total frequency distribution into two equal parts: one-half of the cases fall below the median and one-half of the cases exceed the median.

Median Income: The median income divides the income distribution into two equal groups, one having incomes above the median, and the other having incomes below the median.

Median Family Income (MFI) is the middle income value taken for all families, defined as a group of two or more people who reside together and who are related by birth, marriage or adoption. MFI in Polson is \$30,833. The calculation of 120 percent of Polson's MFI generates \$37,000. Median Family Income is different from Median Household Income, which is the middle value taken for all households. A household includes all people who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence. Median Household Income in Polson is \$21,870.

mi: Miles

Mortgage and Associated Costs: Mortgage and Associated costs are derived from the US Census Bureau data regarding "Selected Monthly Owner Costs." In the Census 2000, the selected monthly owner costs are calculated from the sum of payment for mortgages, real estate taxes, various insurances, utilities, fuels, mobile home costs, and condominium fees. Listing the items separately improves accuracy and provides additional detail. When combined with income, a new item is created - Selected Monthly Owner Costs as a Percentage of Household Income. This item is used to measure housing affordability and excessive shelter costs. For example, many government agencies define excessive as costs that exceed 30 percent of household income.

MNHP: Montana Natural Heritage Program

MPC: Montana Power Company



MRZD: Medium Density Residential District

msl: Mean Sea Level

MVP: Mission Valley Power

NAAQS: National Ambient Air Quality Standards

NAICS: North American Industry Classification System, or NAICS, classifies industries using two-, three-, four-, five-, and six-digit levels of detail. Two-digit codes represent sectors, the broadest classifications. Six-digit codes represent individual industries in the U.S. The North American Industry Classification System was developed by representatives from the United States, Canada, and Mexico, and replaces each country's separate classification system with one uniform system for classifying industries. In the United States, NAICS replaces the Standard Industrial Classification, a system that federal, state, and local governments, the business community, and the general public have used since the 1930s.

NEA: National Endowment for the Arts

NEPA: National Environmental Policy Act

NFIP: National Flood Insurance Program

NFPA: National Fire Protection Association

Not in Labor Force: Not in labor force includes all people 16 years old and over who are not classified as members of the labor force. This category consists mainly of students, housewives, retired workers, seasonal workers interviewed in an off season who were not looking for work, institutionalized people, and people doing only incidental unpaid family work (less than 15 hours during the reference week).

NLCD: USGS National Land Cover Dataset

NPS: Non-Point Source

NRCS: Natural Resources Conservation Service

OAQPS: Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards

OEDP: Overall Economic Development Program

Overlay District: In addition to zoning districts, the city has delineated several overlay districts, including airport safety, railyard, resort residential, Salish Point, and wellhead protection overlay districts. Within these areas, regulations applicable to the underlying zoning districts have been modified to accommodate safety concerns or special land uses.



PDC: Polson Development Corporation

PCDA: Polson Community Development Agency

Per Capita Income: Average obtained by dividing aggregate income by total population of an area.

PFD: Polson Fire Department

PFI: Polson Fairgrounds, Inc.

Place: A concentration of population either legally bounded as an incorporated place, or identified as a Census Designated Place (CDP), including comunidades and zonas urbanas in Puerto Rico. Incorporated places have legal descriptions of borough (except in Alaska and New York), city, town (except in New England, New York, and Wisconsin), or village.

Planned Unit Development (PUD): A program that allows more flexibility in development practices than traditional zoning. The PUD concept can be applied to encourage creative mixes of land uses, preservation of open spaces, and greater variety and aesthetic value in physical development patterns. PUD zoning may be required to meet overall community density and land use goals without being bound by requirements such as minimum lot standards, set-back requirements, and land use categories.

PLZD: Productive Lands Zoning District

PM10: Particulate Matter, including those particles with an aerodynamic diameter smaller than 10 micrometers.

PM2.5: Particulate Matter, including those particles with an aerodynamic diameter smaller than 2.5 micrometers.

PMP: Polson Master Plan

Poverty: Following the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB's) Directive 14, the Census Bureau uses a set of money income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to detect who is poor. If the total income for a family or unrelated individual falls below the relevant poverty threshold, then the family or unrelated individual is classified as being "below the poverty level."

PPD: Polson Police Department

PRA: Polson Redevelopment Agency

PRD: Polson Roads Department



Purchase of Development Rights: A program using public funds to purchase development rights of a parcel of land and permanently retire those rights. When a landowner sells his development rights, he still owns the land and may use it for agriculture and forestry purposes, but residential development cannot legally occur.

PVC: Polyvinyl Chloride

RECD: U.S. Rural Economic and Community Development Agency

RRZD: Rural Residential Zoning District

RV: recreational vehicle

RWRCC: Reserved Water Rights Compact Commission

RZD: Resort Zoning District

SDWIS: Safe Drinking Water Information System

Selected Monthly Owner Costs: In Census 2000 the selected monthly owner costs are calculated from the sum of payment for mortgages, real estate taxes, various insurances, utilities, fuels, mobile home costs, and condominium fees. Listing the items separately improves accuracy and provides additional detail. When combined with income, a new item is created - Selected Monthly Owner Costs as a Percentage of Household Income. This item is used to measure housing affordability and excessive shelter costs. For example, many government agencies define excessive as costs that exceed 30 percent of household income

SHPO: State Historic Preservation Office

SID: Special Improvement District

sq: Square

SRF: Montana State Revolving Loan Fund

SWMD: Lake County Solid Waste Management District

TANF: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

Tenure: Refers to the distinction between owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing units.

TIF District: Tax Increment Financing District

TLOD: Tribal Law and Order Department



Transfer of Development Rights: A program encouraging private purchase of development rights on certain parcels of land in order to encourage development in other areas. When a landowner sells his development rights, he still owns the land and may use it for agriculture and forestry purposes, but residential development cannot legally occur. The person or legal entity that purchases the development rights may use those rights to build more residential units on land owned within a designated area than zoning would normally allow. Local governments generally designate “sending areas” and “receiving areas” in order to encourage future development in areas that can accommodate growth through existing and/or planned provision of infrastructure.

TSEP: Treasure State Endowment Program

TZD: Transitional Zoning District

U.S. 93: U.S. Highway 93

ug/m³: Micrograms per Cubic Meter

USDA: U.S. Department of Agriculture

USFWS: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

USGS: U.S. Geological Survey

Vacancy Status: Unoccupied housing units are considered vacant. Vacancy status is determined by the terms under which the unit may be occupied, e.g., for rent, for sale, or for seasonal use only.

Vacant Housing Unit: A housing unit is vacant if no one is living in it at the time of enumeration, unless its occupants are only temporarily absent. Units temporarily occupied at the time of enumeration entirely by people who have a usual residence elsewhere are also classified as vacant.

WIA: Workforce Investment Act

XRZD: Mixed-Use Residential District



Montana Growth Policy Statute

MCA § 76-1-601

- 1) A growth policy may cover all or part of the jurisdictional area.
- 2) A growth policy must include the elements listed in subsection (3) by October 1, 2006. The extent to which a growth policy addresses the elements of a growth policy that are listed in subsection (3) is at the full discretion of the governing body.
- 3) A growth policy must include:
 - a) community goals and objectives;
 - b) maps and text describing an inventory of the existing characteristics and features of the jurisdictional area, including:
 - i) land uses;
 - ii) population;
 - iii) housing needs;
 - iv) economic conditions;
 - v) local services;
 - vi) public facilities;
 - vii) natural resources; and
 - viii) other characteristics and features proposed by the planning board and adopted by the governing bodies;
 - c) projected trends for the life of the growth policy for each of the following elements:
 - i) land use;
 - ii) population;
 - iii) housing needs;
 - iv) economic conditions;
 - v) local services;
 - vi) natural resources; and
 - vii) other elements proposed by the planning board and adopted by the governing bodies;
 - d) a description of policies, regulations, and other measures to be implemented in order to achieve the goals and objectives established pursuant to subsection (3)(a);
 - e) a strategy for development, maintenance, and replacement of public infrastructure, including drinking water systems, wastewater treatment facilities, sewer systems, solid waste facilities, fire protection facilities, roads, and bridges;
 - f) an implementation strategy that includes:
 - i) a timetable for implementing the growth policy;
 - ii) a list of conditions that will lead to a revision of the growth policy; and
 - iii) a timetable for reviewing the growth policy at least once every 5 years and revising the policy if necessary;



- g) a statement of how the governing bodies will coordinate and cooperate with other jurisdictions that explains:
 - i) if a governing body is a city or town, how the governing body will coordinate and cooperate with the county in which the city or town is located on matters related to the growth policy;
 - ii) if a governing body is a county, how the governing body will coordinate and cooperate with cities and towns located within the county's boundaries on matters related to the growth policy;
 - h) a statement explaining how the governing bodies will:
 - i) define the criteria in 76-3-608(3)(a); and
 - ii) evaluate and make decisions regarding proposed subdivisions with respect to the criteria in 76-3-608(3)(a); and
 - iii) a statement explaining how public hearings regarding proposed subdivisions will be conducted.
- 4) A growth policy may:
- a) include one or more neighborhood plans. A neighborhood plan must be consistent with the growth policy.
 - b) establish minimum criteria defining the jurisdictional area for a neighborhood plan;
 - c) address the criteria in 76-3-608(3)(a);
 - d) evaluate the effect of subdivision on the criteria in 76-3-608(3)(a);
 - e) describe zoning regulations that will be implemented to address the criteria in 76-3-608(3)(a); and
 - f) identify geographic areas where the governing body intends to authorize an exemption from review of the criteria in 76-3-608(3)(a) for proposed subdivisions pursuant to 76-3-608.
- 5) The planning board may propose and the governing bodies may adopt additional elements of a growth policy in order to fulfill the purpose of this chapter.



Introduction

This growth policy is an official document adopted by the city of Polson that seeks to protect and enhance the area's resources while encouraging smart growth and economic development. It is intended to guide decisions about the physical, social, and economic development of the city of Polson through broad policy statements that are both comprehensive and long-range in nature. Although this document does not have the force of law, it may be used to provide the basis for future regulations, public expenditures, or other government programs or actions.

The authors of Montana's Growth Policy Act recognized that local governments may be challenged by the consequences of growth. Population growth can result in increasing demands for infrastructure such as roads and sewer systems, additional conflicts among land uses, and a greater number of regulatory reviews. The description and analysis of existing conditions and projected trends helps to define the scale and rate of growth that may be occurring in the community and is the first step in determining a thoughtful response. The identification of community goals and objectives helps to define areas where improvements or changes are needed and describes in broad terms how the community hopes to address those areas. Finally, the recommended set of implementation strategies suggests specific actions that may be used to manage future development and promote the best possible economic, environmental, and social conditions for the citizens of Polson.

Document Organization

This growth policy is divided into eleven chapters. As required by the Montana Growth Policy Act (§ 76-1-601, MCA), the first eight chapters use text and maps to describe the existing characteristics and features of the jurisdictional area that the policy will address. These include land uses, population, housing needs, economic conditions, local services, public facilities, natural resources, and cultural resources. The act also requires a discussion of projected trends for each of these elements (except public facilities) for the life of the growth policy. Chapter 9 presents Polson's goals and objectives and discusses various implementation strategies, including planning strategies, funding options, and regulatory tools. Chapter 10 discusses several additional requirements set out by Montana statute, including interjurisdictional cooperation, a



timeline for the implementation and review of the growth policy, and the subdivision review process. Chapter 11 lists references used for this document. The Appendix includes all written comments received during the public comment period between December 15, 2005 and January 31, 2006.

Polson's Planning Background

The *1986 Development Plan and Policy* was the city of Polson's first set of planning policies and regulations and was accompanied by a set of zoning and subdivision regulations. In 1993, the city of Polson adopted the *Polson Master Plan* and the *Polson Development Code*. These documents superseded previous planning efforts. The Polson City Council, the City / County Planning Board, the Lake County Board of Commissioners, the City and County Boards of Adjustment, a land use task force, and members of the public were involved in the development of the Master Plan.

In 1998, the Polson City Council adopted *Consider the Possibilities for Polson!*, a document that directed the establishment of the Polson Redevelopment Agency (PRA) to implement an urban renewal design plan for the central business district, Salish Point, the railyard, and the commercial/light industrial area

History of Polson

Polson is located at the southern end of Flathead Lake in northwestern Montana. Prior to non-Indian settlement in the early 19th century, the Flathead Lake region in northwest Montana was, for thousands of years, part of the region occupied by two major Salish-speaking Tribes – the Salish and the Pend d'Oreilles, and one band of the Kootenai Tribe.

The first non-Indian visitors to the Flathead Lake region were fur-traders who visited the area in the 1820's. Increasing commerce in the region required better transportation, and both Flathead River and Flathead Lake offered a convenient way to ship goods. The first ferry across the lower Flathead River at present-day Polson was operated by Abraham Finley. Finley, a French-Canadian, came to northwestern Montana in 1840 with Father DeSmet. Finley sold his ferry business to Baptiste Aeneas in 1869 and the log cabin that Aeneas built was Polson's first permanent (non-Indian) residence. In addition to the ferry, he operated a freight line from Missoula (called Hellgate at the time) to the foot of the lake.



In 1854, a government expedition under the leadership of Lt. John Mullan, en route to the Kootenai country to the west, followed the course of the Flathead River through the area. A year later, the Flathead Indian Reservation was created as a result of the 1855 Hellgate Treaty. The new Reservation included the lands that would later become the town site of Polson, Montana. Settlers gradually spread throughout the area and in 1883 the Northern Pacific railroad was built through the southern end of what is now Lake County. In the early 1880's, Harry Lambert established a trading post on the south shore of Flathead Lake and the area became known as "Lambert's Landing." In 1899, a post office was established at Lambert's Landing and was named for David Polson, one of the first non-Indian settlers who had been ranching in the area since 1884.

In 1904, the U.S. government authorized the allotment of parcels to Reservation and Tribal members, and in 1908, Congress authorized construction of the Flathead Irrigation Project. In 1910, a Presidential Proclamation opened "surplus" reservation lands to settlement. As a result, an increasing number of non-Indians settled much of the land in the valleys.

The town site of Polson was platted and the first lots were sold in 1909. The federal government appropriated \$6,000 for the deepening of the Polson Harbor so ample dock facilities would be available for the new and modern steamboats that were serving growing economic activity on Flathead Lake. In 1909 alone, \$250,000 worth of goods had been shipped or received at the harbor offices. Polson voted to incorporate and formed its municipal government on May 12th, 1910. C.M. Mansur, a local hardware merchant served the city as its first mayor. In September of 1911, the Polson public school opened, serving 143 students. The Polson General Hospital opened its doors two years later. At the same time, a number of businesses were established and Polson became a thriving and growing community.

In 1918, the Northern Pacific Railroad constructed a branch line from Dixon, Montana to Polson, fueling ongoing discussion about creating a new county. In 1923, Lake County was created from portions of Missoula and Flathead counties and Polson successfully vied with Ronan to be the new county's seat. Polson and Lake County grew during the 1930s as dry-land farmers from the plains area settled in the region. They had lost their original homesteads as a result of crop failures and low farm prices. While Polson and Lake County experienced steady growth until 1940, population declined between 1940 and 1944 as men and women entered the armed services or migrated to the Pacific coast to work in war-related industries.



While sweet cherries were grown all along the shores of Flathead Lake for decades, they were not produced commercially until the 1930s and early 1940s. At that time, area growers began experiencing excellent crops. They began planning for the packing and marketing of the crop and created the Flathead Sweet Cherry Association. The association operated as a cooperative and built a cherry warehouse that in turn generated the planting of additional orchards in the 1950s and 1960s.

On May 23rd, 1930, Rocky Mountain Power began construction of Kerr Dam, located eight miles south of Polson. The Great Depression stalled construction for five years, beginning in 1931. In 1936, the construction of the dam was resumed by the Montana Power Company (MPC), and on August 6, 1938, the dam was completed and named after Frank A. Kerr who was the president of MPC at the time. Upon completion, it consisted of one unit and a powerhouse. Additional power units were added in 1949 and 1954. In 1999, the MPC sold Kerr Dam to Pennsylvania Power and Light, Montana. The dam is 204 feet high, 450 feet long at the top, 100 feet long at the base, and contains 85,000 cubic yards of concrete. The dam storage capacity is 1,217,000 acre/ft and the water is kept at an elevation between 2,883 ft and 2,893 ft above sea level. Its total capacity is 210 mega-watts.



Wood products have also played an important part of Polson's history. As early as 1910, Polson was home to at least one saw mill and a cabinet works. For many years, Polson was the site of a lumber mill that processed primarily softwoods. The mill was originally opened in the early 1960s by the Dupuis Brothers Lumber, members of the Confederated Salish-Kootenai Tribes. The mill was later purchased by Pac River, an Idaho-based firm which was the fifth largest privately held timber company in the U.S. The Polson Mill was one of its smaller operations and was located on the hill coming into town. It employed about 250 people at the height of production. Pac River also operated a plywood plant in the community. Pac River's operations were closed in the mid 1990s.

Polson's transition from a regional commercial and trade center to a resort community occurred primarily during the latter half of the 20th century. The development of lakeshore



homes in earnest began in the late 1950s and 1960s, particularly by people from surrounding communities like Missoula and Kalispell.



1.0 Land Use

Chapter One addresses land uses in the Polson study area. This analysis is basic to effective land use planning and to the use of such implementation tools as zoning or subdivision regulations. This chapter includes maps showing various land uses within the study area, supported by descriptive, analytical documentation. This information can aid planning boards in the identification of logical, future development patterns.

1.1 Key Findings

Existing Land Uses

Residential

- Low density residential areas are evenly scattered within the incorporated boundaries of Polson.
- High density residential areas are concentrated near the central business district and in the northeast section of the city along U.S. 93. Smaller high density residential areas are scattered within the city boundaries.



Commercial

- Commercial/industrial developments are primarily located in the downtown central business district, between of 7th Avenue East and 11th Avenue East in a commercial/industrial district, and between 8th Avenue West and 11th Avenue West in a medium density residential district. Commercial/industrial areas are also positioned along U.S. 93 on either side of Polson and between the west bank of the Flathead River and Irvine Flats Road.

Agricultural

- Irrigated agricultural lands are located south of Polson and fill the entire planning area south of Pablo Feeder Canal Road in the productive lands zone. Irrigated agricultural lands are also found to the east of the city between U.S. 93 and the lakeshore in low density, mixed-use, and rural residential zoning districts.

Ownership

- The majority of land within the two-mile study area is privately owned, accounting for 12,815 acres. Local governments own a total of 1,153 acres, the state of Montana owns 728 acres, and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes own nearly 3,000 acres of land within the study area.



Growth Trends

- The city of Polson grew from 1,152 acres in 1990 to 1,733 acres in 2000.
- Between 1990 and 2000, the city boundaries expanded to the northeast along the Flathead Lake shoreline, along Highway 35, to the east and southeast, and to the west along the Flathead River.
- Areas of future residential growth may include west, southwest, south, southeast, and east of the city, and to the northwest and northeast along the shoreline of Flathead Lake.
- Areas of future economic growth may include the central business district, the two commercial/industrial districts located in the city center and along the east bank of the Flathead River, sites along U.S. 93, and Salish Point.

1.2 Historic Land Uses

Thousands of years ago, a single Salish-speaking Tribal group divided into several bands that occupied much of the northwest. Included in this group were Bitterroot Salish, Pend d'Oreilles, Kalispel, and Spokane Indians, among other tribes. Some of these groups lived throughout Montana from the Bitterroot to the Yellowstone valleys. The Pend d'Oreilles settled in the Flathead Valley and a band of Kalispel settled along the Flathead River.

The Salish and Kootenai Tribes moved seasonally to hunting and fishing grounds. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the loss of bison herds and the westward movement of non-Indians forced the Tribes to concentrate most settlements in the valleys west of the Continental Divide. In 1855, the Flathead Indian Reservation was created as a result of the Hellgate Treaty. Under the treaty and an 1871 Executive Order, the Kootenai, Pend d'Oreilles, and Salish Tribes were forced to relocate to the Jocko Reserve (now called the Flathead Reservation).

Polson's first non-Indian residence was a log-cabin built in 1869 by Baptiste Aeneas, who operated a ferry across the lower Flathead River at the site of present-day Polson. A man named Harry Lambert settled nearby to Aeneas and began operating a general store. Many people were attracted to the settlement and built additional residences in the area.

Residential and commercial development in the city of Polson originated in the older sections of downtown. Development has since spread outward away from the lake. Between 1900 and 1910, a total of 47 buildings were constructed in the city. Construction activities increased after this period, with an average of 140 new buildings every decade between 1910 and 1966.

According to the *1986 Polson Development Plan*, residential areas occupied 177.6 acres, or 56.8 percent of total land within the Polson city boundaries. From a total of 312.4 acres within



the city, vacant lots occupied 58.3 acres, or 18.7 percent of city lands; 19.1 acres, or 6.1 percent of land, was used for commercial purposes; 14.8 acres, or 4.7 percent, was dedicated to industrial uses; 32.5 acres, or 10.4 percent of lands, were used for public and semi-public buildings; with all remaining lands used for parks, streets, and alleys. At that time, residences were scattered throughout the city, whereas businesses were located primarily in the northwest area of Polson and industrial facilities occupied the central area of town. Building age distribution did not clearly show a direction of growth. With the lake bounding the city on the north, growth progressed south and west, but without a discernible pattern.

As noted in the *1986 Polson Development Plan*, agricultural lands accounted for 6,194.4 acres, or 68.4 percent of the outlying study area, which totaled 9,050.6 acres. An additional 1,536.2 acres, or 16.9 percent of lands, were vacant. Remaining lands were used for residential (613.2 acres, 6.8 percent), commercial (90.6 acres, 1.1 percent), industrial (129.5 acres, 1.4 percent), parks (170 acres, 1.9 percent), and streets and alleys (295 acres, 3.3 percent).

1.3 Planning Area

As illustrated in Figure 1.1, the Polson planning area includes the area within a two-mile radius of the incorporated boundaries of the city of Polson, excluding Flathead Lake.



Polson Growth Policy - 2006

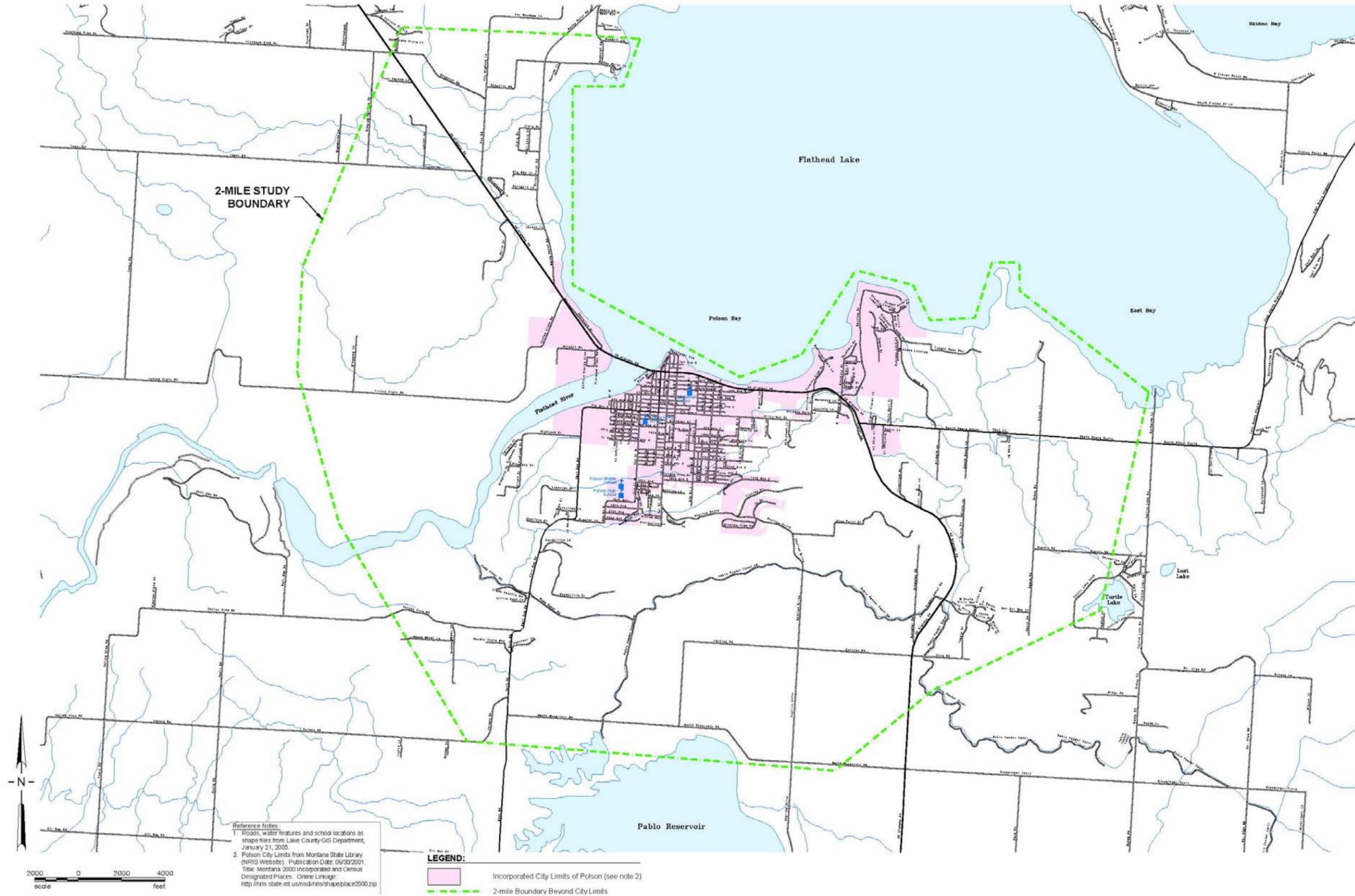


Figure 1.1 Planning Area Base Map



1.4 Land Use Regulations

The city of Polson established the *Polson Development Code* in 1993. Its purpose is to promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the people of the city of Polson and the surrounding jurisdictional area by implementing the regulatory strategies of the *Polson Master Plan*. The code requires a permit for all land development and building activity within the city and surrounding area. The city cannot assert planning or zoning authority on lands owned or otherwise controlled by the Tribes, their members, or the United States in trust for the Tribes.

Zoning

As illustrated in Figure 1.2, the city of Polson has delineated several zoning districts within which development of certain land uses and buildings is permitted upon approval of a development permit, and certain other land uses are permitted upon approval of a special use permit. All other land uses are prohibited. Permitted uses for each of the zoning districts are listed in the *Polson Development Code*.

The central business zoning district (CBZD) is located in the city center on either side of U.S. 93. This 80.6 acre area comprises the “commercial core” of the city and accounts for less than one percent of the two-mile study area. The district provides an area for uses that depend on pedestrian circulation and a central location. Just to the south and southwest of this area are two commercial/industrial zoning districts (CIZDs). Commercial/industrial districts also extend along the west side of U.S. 93. These areas, which occupy 504.9 acres or five percent of the study area, accommodate a wide range of commercial and industrial uses that do not rely on direct highway access or a central business location. Developments in these areas may not rely on principal access through rural, low or medium density residential areas. There are no minimum lot size requirements for the central business or commercial/industrial districts.

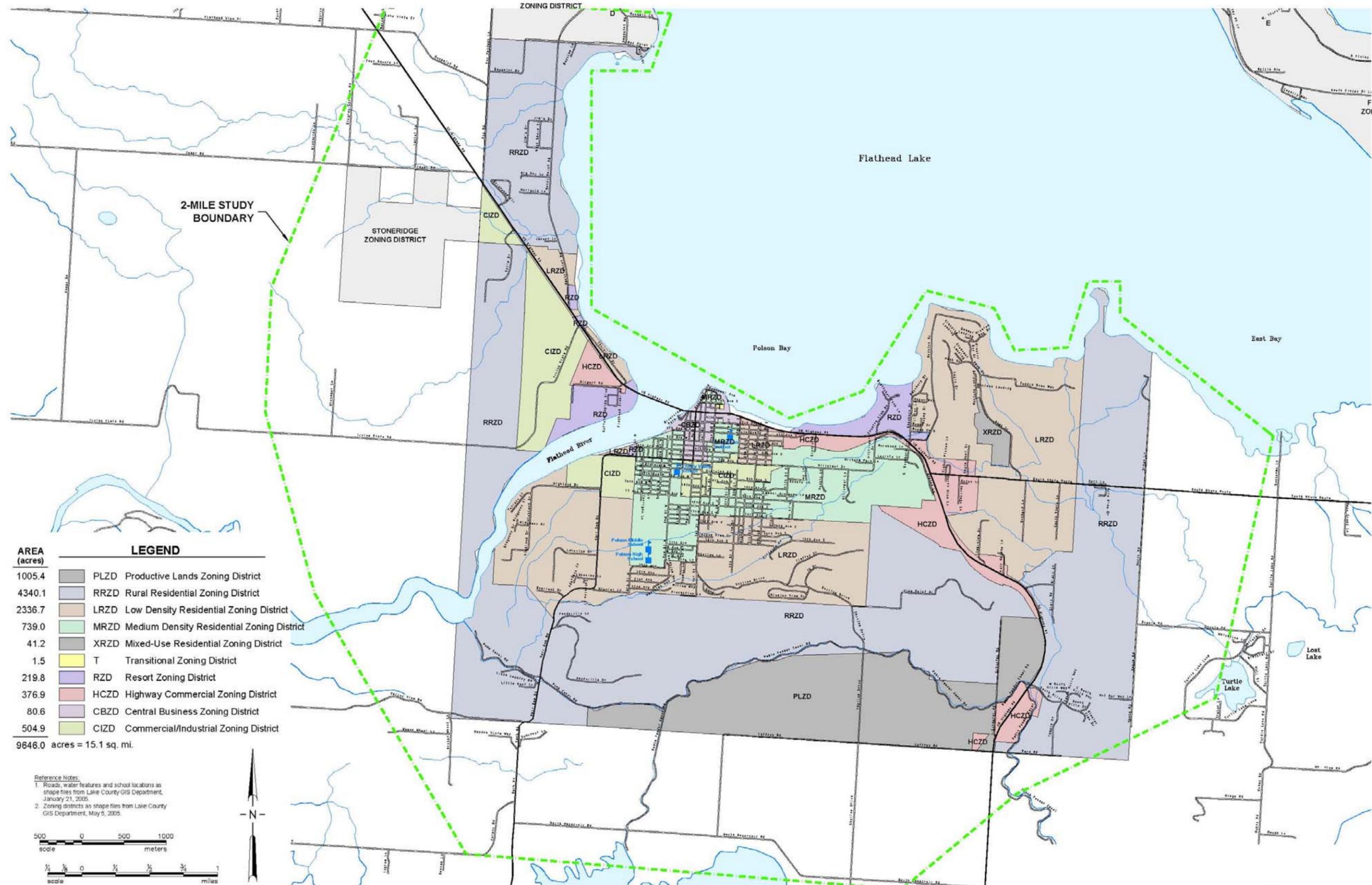


Figure 1.2 Zoning Districts



Several highway commercial zoning districts (HCZD) extend along both sides of U.S. 93 on either side of Polson. These districts, which total 376.9 acres or nearly four percent of the study area, provide a place for commercial uses that rely on immediate automobile access. Commercial developments that require extensive outdoor sales space are also accommodated in these areas. Because the view from the highway is critical to the city's image, all new developments in these districts require a special use permit. Development in these districts must be designed and constructed to minimize the "strip" development pattern. Further, commercial developments in these areas may not rely on principal access through rural, low or medium density residential areas. There are no minimum lot size requirements for these districts.

Medium density residential districts (MRZD) and low density residential districts (LRZD) surround the commercial and business districts. Low density residential and mixed-use residential districts (XRZD) extend east of town between U.S. 93 and the lakeshore. To the west of the Flathead River, low density residential areas also stretch along the east side of the highway. Low density districts cover 24 percent of the study area (2,337 acres), while medium density districts occupy 7.5 percent of the study area (739 acres), and mixed-use districts account for less than one percent of the study area (41.2 acres). These residential zoning districts are intended for neighborhoods of single and multiple family dwellings that are connected to municipal utilities. Minimum lot size in low density areas is 7,000 square feet. The minimum lot or mobile home space in medium density areas is 7,000 square feet for permitted uses and 5,000 square feet for special permit uses, with an additional 1,000 square foot lot required for each additional unit of multiple-family dwellings. In mixed-use areas, the minimum lot size is 5,900 square feet for a single family dwelling, 3,400 square feet for a townhouse, and 5,000 square feet for special permit uses.

A very small transitional zoning district (TZD) covering 1.5 acres is located between the central business district and a medium density residential district. This area is intended to provide a well-planned transition from predominantly single-family residential areas to high density residential areas or commercial use areas. Transitional developments must comply with performance standards designed to protect existing residences. Minimum lot size standards for the transitional zoning district are identical to those for medium density districts.

A resort zoning district (RZD) is located along the Flathead Lake shoreline and U.S. 93. A large resort district is also situated along the west bank of the Flathead River, with a smaller



section on the east bank. These districts occupy just under 220 acres, or two percent of the study area, and permit mixed high density residential uses and resort commercial development.

Because the lakeshore is critical to the city's quality of life, new uses in these districts require special use permits. Appropriate commercial uses for these districts include hotels, recreational vehicle parks, restaurants, retail sporting goods stores, guide services, and marinas. These uses must pose no threat to water quality. Additionally, developments in these areas must be designed and constructed to afford views from adjoining public streets and sidewalks/trails to the lake. Minimum lot standards for both residential and commercial developments within resort districts are identical to those for medium density districts, except that minimum lot size requirements may be converted to a maximum average density requirement of eight dwelling units per acre. A lot coverage incentive is also offered for provision of public access to the shoreline.

Several large rural residential zoning districts (RRZDs) covering 4,340 acres, or 45 percent of the study area, surround the areas to the northwest, west, south and east of Polson. These expansive districts permit residential development on suitable sites within the jurisdictional area, but not where such development will impede the city's expansion. These areas are the only districts in which livestock may be kept on residential lots or parcels as a permitted accessory use. The minimum lot size for these districts is one acre for lakefront property, and two acres for all other properties.

South of the city boundaries and the rural district, a productive lands zoning district (PLZD) covers just over 1,000 acres, or ten percent of the study area. This district is intended to encourage continuing agriculture and mineral production in the Polson area. Minimum lot sizes for the limited residential developments permitted in these districts are the same as those for rural residential districts.

Overlay Districts

In addition to zoning districts, the city has delineated several overlay districts, including airport safety, railyard, resort residential, Salish Point, and wellhead protection overlay districts. Within these areas, regulations applicable to the underlying zoning districts have been modified to accommodate safety concerns or special land uses.



1.5 Existing Land Uses

Residential

Figure 1.3 illustrates information from the 1992 USGS National Land Cover Dataset (NLCD). As defined in the NLCD, low intensity residential areas are areas with a mixture of constructed materials and vegetation. Constructed materials account for 30 to 80 percent of the cover. Vegetation may account for 20 to 70 percent of the cover. These areas most commonly include single-family units. Population densities are lower than those in high intensity residential areas. High intensity residential areas are defined as areas where people reside in high numbers. Examples include apartment complexes and condominiums. Vegetation accounts for less than 20 percent of the cover. Constructed materials account for 80 to 100 percent of the land cover.

As illustrated in Figure 1.3, low density residential areas are evenly scattered within the incorporated boundaries of Polson. High density residential areas are concentrated near the central business district and in the northeast section of the city along U.S. 93. Smaller high density residential areas are scattered within the city boundaries. These areas fall within the appropriate low and medium density zoning districts. Data on the number of acres of residential development currently present in Polson is not available. Figure 1.3 is for planning purposes only and may not accurately reflect current land uses.

Commercial / Industrial

As defined in the NLCD, commercial/industrial/transportation areas include infrastructure (e.g. roads, railroads, etc.) and all highly developed areas not classified as high intensity residential. As illustrated in Figure 1.3, commercial/industrial developments are primarily located in the downtown central business district, between 7th Avenue East and 11th Avenue East in a commercial/industrial district, and between 7th Avenue West and 11th Avenue West in a medium density residential district. Commercial/industrial areas are also positioned along U.S. 93 on either side of Polson and between the west bank of the Flathead River and Irvine Flats Road. Other small commercial/industrial developments are scattered within the medium and low density residential areas throughout the city. Shopping areas are located primarily in the downtown central business district and at the intersection of U.S. 93 and Highway 35. Data on the number of acres of commercial/industrial development currently present in Polson is not available. Figure 1.3 is for planning purposes only and may not accurately reflect current land uses.

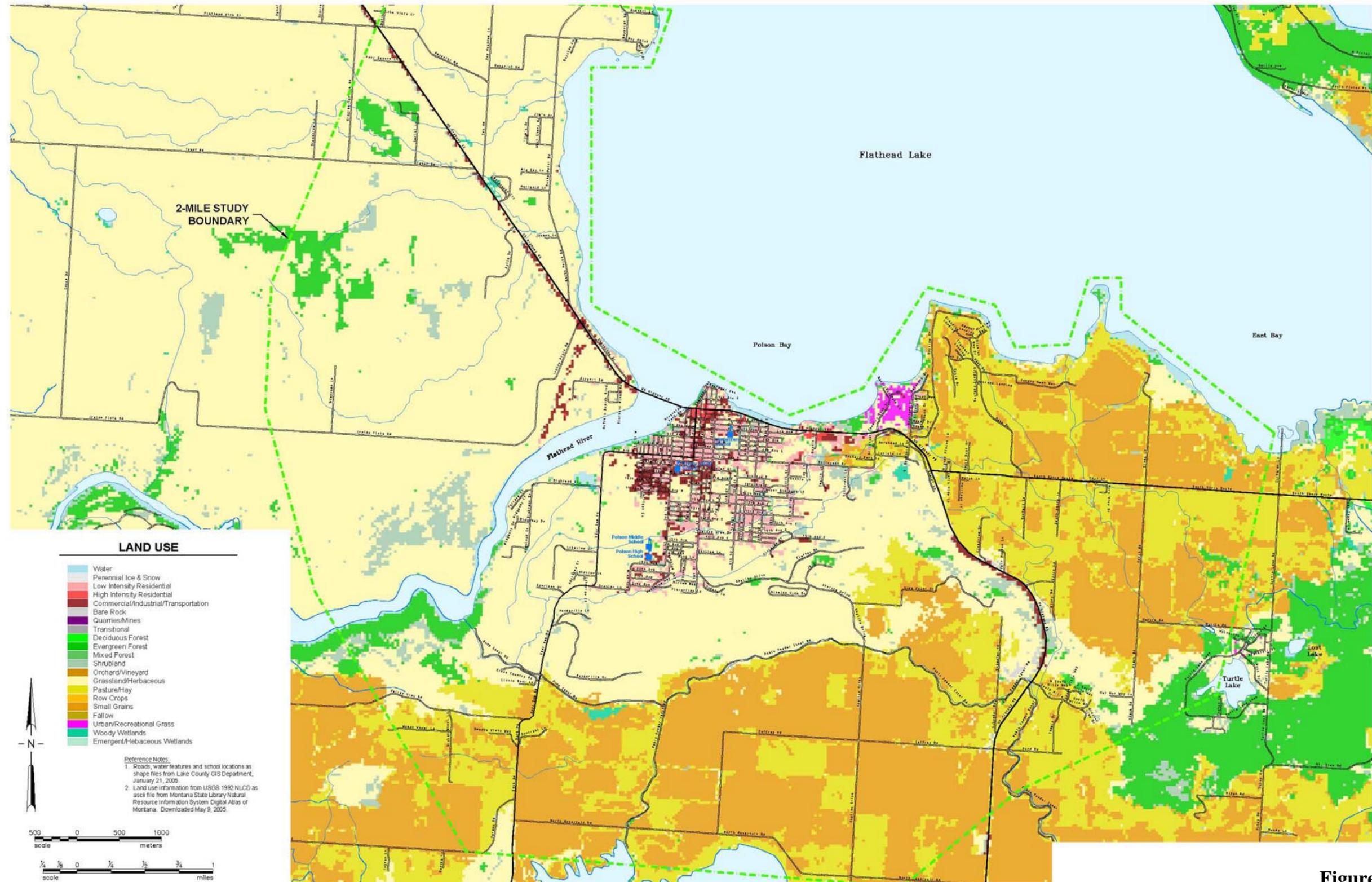


Figure 1.3 Land Use



Agriculture

As illustrated in Figure 1.4, there are a total of 9,075 acres of agricultural land within the two-mile study area. Of this, 2,570 acres (28.3 percent of the total area) is irrigated farmland; 2,500 acres (27.5 percent) is used for grazing; 1,665 acres (18.34 percent) is used for non-qualified agricultural purposes; 1,369 acres (15 percent of total area) is fallow cropping; and 885 acres (9.75 percent) is used for hay production. An additional 86 acres (less than one percent) is continuously cropped.

As illustrated in Figure 1.4 and Figure 1.5, private and Tribally-owned irrigated agricultural lands are located south of Polson and fill the entire planning area south of Pablo Feeder Canal Road in the productive lands zone. Irrigated agricultural lands are also found to the east of the city between U.S. 93 and the lakeshore in low density, mixed-use, and rural residential zoning districts. Isolated sections of irrigated lands are also positioned east of Kerr Dam Road in a low density residential district, near the east bank of the Flathead River adjacent to Highland Drive in a low density residential district, and near the city center in a medium density district. A continuously cropped area falls within a medium density residential district near the junction of U.S. 93 and Highway 35. Three other small cropped areas are found south of Hillcrest Drive between Devlin and Hillcrest Lanes in a medium density residential district, south of 11th Avenue E. between 8th Street East and 11th Street East in a medium density residential district, and adjacent to Kerr Dam Road and Grenier Lane in a low density residential district.

Figure 1.4 does not include Tribal agricultural lands and Figure 1.5 does not show all Tribal properties. These figures are for planning purposes only. More accurate and detailed records of land ownership and use are maintained by the respective jurisdictions.

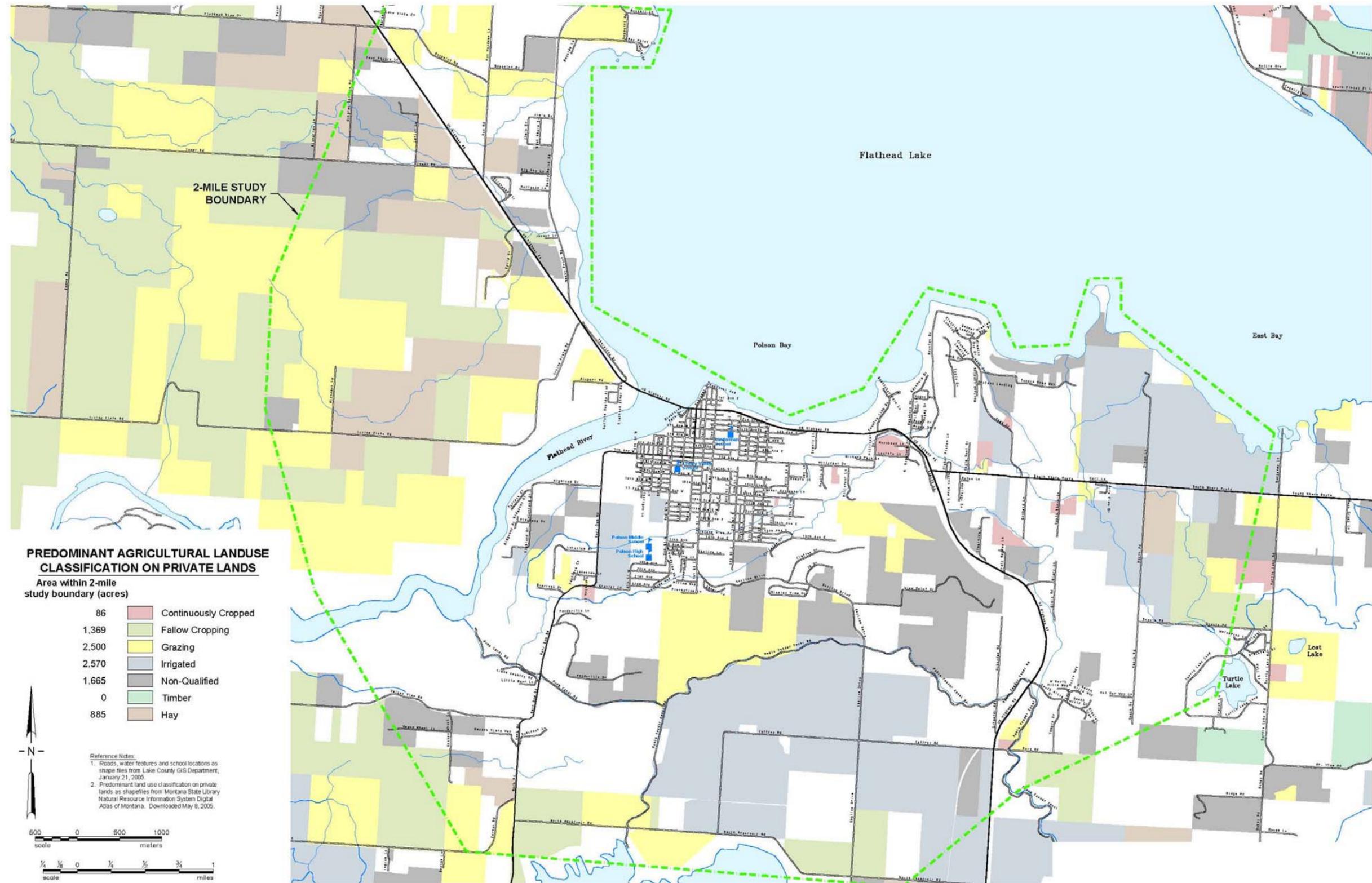


Figure 1.4 Parcel Agricultural Use

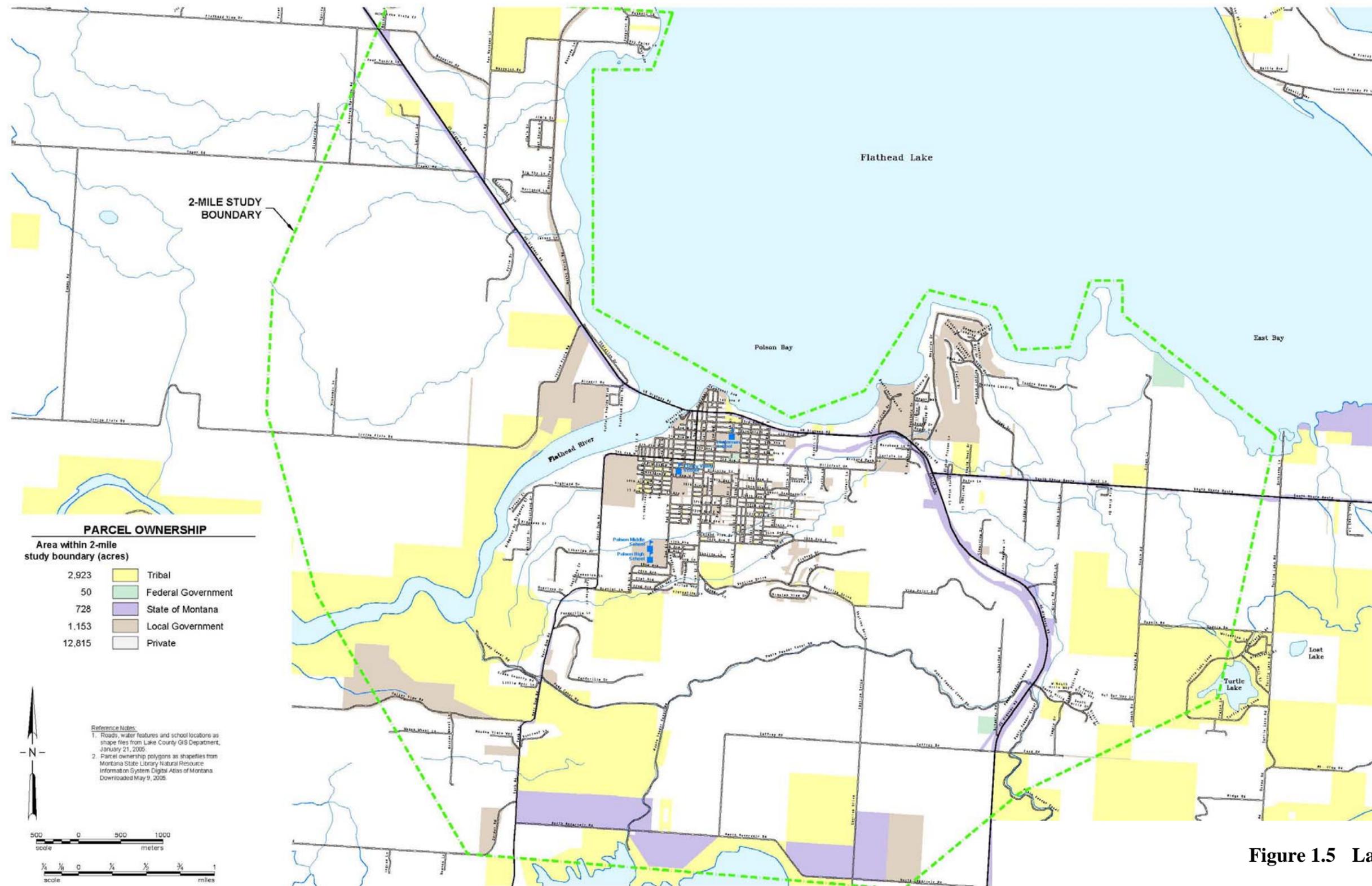


Figure 1.5 Land Ownership



Parcel Ownership

As illustrated by Figure 1.5, the majority of land within the two-mile study area is privately owned, accounting for 12,815 acres. Private lands are interspersed within the city center. Private lands also surround the city, with large areas to the northwest, west, south, and east of Polson.

There are many land areas owned by local or municipal government entities scattered throughout the city limits. Other large areas of land owned by local governments include a northeast section of the city along the Flathead Lake shoreline, an area to the west of Polson between Irvine Flats Road and the Flathead River, and an area adjacent to Kerr Dam Road and 7th Avenue West. Local governments own a total of 1,153 acres of land within the two-mile study area.

The state of Montana owns 728 acres of fee lands within the study area. These lands are located along U.S. 93, Highway 35, and to the south of Polson along North Reservoir Road.

According to Figure 1.5, the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) own 2,923 acres of land within the study area. Several of these land areas are interspersed within Polson's incorporated limits; others are located north of Skyline Drive just outside the city boundaries. The Tribes also own large areas of land southwest of Polson on both sides of the Flathead River and to the southeast surrounding Turtle Lake. Smaller areas of Tribal lands are located northwest of the city on either side of U.S. 93 and east of the city along Highway 35. Figure 1.5 does not show all Tribal properties. This figure is for planning purposes only. More accurate and detailed records of land ownership and use are maintained by the respective jurisdictions.

Growth Trends

As illustrated in Figure 1.6, the Polson city boundaries encompassed 838 acres in 1979. By 1990, the city had expanded to cover 1,152 acres, a 37 percent increase over the previous ten-year period. Between 1990 and 2000, the city grew by 50 percent to encompass 1,733 acres. Between 1990 and 2000, the city extended its boundaries to the northeast along the lakeshore and along Highway 35. The city also expanded to the east, the southeast, and the west along the Flathead River. These geographic areas correspond to changes in population density and septic tank density. (See Figures 2.4, 2.5, 6.1, and 6.2).



These growth trends are likely to continue. With the ongoing review of subdivision applications and the projected population growth of 31.6 percent over the next twenty years, the city may choose to continue to annex land just outside the city boundaries. Because Polson is bounded on the north by Flathead Lake, residential development will likely continue to spread to the west, southwest, south, southeast, and east of the city. Development could also expand to the northwest and northeast along the shoreline of Flathead Lake.

Areas of concentrated economic development currently include the central business district, the intersection of U.S. 93 and Highway 35, and along U.S. 93 on either side of Polson. With continued revitalization efforts, the central business district could strengthen and expand. Additionally, the two commercial/industrial districts located in the city center and along the east bank of the Flathead River are logical areas for economic growth. Sites along U.S. 93 will likely continue to host economic developments, especially tourism-related businesses. Salish Point may also prove to be a possible site for future economic activity.

As Polson chooses appropriate areas for future growth, factors to consider include the location and relative vulnerability of natural resources and current agricultural land uses. In addition to resource concerns, future growth may be shaped by the area's suitability for development in terms of slope and flood risk. The following existing condition chapters identify important resources and risk areas in order to help guide Polson's planning process.



2.0 Demographic Characteristics and Trends

Chapter Two analyzes Polson’s demographic conditions. Population projections constitute a critical component of comprehensive planning as they are the basis for estimating all other future needs in the community. Population projections help local government officials estimate the type and quantity of public facilities and services that will be required for the future. Population information is also useful in the preparation of other studies and analyses that may be called for in implementing a growth policy such as capital improvement, economic development, and housing plans.

2.1 Key Findings

Population

- The city of Polson has been in a steady pattern of growth since 1920, gaining population during each ten-year Census of the population. Growth, much of which is occurring through in-migration rather than internal growth, is expected to continue at a rapid rate into 2025. Polson is projected to grow at a rate of 31.6 percent over the next twenty years and gain nearly 1,400 people.

Characteristics of the Population

- Polson’s population is getting older, more educated, and less homogeneous as evidenced by:
 - an increasingly high median age, currently 38.6, that is higher than Lake County, the state of Montana, and the nation;
 - an average educational attainment level that has increased over time;
 - a growing percentage of people categorized as “American Indians” in the population and a decreasing percentage of people categorized as ‘white’ by the Census Bureau.

Households

- Polson has experienced an increase in its number of households over time, a trend expected to continue over the next twenty years (2005-2025) with the addition of 614 households.

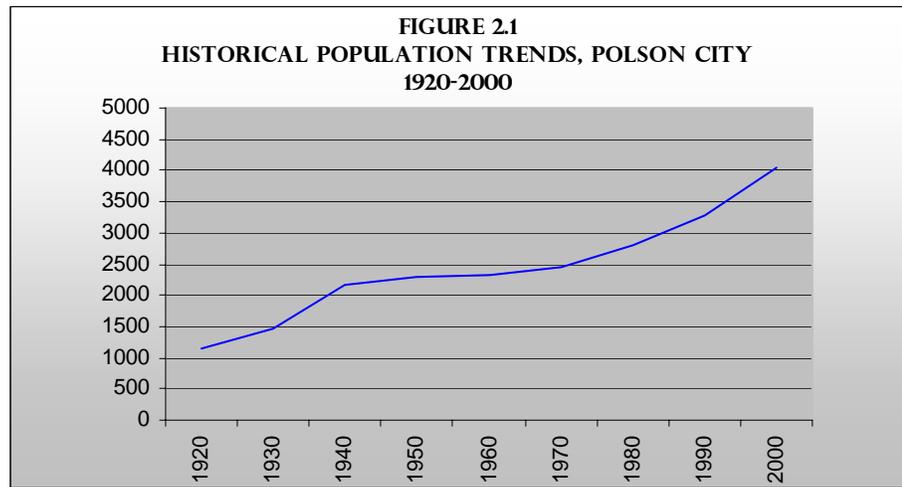


2.2 Population

Historical Trends

The city of Polson has been a part of the U.S Census Bureau's decennial Census count since 1920. As illustrated in Figure 2.1, the eight decades of record since that time have been marked by continuous growth for the community. While there have been intervals of decline within decades, the net overall change at each ten-year mark has been a change of positive growth.

The most dramatic growth for Polson occurred during the decades 1920-1940, when the population nearly doubled (from 1,132 to 2,156). Much of the growth during this period can be



attributed to a few important factors. First, the area experienced an influx of dry land farmers who had left the Montana plains to find more fertile lands in the northwestern part of the state. It was also during this period that sweet cherries became commercially marketed and the Kerr Dam was constructed.

Growth slowed after 1940, with the most sluggish growth occurring during the decade 1950-1960, when the community gained only 34 people for a growth rate of 1.49 percent. Growth accelerated again between 1980 and 1990 with a 17.62 percent rate of growth. (Refer to Table 2-1).



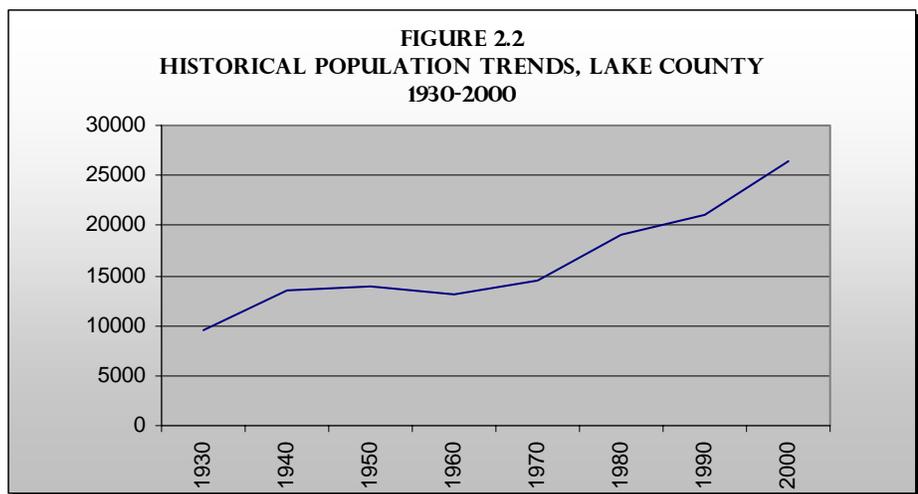
Table 2-1 Historical Population Trends - Growth Rates by Decade, 1920 – 2000

Decade	Polson City Growth Rate	Lake County Growth Rate	Montana Growth Rate
1920-1930	28.53%	*Data Unavailable	-2.06%
1930-1940	48.18%	41.39%	4.06%
1940-1950	5.75%	2.56%	5.64%
1950-1960	1.49%	5.28%	14.17%
1960-1970	6.48%	10.23%	2.91%
1970-1980	13.56%	31.92%	13.29%
1980-1990	17.62%	10.42%	1.57%
1990-2000	22.79%	25.98%	12.91%

Source: Based upon US Census Bureau Data: Population of Incorporated Places, 1890-2000.
**Lake County was not formed until 1923; Census data unavailable until 1930.*

During the most recent decade (1990-2000), Census data indicates a growth rate of 22.79 percent. While the number of people residing in Polson did increase by that percentage, approximately 42 percent of the growth can be attributed to expansion of the Polson city limits through annexation. According to Census figures, the population of Polson increased by 750 between 1990 and 2000. The impact of annexation during the period was the addition of an approximate 315 people. Net gains through births over deaths and in-migration amount to approximately 435, which is an approximate 13.2 percent increase in population between 1990 and 2000, factoring out annexation.

Polson, which became part of Lake County in 1923 (when the county was formed), made up 15.25 percent of the county’s population, according to the 2000 Census. Its portion of Lake County in 2000





equaled what it was in 1930, but fluctuated at times over the 70-year period, with a high of 17.66 percent in 1960 and a low of 14.58 percent in 1980. (Refer to Table 2-2).

Like Polson, Lake County also experienced periods of dramatic growth over the last 70 years. As illustrated in Figure 2.2 and Table 2-2, three periods marked the most dramatic increases in Lake County, including 1930-1940 when the population increased by 41.39 percent, 1970-1980 which saw a 31.92 percent increase, and the most recent decade, 1990-2000 when the county experienced growth at a 25.98 percent rate. Both Polson and Lake County grew by 178 percent between 1930 and 2000.

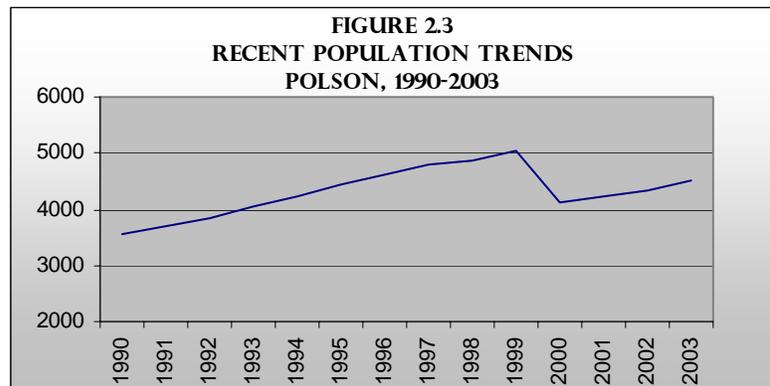
Decade	Lake County	Polson City	Percent of County
1930	9,541	1,455	15.25%
1940	13,490	2,156	15.98%
1950	13,385	2,280	16.48%
1960	13,104	2,314	17.66%
1970	14,445	2,464	17.06%
1980	19,056	2,798	14.68%
1990	21,041	3,291	15.64%
2000	26,507	4,041	15.25%

Source: US Census Bureau: Population of Incorporated Places, 1890-2000; Population of Montana Counties 1890-2000.

Polson’s population growth over the last 80 years outpaced growth for the state of Montana overall. The decade 1950-1960 was the only period during which Polson experienced slower growth than the state.

Recent Trends

Annual estimates of the population made available through the US Census Bureau indicate the city of Polson gained population steadily through the 1990’s but experienced a decline between 1999 and 2000. While





the actual ten-year change in population during the ten-year period 1990-2000 was an increase of 22.79 percent (closer to 13 percent when factoring out annexation), the decline that occurred between 1999 and 2000 indicated by Census estimates was at a rate of 17.96 percent —a loss of approximately 900 people. Because the analysis relied upon estimates of the population, it is possible the 1999 estimate was too high. Community planners and leaders have indicated they did not note a substantial change in the population during that period.

Population estimates for the years subsequent to the 2000 Census show Polson returning to a pattern of growth. The community gained over two percent per year for the period 2001 through 2002 and gained just over four percent in 2003, for a total gain of 369 people. (Refer to Table 2-3.) *(Note: Figures from the Census Bureau's population estimates program vary from actual decennial Census figures. The 2000 population figure from the decennial Census is 4,041. The Census estimate program estimates 4,129.)*

The number of people per square mile in the city of Polson is 1,491.14, according to 2000 Census reports. This is down from 1990 when population density was 1,823.9. The decrease is associated with annexation occurrences which added .91 square miles to Polson city limits between Census counts. As illustrated in Figures 2.4 and 2.5, the population density of areas surrounding Polson increased between 1990 and 2000.

Census Block level data was used to determine population and housing units within a two-mile radius surrounding Polson. In some cases, the two-mile boundary passed through a Census Block, and an approximate figure was drawn. The total for both population and housing units is, therefore, an approximation.

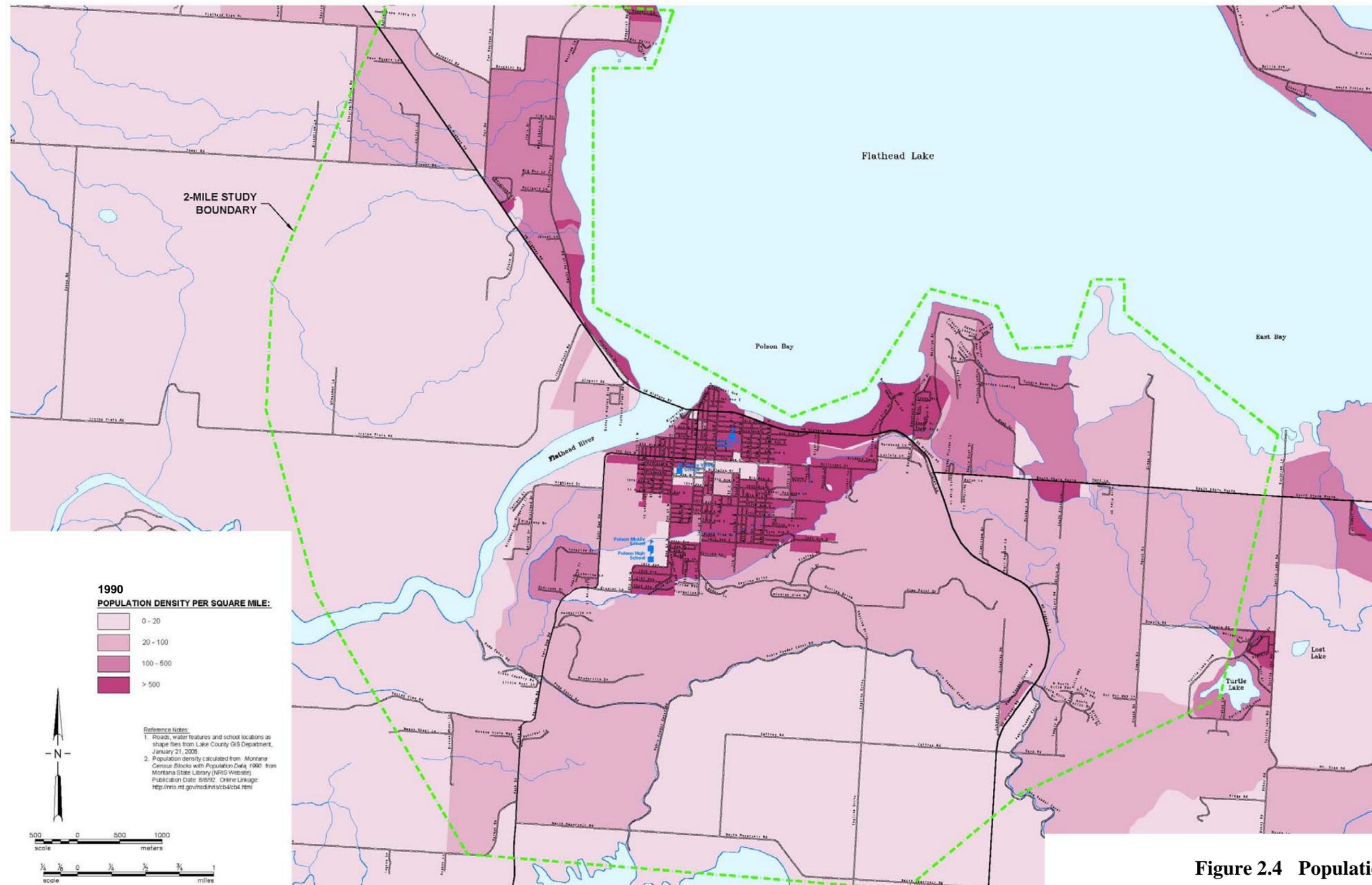


Figure 2.4 Population Density, 1990

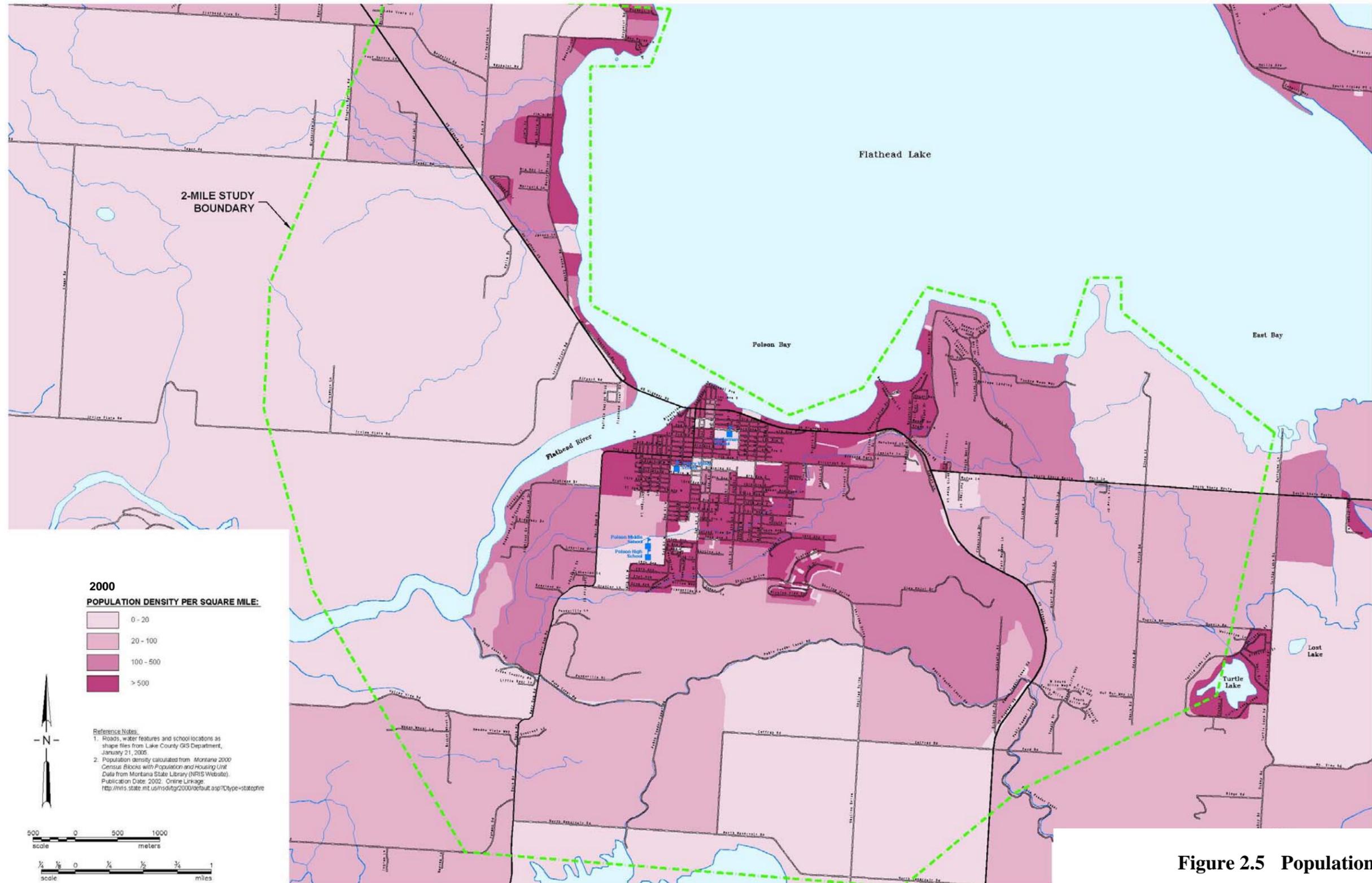


Figure 2.5 Population Density, 2000



The two-mile radius surrounding the city of Polson has a population of approximately 1,497 and contains approximately 683 housing units. The western shoreline within the two-mile radius contains approximately 160 people and 114 housing units.

Year	Lake County	Polson City	Percent of County
1990	21,046	3,563	16.93%
1991	21,578	3,703	17.16%
1992	22,052	3,846	17.44%
1993	22,965	4,053	17.65%
1994	23,640	4,241	17.94%
1995	24,441	4,455	18.23%
1996	24,967	4,631	18.55%
1997	25,421	4,784	18.82%
1998	25,557	4,866	19.04%
1999	25,885	5,033	19.44%
2000	26,628	*4,129	15.51%
2001	26,935	4,217	15.66%
2002	26,984	4,320	16.01%
2003	27,197	4,497	16.53%

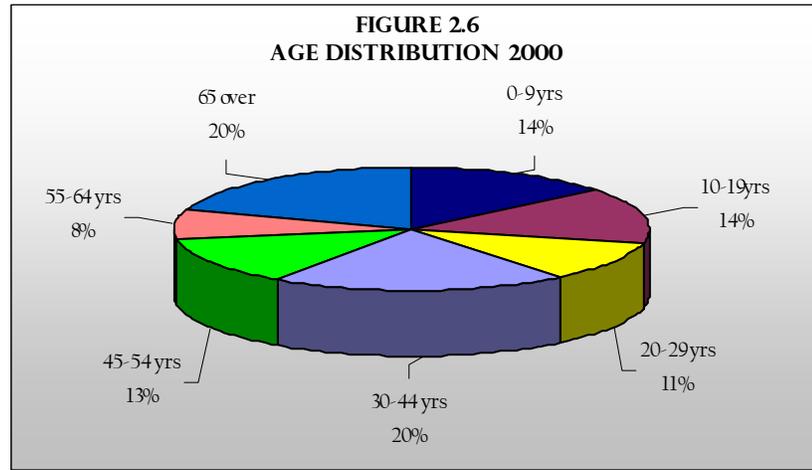
*Source: US Census Bureau: Annual Time Series, County Population Estimates 7-1-90 through 7-1-99 with revised 1990 Population Estimates for Places.
Population figure is taken from the U.S. Census Bureau estimates series and differs from the 2000 decennial Census figure. Annual population estimates are being used here to indicate recent trends.

Characteristics of the Population

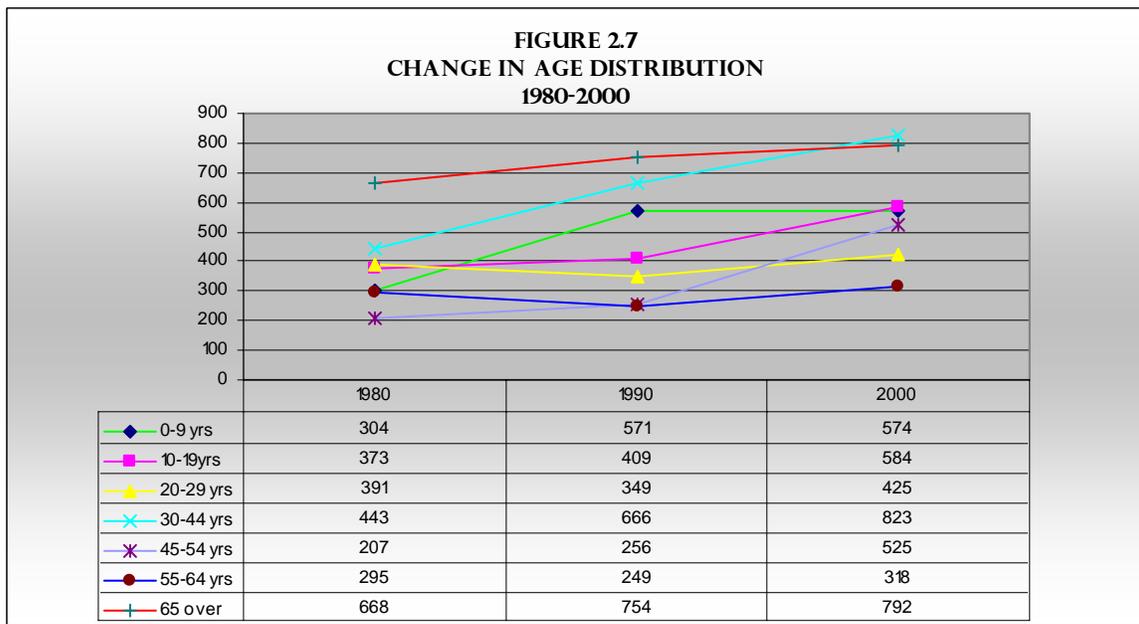
Age The median age for the city of Polson has gradually increased over the past ten years, going from 36 in 1990 to 38.6 in 2000. The increase follows global trends affected by declines in fertility and a twenty-year increase in the average life span during the second half of the 20th century. In combination with an elevated fertility rate during the two decades after World War II (the “baby boom”), the result nationally is expected to be an increase in the number of people 65 years of age and older by 2010 and through 2030. The median age for Polson provided by the 2000 Census was higher than it was for Lake County at 38.2, the state of Montana at 37.5, and the nation at 35.3.



According to the 2000 Census of Population and Housing, the age groups 30-44 and 65 and older constitute the largest age groups in Polson. The 30-44 age group has seen the most significant growth since 1980, increasing from



443 in 1980 to 666 in 1990 and then to 823 in 2000. While the group's percentage of the population increased from 16.52 percent in 1980 to 20.47 percent in 1990, the percentage remained flat between 1990 and 2000. (Refer to Figure 2.6, Figure 2.7, Table 2-4).



The age group 65 years and older, which was by far the largest age group in 1980, is now second to the 30-44 group. The age groups 10-19 and 45-54 experienced significant growth during the decade 1990-2000, while the 0-9 group, which grew between 1980 and 1990, experienced static growth during the last decade. The 20-29 and 55-64 age groups saw some



growth between 1990 and 2000 after a period of decline during the previous ten years. (Refer to Table 2-4.)

Flat growth in the number of pre-school and elementary school aged children in Polson between 1990 and 2000 correlates with recent school enrollment figures. If the pattern continues, it will have a negative impact on school enrollment into the future. Flat growth in the number of children in the age group 0-9 in the context of overall population growth also indicates that growth occurring in Polson is largely due to in-migration rather than natural, internal growth.

Table 2-4 Age Distribution, 1980 – 2000						
Age	1980	Percent of population	1990	Percent of Population	2000	Percent of population
0-9 years	304	11.34%	571	17.55%	574	14.20%
10-19 years	373	13.91%	409	12.57%	584	14.45%
20-29 years	391	14.58%	349	10.73%	425	10.52%
30-44years	443	16.52%	666	20.47%	515	20.37%
45-54 years	207	7.72%	256	7.87%	833	12.99%
55-64 years	295	11.00%	249	7.65%	318	7.87%
65 years and over	668	24.92%	754	23.17%	792	19.60%

Source: US Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing, 1980, 1990, 2000.

Gender The ratio of men to women in Polson has remained relatively constant over the last twenty years. Females comprise a larger percentage of the population than men. According to the 2000 Census, women make up 53.5 percent of the population and men constitute 46.5 percent. Gender distribution did not change between 1990 and 2000, according to Census figures. The percentages were slightly different in 1980 with females making up 52.8 percent and men 47.2 percent. Gender distribution in Polson is similar to the national distribution where women comprise 51 percent of the population and men 49 percent, according to 2000 Census figures.

Race Of the seven major race categories used by the Census Bureau, the majority of Polson residents are categorized as “white” according to the 2000 Census of Population and



Housing, as illustrated in Figure 2.8. While the “white” category comprised 78.2 percent of the population in 2000, the percentage has been decreasing since 1980, when the population was 98.4 percent “white”. (Refer to Table 2-5.) At the same time the percentage of people categorized as “white” has been decreasing, the percentage of people in the “American Indian or Alaskan Native” category has been increasing, going from 0.8 percent in 1980 to 16.1 percent in 2000, an increase of 454 people.

Ninety-four percent of people in the “American Indian or Alaskan Native” category fall into the subcategory of “American Indian” (613 of 651), primarily because Polson

is located within boundaries of the Flathead Indian Reservation. Thus, “American Indians” comprised 15.2 percent of Polson’s population in 2000. By comparison, “American Indians” accounted for 24 percent of the Lake County population in the 2000 at the time of the Census count.

Ethnicity and race are regarded separately by federal agencies, including the US Census Bureau. All people are classified in both a race category and in a category of either Hispanic or Non-Hispanic. The number of people who claimed a Hispanic or Latino ethnicity was minimal during the last 20 years with zero in 1980, 56 people in 1990, and 31 in 2000.

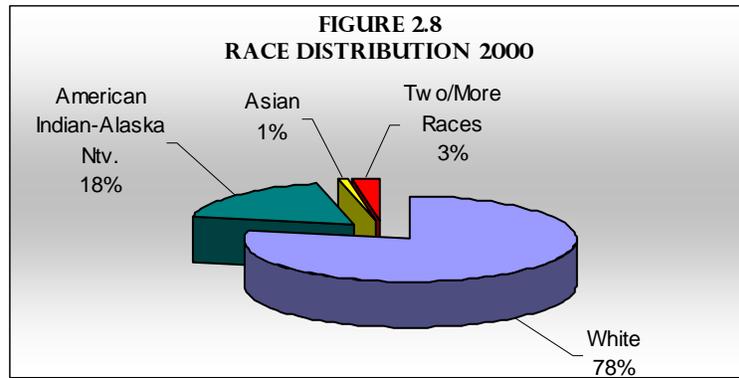




Table 2-5 Race Distribution, 1980 – 2000

Race	1980	Percent of population	1990	Percent of Population	2000	Percent of Population
White	2,637	98.4%	2,761	84.8%	3,162	78.20%
Black/African American	22	0.8%	0	0	6	0.10%
American Indian-Alaska Native	22	0.8%	476	14.6%	651	16.10%
Asian	0	0.0%	0	0	19	0.50%
Native Hawaiian-Pacific Islander	0	0.0%	0	0	3	0.10%
Other Race	0	0.0%	17	.6%	18	0.50%
Two or More Races	0	0.0%	0	0	182	4.50%
Hispanic or Latino	0	0.0%	56	1.8%	31	0.8%

Source: US Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing, 1980, 1990, 2000.

Educational Attainment An analysis of Census of Population and Housing figures pertaining to the educational attainment of Polson residents indicates the city’s population is becoming more educated, as shown in Table 2-6. The analysis refers only to persons 25 years of age and older. In both 1990 and 2000, the average educational attainment level fell into the range of ‘some college, no degree.’ However, in 2000, the average attainment level moved closer to the next category of ‘associate degree.’

Table 2-6 Educational Attainment – 25 Years of Age and Older, 1990 – 2000

Level	1990	Percent of Population	2000	Percent of Population
Less than 9th grade	218	9.23%	128	5.03%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	413	17.48%	293	11.51%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	944	39.95%	875	34.37%
Some college, no degree	357	15.11%	633	24.86%
Associate degree	133	5.63%	153	6.01%
Bachelor's degree	175	7.41%	332	13.04%
Graduate or professional degree	123	5.21%	132	5.18%

Source: US Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing, 1990, 2000.



While the percentage of high school graduates decreased during the ten-year period, the percentage of 25 and older residents who did not complete high school also decreased. Percentages for those completing some college increased, as did the percentage for those obtaining Associate and Bachelor degrees.

2.3 Households

Average Size The average size of a household in Polson increased between 1980 and 1990 from 2.16 to 2.28, and then slightly decreased in the decade 1990-2000 to 2.25. While Polson has not experienced steady decline in the average household size, as has been the national trend since the second half of the 20th century, Polson’s average household size remains lower than those of Lake County, the state of Montana, and the United States. (Refer to Table 2-7.)

Table 2-7 Average Household Size, 1980 – 2000						
	1980	1990	2000			
	Polson	Polson	Polson	Lake Co.	Montana	Nation
Average Size	2.16	2.28	2.25	2.54	2.45	2.59

Source: US Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing, 1980, 1990, 2000.

Number of Households The total number of households (both family and non-family) in Polson increased by 14.3 percent between 1980 and 1990 and 21 percent between 1990 and 2000. Like 2000 population figures for Polson, the growth in total households between 1990 and 2000 was also affected by annexations that occurred between Census counts. Annexations are responsible for approximately 42 percent of the population growth

Table 2-8 Total Number of Households, 1980-2000			
	1980	1990	2000
Polson	1,244	1,422	1,720
Lake County	6,658	7,814	10,233

Source: US Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing, 1980, 1990, 2000.

during the period. Applying the same percent to growth in households provides a way to approximate actual growth. The number of Polson households increased by 298 between 1990 and 2000. Forty-two percent of that figure (125 households) is attributable to annexation. The



remaining 173 households are attributable to actual growth. Factoring out annexation, the approximate growth rate is 12 percent. Households in Polson comprise 16.8 percent of total households in Lake County, down from 18.2 percent in 1990.

2.4 Projections

Population

The city of Polson accounted for 13.72 percent of the growth that occurred in Lake County between 1990 and 2000 (750 people out of 5,466). NPA Data Services Inc. has projected county populations into the year 2025, but no projections are available by place. Therefore, in order to provide population projections for Polson, the percent of growth that occurred in Lake County between 1990 and 2000 that the Polson community comprised was applied to growth projected for Lake County into 2025. Assuming Polson continues to maintain the same percentage of Lake County’s overall population growth into the future, the community is projected to gain almost 1,400 residents by the year 2025 for a total population of 5,755. (Refer to Table 2-9.) This represents a 42.4 percent increase in population for the period 2000-2025 and a 31.6 percent increase between 2005 and 2025. The annual average growth rate for the 20-year period 2005-2025 is projected to be 1.37 percent.

Table 2-9 Population Projections, 2005-2025					
	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Lake County	28,920	31,410	33,910	36,430	39,000
Polson	4,372	4,714	5,056	5,402	5,755

Source: Lake County population projections – NPA Data Services Inc., Population Projections. Polson population projections are extracted from Lake County figures with the assumption the community will continue to constitute 13.71% of the County’s growth.



Households

Projections for households in Polson are based upon population projections and the assumption that the average household size provided by the 2000 Census of Population and Housing will remain constant through 2025 (see Table 2-10 below). Using population projections and a fixed average household size of 2.25, projections for the number of households into the year 2025 indicate that Polson is expected to gain 614 new households—a growth rate of 31.6 percent. With the addition of 30.7 households per year, the total number of households in Polson is expected to reach 2,557 by 2025.

Table 2-10 Household Projections, 2005-2025					
	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Population	4,372	4,714	5,056	5,402	5,755
Average Household Size	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.25
Total Households	1,943	2,095	2,247	2,400	2,557
<i>Source: 2000 Census of Population and Housing.</i>					



3.0 Housing

Chapter Three presents a review of Polson’s housing conditions. Housing is central to the concept of community. This chapter describes the type, occupied status, size, location, and quality of housing in the city of Polson. The chapter also addresses the need for different housing types such as single and multi-family dwellings and the issue of affordability. The housing needs analysis can help suggest geographic areas in the community which appear most suitable for new development based on the availability of infrastructure or the feasibility of providing new infrastructure. It can also help form the basis for recommended changes in the community development codes to help address housing needs.

3.1 Key Findings

- Polson experienced a 24 percent increase in the number of housing units between 1990 and 2000 (a portion of which is attributable to annexations).
- Housing costs increased at a higher rate than median household income during the decade 1990-2000. Median contract rent and homeownership costs (mortgages and associated costs) rose by 71 percent. Median household income increased by 53.68 percent during the same period.
- Fifty-five percent (55 percent) of Polson households have annual incomes of less than \$25,000. Sixty-four percent (64 percent) of these households are renters. Forty percent (40 percent) of the renters in this income group pay more than 30 percent of their income for housing and, according to U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development standards, are experiencing a cost burden.
- The homeownership rate in Polson is 54 percent, far less than the rate for the state (69.1 percent) and the nation (66.2 percent).
- Vacancy rates for apartments appear to be very low in a market that is limited by supply rather than demand.



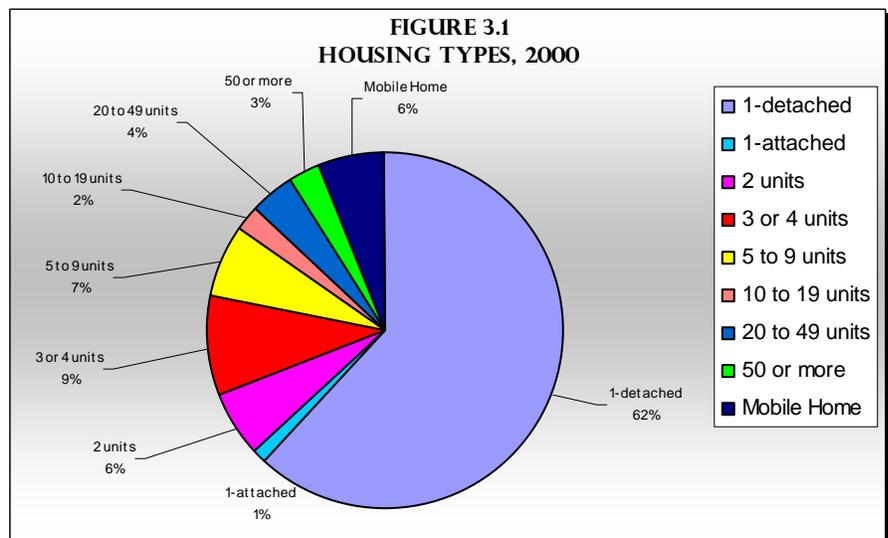
3.2 Housing Stock

Total Units The city of Polson had a total of 1,938 housing units in 2000 according to the 2000 Census of Population and Housing. The Turtle Lake Housing Addition, located outside the city of Polson in the eastern portion of the Polson planning area, consists of approximately 80 homes. The Polson community gained 377 units between 1990 and 2000 - a 24 percent increase over the 10-year period. Annexations that occurred in Polson between the 1990 and 2000 Census counts are responsible for approximately 42 percent of the population growth during the period. Applying the same percent to growth in housing units provides a way to approximate actual growth. The number of housing units increased by 377 between 1990 and 2000. Forty-two percent of that figure (158 households) is attributable to annexation. The remaining 219 housing units are attributable to actual growth. Accordingly, actual growth in housing units, factoring out annexations, is closer to 14 percent or 219 homes.

The number of building permits issued by the Polson Building and Planning Department between June 2001 and March of 2005 suggest that another 165 units have been added to the housing stock since the 2000 Census. The additional units would bring the total number of units to 2,103 - an 8.5 percent increase for the period 2000-2005.

Categories of

Housing The housing stock in Polson has historically been and continues to be characterized by a predominance of single-family detached units. Single-family homes comprise almost 62 percent of the community's housing stock, according to the 2000



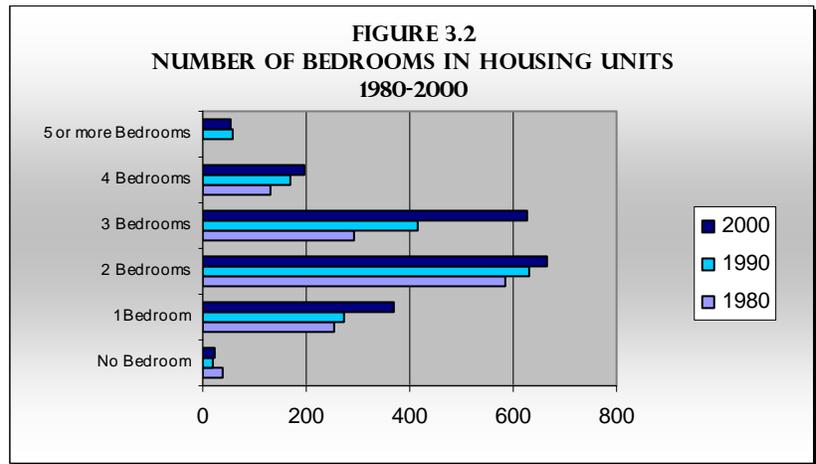
Census of Population and Housing, compared with 61 percent in 1990 and 64 percent in 1980. Further, 82.4 percent of the building permits issued between 2001 and 2005 were for single-family homes. The percentage of single-family detached units is comparable to the national



percentage of 60.2 percent and is slightly lower than the state percentage of 67 percent. The percentage of the housing stock in Lake County that is single-family detached is higher at 75 percent.

Multi-family housing comprises 31 percent of Polson’s housing stock, up from the 26 percent in 1990. Twenty-nine building permits were issued in Polson between June 2001 and March 2005 for multi-family units that would ultimately contain 123 apartments. The number of mobile homes decreased between 1990 and 2000, going from nine percent of total units (148) in 1990 to six percent of total units (121) in 2000.

Size of Units The size of a housing unit is measured here by the number of bedrooms contained within the unit. In Polson, two-bedroom units have historically and continue to comprise the largest group of housing units. However, the most notable change in the distribution of unit sizes since 1980 is growth in the number of three-bedroom units. These



units, which once comprised 22.59 percent of total units, now make up 32.40 percent. The actual number of three-bedroom units increased by 114 percent over the two decades since 1980 and increased by 51.6 percent between 1990 and 2000.

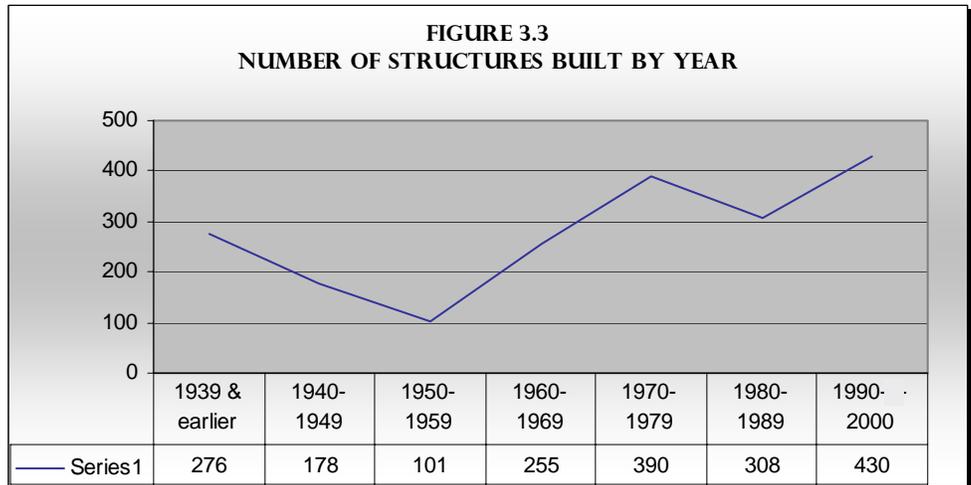
Unit Size	1980	1990	2000
No Bedrooms	2.93%	1.22%	1.19%
1 Bedroom	19.43%	17.49%	19.14%
2 Bedrooms	44.95%	40.36%	34.42%
3 Bedrooms	22.59%	26.52%	32.40%
4 Bedrooms	10.10%	10.83%	10.17%
5 or More Bedrooms	0.00%	3.59%	2.68%

Source: US Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing, 1980, 1990, 2000.



Age/Condition. The median year a housing unit was built in Polson is 1974 according to the 2000 Census. This figure moved up from 1990 when the median year of construction was 1971. The largest percentage (22.19 percent) of housing units was constructed between 1990 and March of 2000 (430). The 1970s saw the second largest construction period when 20.2 percent of the community's housing units were constructed (390 units).

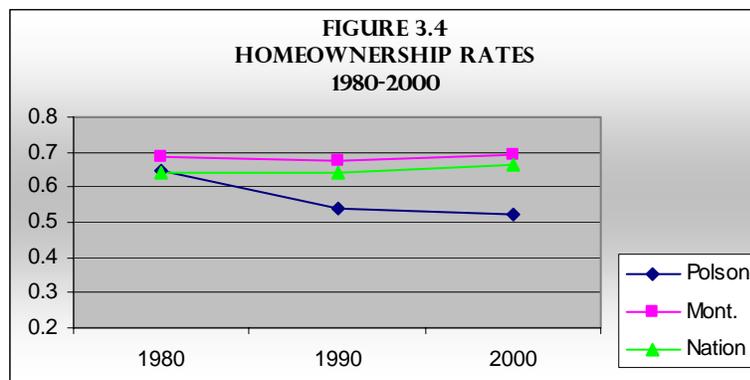
Because nearly 60 percent of Polson's housing units are only 30-35 years old, condition of the housing stock is generally good. Just over 14.24 percent of the total units are now over 60 years old.



Many of the older units are located in the older town site and are more susceptible to deterioration. While there has been some investment in older homes in this area, some units have fallen into disrepair. In a housing market like Polson's where property values and costs are increasing more rapidly than incomes, the lower income groups are more likely to locate in areas where property values are lower due to deteriorating stock.

Homeownership

Homeownership is measured by the number of housing units that are owner-occupied. According to U.S. Census Bureau figures, the rate of homeownership in Polson has been on the





decline since 1980 when 64.6 percent of occupied units were owner-occupied. By 1990, the rate of homeownership dropped to 54 percent and was down to 52 percent in 2000. This is compared to a 69.1 percent rate for Montana and a 66.2 percent for the nation in 2000.

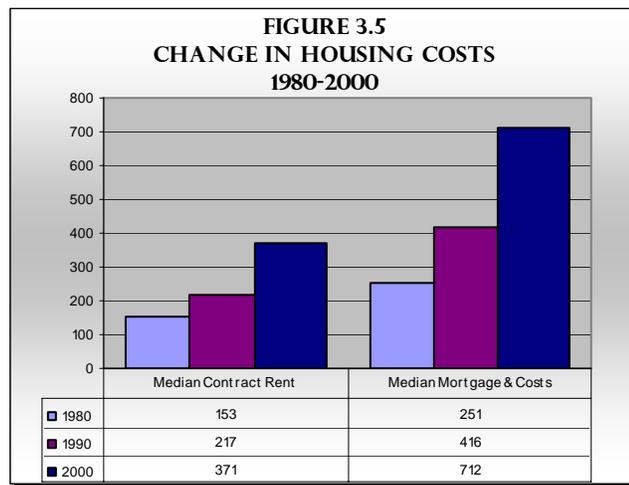
Forty-eight percent of occupied homes in 2000 were renter-occupied. Because the percentage of units occupied by renters is high and the percentage of multi-family units is relatively low, a significant number of single-family detached homes in Polson are occupied by renters (23 percent). The relatively short supply of multi-family units available to renters and the subsequent move into single-family rentals can limit the availability of single-family units for homeownership.

Another potential impact on the homeownership rate is the tendency for the rate to be low for working families (56.6 percent nationally compared to an overall rate of over 65 percent). Working families are those in which members work the equivalent of a full-time job and earn between the full-time minimum wage of \$10,712 per year, and up to 120 percent of an area’s median family income (which in Polson is \$37,000). In Polson, 1,020 households are categorized as “Family Households” by the U.S. Census Bureau. Of those, 57 percent (518 of 1,020) are comprised of working-age people who have annual family incomes of less than \$35,000 (120 percent of median family income in Polson is \$37,000).

3.3 Affordability

Housing Costs

As illustrated in Figure 3.5, the cost of housing in Polson increased during the decade 1990-2000. The median value of a home nearly doubled during that time, going from \$47,500 in 1990 to \$88,100 in 2000, as shown in Figure 3.6. In 1990, only 7 percent of homes were valued at \$100,000 or more. By 2000, that percentage reached 42



percent. (Refer to Table 3-2). A report compiled by the Center for Applied Economic Research indicates the median value of a home in 2003 was \$154,750, a 14 percent increase over 2002.



In addition to rising home values, rents and mortgages rose during the decade 1990-2000. Median contract rent in Polson increased by nearly 71 percent between 1990 and 2000 and the cost of owning a home, which includes a mortgage and associated costs, rose by just over 71 percent during the decade. (Refer to Table 3-2).

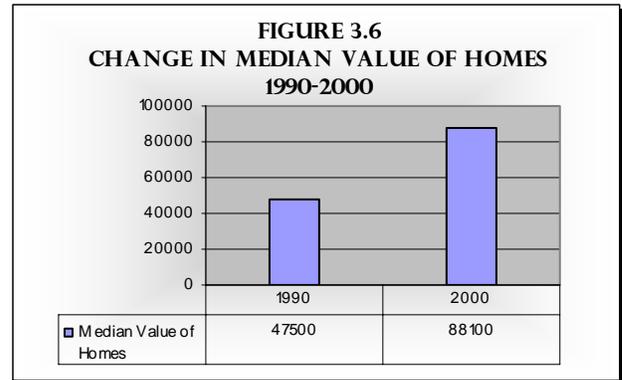


Table 3-2 Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Units, 1990 – 2000

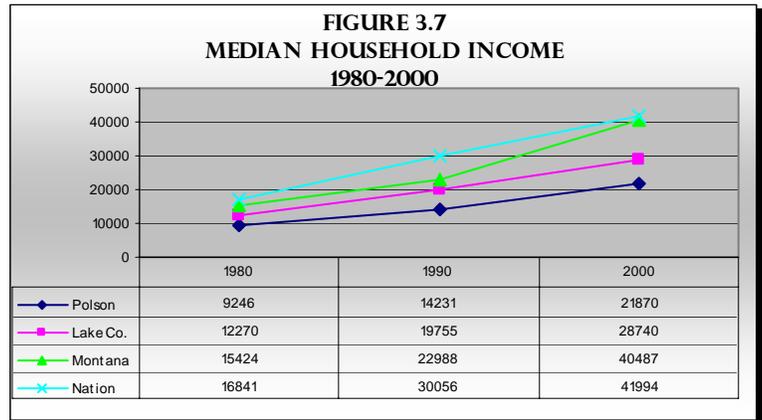
Value Range	1990		2000	
	Number of Units	Percent of Total	Number of Units	Percent of Total
Less than \$35,000	120	19.08%	12	1.58%
\$35,000 - \$39,999	60	9.54%	18	2.37%
\$40,000 - \$49,999	154	24.48%	17	2.24%
\$50,000 - \$59,999	80	12.72%	61	8.03%
\$60,000 - \$99,999	172	27.34%	335	44.08%
\$100,000 - \$124,999	26	4.13%	136	17.89%
\$125,000 - \$149,999	7	1.11%	79	10.39%
\$150,000 - \$174,999	6	0.95%	18	2.37%
\$175,000 - \$199,999	0	0.00%	19	2.50%
\$200,000 - \$249,999	2	0.32%	13	1.71%
\$250,000 - \$299,999	1	0.16%	19	2.50%
\$300,000 - \$399,999	0	0.00%	7	0.92%
\$400,000 - 499,999	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
\$500,000 or more	1	0.16%	26	3.42%

Source: US Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing; 1990, 2000.



Household Income

Median household income in Polson increased between 1990 and 2000, but at a lower rate than housing costs. While housing costs increased by over 70 percent between the years 1990 and 2000, median household income increased by 53.68 percent for the same time period. (Refer to Table 3-3).



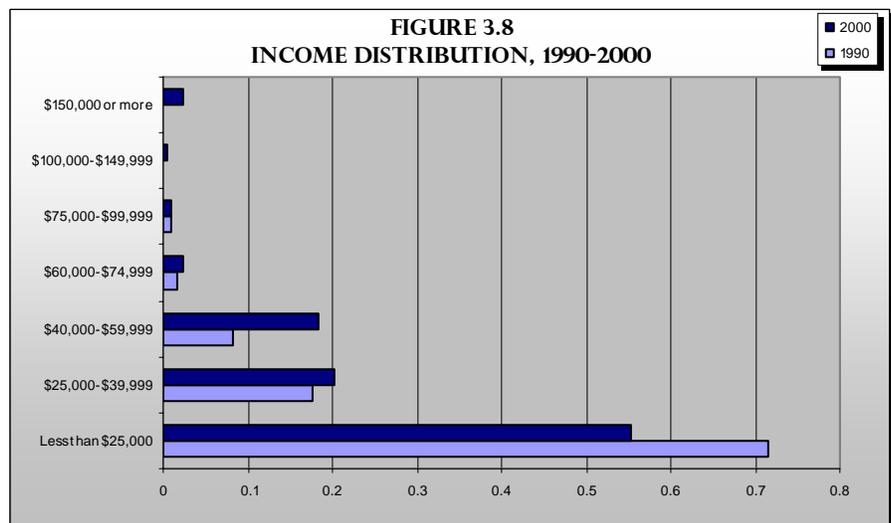
Median household income has risen steadily since 1980, but remains lower than Lake County, the state of Montana, and the nation. (Refer to Figure 3.7). Polson’s median household income of \$21,870 is 52 percent of the national and 54 percent of the Montana figure.

Table 3-3 Change in Median Household Income v. Housing Costs, 1980 – 1990

	Percent Change 1980-1990	Percent Change 1990-2000
Median Household Income	53.92%	53.68%
Median Contract Rent	41.83%	70.97%
Median Mortgage & Associated Costs	65.74%	71.15%

Source: Derived from US Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, 1980, 1990, 2000.

Polson experienced a shift in income distribution between 1990 and 2000. The percentage of households in the lower income bracket diminished to some extent, while percentages of households in the middle and upper income brackets increased. In 1990, no households showed incomes of \$150,000 or more. According to 2000 Census figures, 2.27





percent of households now have an income in that range. Further, in 1990, only 2.46 percent of households had incomes of \$60,000 or more. That percentage grew to 6.22 percent by 2000.

While there has been a shifting of household incomes toward the middle and higher brackets, households with annual incomes of less than \$25,000 continue to comprise the largest income group in Polson. In 1990, 71.5 percent or 1,017 households had annual incomes of less than \$25,000. In, 2000, 55.35 percent (952 out of 1,720) of households remained in that bracket. The high percentage of households with lower incomes is evidence of the service-based economy that exists in Polson, where job opportunities tend to be in low-paying sectors.

The high number of households with incomes less than \$25,000 is paramount to the housing discussion in Polson. Of the households that fall into this income category, the vast majority are renters (64 percent). In addition, 60.29 percent are of a working age and are, therefore, likely a part of the workforce. For these households, whose hourly household income is \$12 or less, homeownership in Polson may be difficult to achieve. The Department of Housing and Urban Development defines ‘cost burden’ as a payment of more than 30 percent of income for housing. For renters in this income group, 40 percent are paying more than 30 percent of their household income for rent and are, therefore, experiencing a cost burden. Households with higher incomes (greater than \$35,000), do not appear to be experiencing cost burdens, according to 2000 Census figures.



Table 3-4 Household Incomes, 1990 – 2000

Income Category	1990	Percent of Total	2000	Percent of Total
Less than \$10,000	459	32.28%	340	19.77%
\$10,000-\$14,999	292	20.53%	233	13.55%
\$15,000-\$19,999	146	10.27%	186	10.81%
\$20,000-\$24,999	120	8.44%	193	11.22%
\$25,000-\$29,999	119	8.37%	100	5.81%
\$30,000-\$34,999	51	3.59%	127	7.38%
\$35,000-\$39,999	82	5.77%	119	6.92%
\$40,000-\$44,999	33	2.32%	112	6.51%
\$45,000-\$49,999	41	2.88%	89	5.17%
\$50,000-\$59,999	44	3.09%	114	6.63%
\$60,000-\$74,999	23	1.62%	42	2.44%
\$75,000-\$99,999	12	0.84%	16	0.93%
\$100,000-\$124,999	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
\$125,000-\$149,999	0	0.00%	10	0.58%
\$150,000 or more	0	0.00%	39	2.27%

Source; US Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing, 1990, 2000.

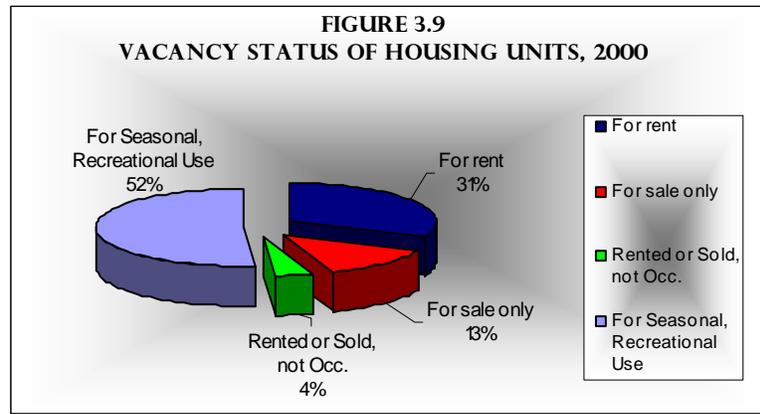
3.4 Availability

In order to help evaluate the availability of housing, Census data regarding vacancy status was reviewed. During each decennial Census, the Census Bureau collects data from every household in the U.S. and its territories, most recently in April 2000. Housing units are counted and given an occupancy status. A housing unit is vacant if no one is living in it at the time of enumeration, unless its occupants are only temporarily absent. Units temporarily occupied at the time of enumeration entirely by people who have a usual residence elsewhere are also classified as vacant. Vacancy status is divided into categories including “for rent,” “for sale,” “rented or sold - not occupied,” or “seasonal.”

According to the 2000 Census, Polson had 218 vacant housing units, which is an 11.35 percent rate. Of the vacant units, just over half (112) were seasonal units. Forty-four percent of the vacant units were either “for rent” or “for sale.”



More recent information indicates a very low vacancy rate among apartment rentals in Polson. A housing study conducted in 1991 of the Polson and Ronan areas of Lake County reported that vacancies for subsidized units is a mere 0.1 percent. There are approximately 230 government subsidized units in Polson. These include 16 units of Public Housing at Boettcher Terrace, 40 *Section 8* units at Lakeview Village, 82 units (22



of which are elderly designated) at Cherry Hill Village North, 40 units at Lakeview Villa, and 52 units within the Polson city limits owned and managed by the Salish-Kootenai Housing Authority for members of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. Of the 52 Tribal units, 10 are homeownership units and 42 are rental units, 10 of which are reserved for Tribal elders. The report concludes that there is a need in the Polson-Ronan area for more affordable senior and family housing.

The vacancy rate for market rate apartments included in the report was also very low at 2.7 percent. The report concludes that “an expansion of the market-rate apartment base is needed to allow a wider range of choice within the housing continuum.” This finding correlates with a relatively low supply of multi-family units overall in Polson.

The report indicates potential need for more lower-priced condominiums (11 units priced less than \$100,000 throughout the Ronan-Polson study area) as well as single-family housing (67 per year in the entire Ronan-Polson study area).



4.0 The Economy

Chapter Four discusses economic conditions within the city of Polson. The evaluation of income and employment data provides some insight into future community needs and future growth trends. Economic conditions can also directly inform the analysis of other factors considered in the growth policy, particularly population and housing needs.

4.1 Key Findings

- Forty percent of workers who live in Polson work outside the city.
- Health services and tourism-related industries employ the highest number of workers.
 - Health services employ 560 or 33 percent of total employed people.
 - Tourism-related industries employ 500 or 30 percent of employed people.
- Employment is projected to grow by 42.5 percent between 2005 and 2025, adding 1,004 workers for a total of 2,696 employed people by 2025.
- The two largest sources of household income are from “wages and salary income” and “interest, dividends, and rental” categories. “Wage and salary income” comprises 62 percent of total household income and increased by 127 percent between 1990 and 2000. Income from the “interest, dividends, and rental” category increased by 200 percent between 1990 and 2000 and comprises 17 percent of total household income.
- The poverty rate in Polson in 2000 was 19.8 percent (745 people). The Polson rate is higher than both the national (12.4 percent) and state (14.6 percent) rates.



4.2 Overview

Once dependent upon agriculture and wood products manufacturing, these basic industries now constitute less than four percent of local economic activity in the city of Polson, with primary income having shifted to jobs in retail and service industries; government employment (especially Tribal); “light” industry/electronics manufacturing; health care/social services; and retirement/government transfer payments.

Further, while tourism constitutes a significant part of the economic base in Polson, the area has become increasingly dependent on residential real estate development, particularly in the last five years. Much of the growth in this sector can be attributed to second home and retirement home development. A residential golf development located along Flathead Lake has added approximately 100 residential units to the community since construction began at the site in 1998. Another recently approved subdivision will add more than 300 additional residential units as well as 65 commercial developments over time. The construction boom has provided job opportunities for self-employed contractors and craft persons who make their home in Polson.

Major Polson employers currently include the area school districts, the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, various construction contractors, Mission Valley Power, the hospital, and city, county, and Tribal governments. Some Polson residents work primarily out of their homes and travel only periodically to their place of business. However, the current local job market tends to be cyclical and seasonal in nature.

The city of Polson is working in partnership with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes to develop recreational opportunities at Salish Point featuring lake-based activities, picnic grounds, open space, and trail components. The project has been identified as a key economic and community development project that will bring activity back into Polson’s core, particularly its downtown.



4.3 Economic Conditions

Industries

Polson is situated in an area of natural beauty and recreational opportunity. Its location on the southern tip of Flathead Lake is itself a draw for summer recreational enthusiasts. Polson's relative proximity to Glacier National Park, which has an annual visitor count of just under two million, as well as its accessibility to the National Bison Range also adds to tourism's major role in the Polson economy.

Polson can also be characterized as a place where people live, but work elsewhere. Forty percent of its workers worked outside their place of residence, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. It is important, then, to understand the industrial mix described in this section as a regional one.

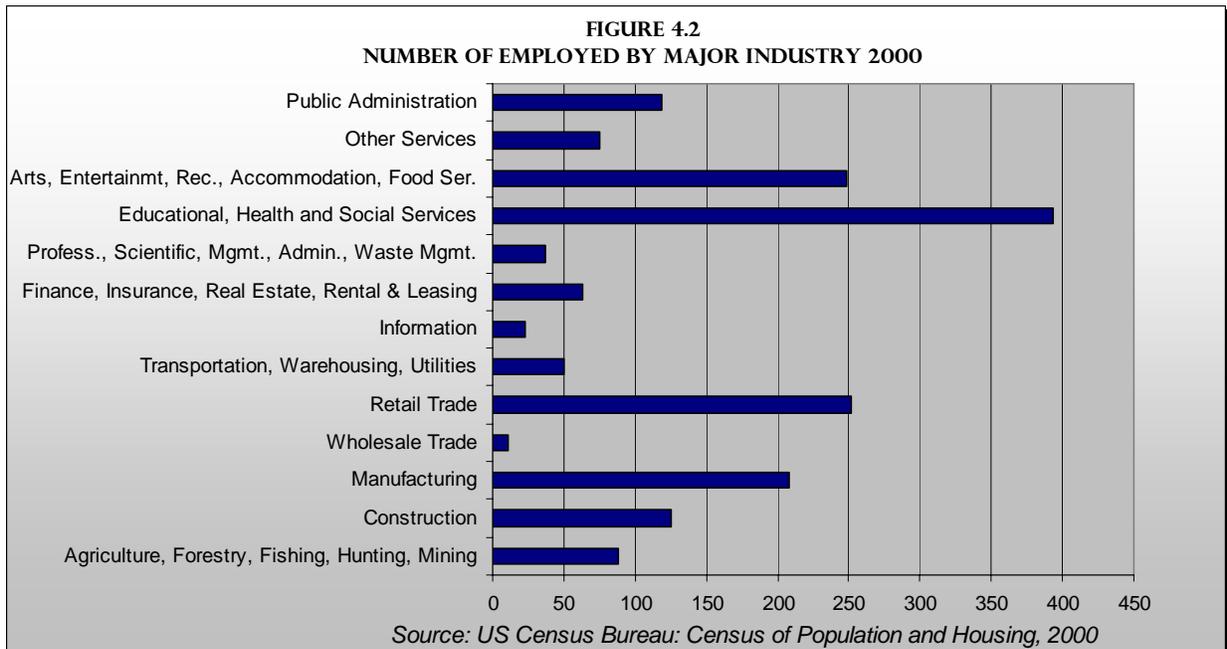
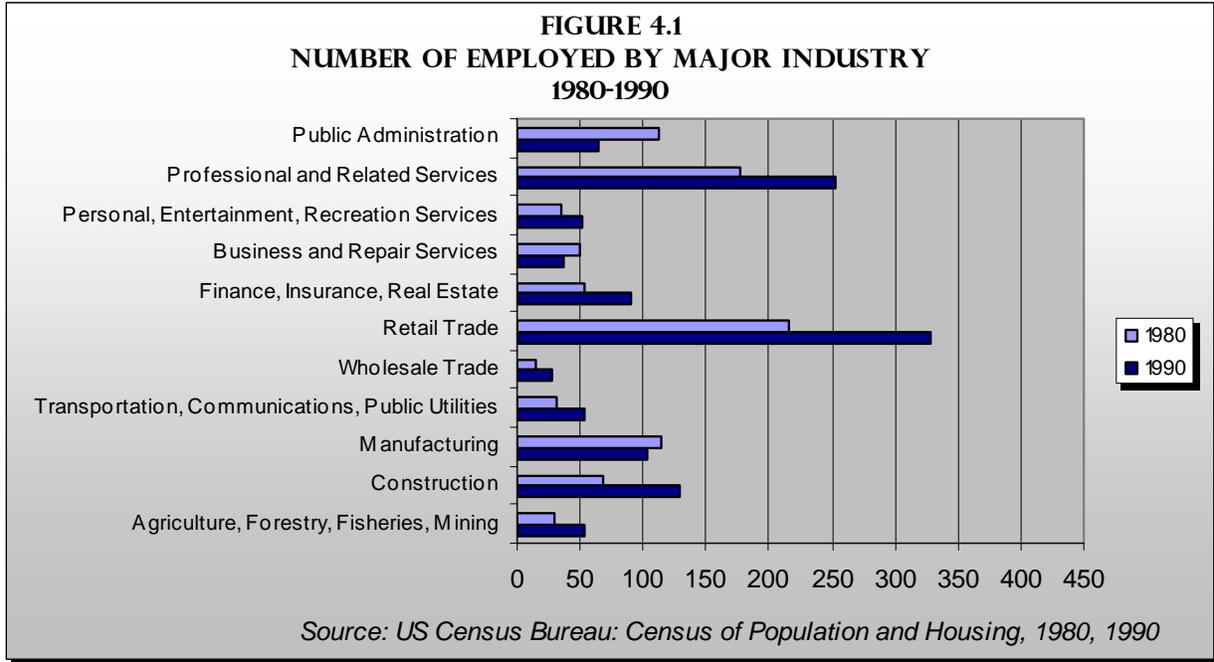
That tourism is a major generator of economic activity is evidenced by the number of people employed in tourism-related industries in Polson. In 2000, the number of people employed in Retail Trade and Entertainment, Accommodation and Food Services comprised 30 percent of the total employed (1,692). That number is slightly down from 1990 when tourism-related industries made up about 32 percent of the employment base. In 1980, tourism-related industries were responsible for nearly 28 percent of total employment.

While tourism is a major component of Polson's economic base, health services is the single largest industry in Polson, as measured by the number of employed. According to the 2000 Census, almost 393 or 23.2 percent of all workers (1,692) of all workers were employed in health services. Recent information released by the Economic Census indicates that the number of health care workers has jumped to 560, which would comprise about 33 percent of all workers, using the 2000 Census figure of 1,692 total employed. Nationally, health services is also the largest industry, employing 12.9 million people. Further, it is expected that about 16 percent of all new wage and salary jobs in the United States between 2002 and 2012 will be in the health services industry.

Another industry of note is manufacturing, which employs about 208 workers according to 2000 Census figures. The number of manufacturing jobs increased by over 100 percent between 1990 and 2000, going from 103 to 208 jobs. The increase is associated with the manufacture of pasta, cabinets, and electronics and also includes people living in Polson who



work at the Jore Corporation. Additionally, the construction industry employs approximately 125 people and the public administration sector employs roughly 120 people.





Note: While industrial categories used by the Census Bureau between 1980 and 1990 were similar, they were altered between 1990 and 2000, thereby making direct comparisons of some industries impossible. Therefore, illustrations regarding the number of employed by industry in 1980 and 1990 and presented together while the number of employed by industry for 2000 is presented separately.

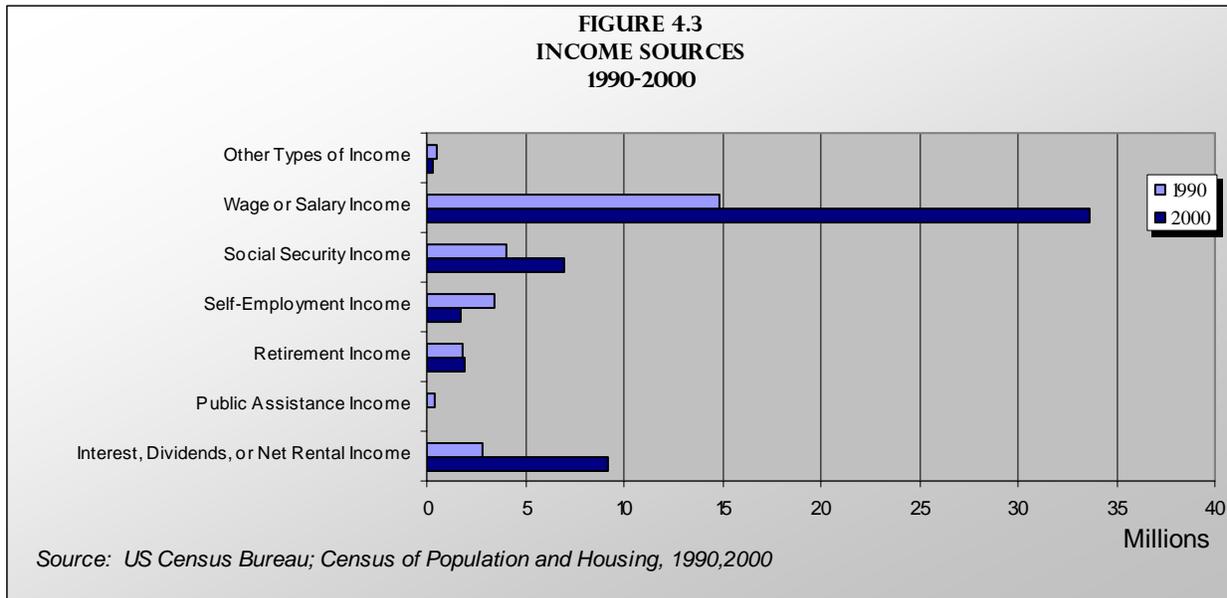
Sources of Household Income

Aggregate household income in Polson in 2000 was \$53,822,500, up from \$27,827,819 in 1990. The main categories of household income include wage and salary, self-employment, interest/dividends/rental income, social security, retirement, and public assistance. Aggregate household income broken down by category indicates that “wage and salary” income is the largest source of income for Polson households, comprising 62 percent of the aggregate, a percentage that is up from 53 percent in 1990. “Interest, dividends and rental” income comprise the next largest segment of aggregate household income at 17 percent. Actual income in this segment increased by over 200 percent between 1990 and 2000.

Social Security income experienced a 71.98 percent increase over the period, while retirement income saw only a modest increase of just over 6 percent. Household income from self-employment declined over the period as did public assistance income. (Refer to Table 4-1 and Figure 4.3.)

Table 4-1 Sources of Household Income, 1990 – 2000			
Category	1990	2000	Percent Change
Interest, Dividends, or Net Rental Income	\$2,810,523	\$9,197,000	227.23%
Public Assistance Income	\$413,120	\$109,500	-417.28%
Retirement Income	\$1,833,358	\$1,944,200	6.05%
Self-Employment Income	\$3,388,473	\$1,723,500	-49.14%
Social Security Income	\$4,044,805	\$6,956,200	71.98%
Wage or Salary Income	\$14,836,156	\$33,617,200	126.59%
Other Types of Income	\$501,384	\$274,800	-45.19%

Source: US Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing; 1990, 2000.



Tax Base

The state of Montana levies property taxes in the state based on the “taxable” valuation of property by class. Taxable valuation is a percentage of the market value of property. The percentage applied varies, based on the type or class of property. For example, for the 2004 tax year, the taxable valuation of residential property is equal to 3.14 percent of its market value. The taxable value for each property is multiplied by the mill levy set by each of the applicable taxing jurisdictions (city, county, state, school district, etc.) to determine the tax paid. The value of a mill is equal to 1/1000 of the taxable valuation of all the property within a taxing jurisdiction. Each taxing body determines the number of mills it needs to operate its budget within state statutory guidelines.

The property tax base is a reflection of the economic character of the community. In Montana, the largest single component (44 percent) of the property tax base is residential property. The second largest is commercial property at 16 percent of the total. In Lake County, residential property is the largest contributor to the property tax base. The total taxable value of property in Lake County for 2004 was \$52,286,175. Of that \$39,192,796 or 75 percent is attributed to residential property, in comparison to the statewide share of 44 percent for residential property. The value of residential property as a percentage of all property taxed in Lake County is the highest in the state. In neighboring Flathead County, residential property accounts for 66 percent of the tax base, and in Gallatin County, another rapidly growing county,



the percentage is 60 percent. Commercial property constitutes just under nine percent of the entire property tax base in Lake County.

In Polson, residential property constitutes 62 percent of the 2005 tax base and commercial property comprises 31 percent of the tax base. A breakdown of the taxable value of Polson by class as compared to state values is presented in Table 4-2 below.

Table 4-2 2005 Taxable Valuation for Polson			
Property Class	2005 Polson Valuation	2005 Polson Taxable Value Percentages by Class	2004 State of Montana Taxable Value Percentages by Class
Class 1 – Mine Net Proceeds	\$0.00	0.00%	0.45%
Class 2 –Gr. Proceeds Metal Mines	\$0.00	0.00%	0.51%
Class 3 – Agricultural Land	\$2,319.00	0.04%	8.00%
Class 4 – Residential	\$3,878,080.00	62.37%	44.00%
Class 4 – Commercial	\$1,953,345.00	31.41%	16.00%
Class 5 – Pollution Control Equip.	\$0.00	0.00%	2.00%
Class 7 – Non-Centrally Assess. Util	\$0.00	0.00%	0.05%
Class 8 – Business Personal Property	\$267,384.00	4.30%	7.00%
Class 9 -- Non-Elec. Gen. Prop. of Electrical Utilities	\$0.00	0.00%	12.00%
Class 10 Forest Land	\$0.00	0.00%	0.38%
Class 12 Railroad and Airline Property	\$0.00	0.00%	3.00%
Class 13 Telecom. & Electric Property	\$116,828.00	1.88%	7.00%
Total	\$6,217,956.00	100.00%	100.39%

Source: Montana Department of Revenue, 2005.

Employment and Workforce

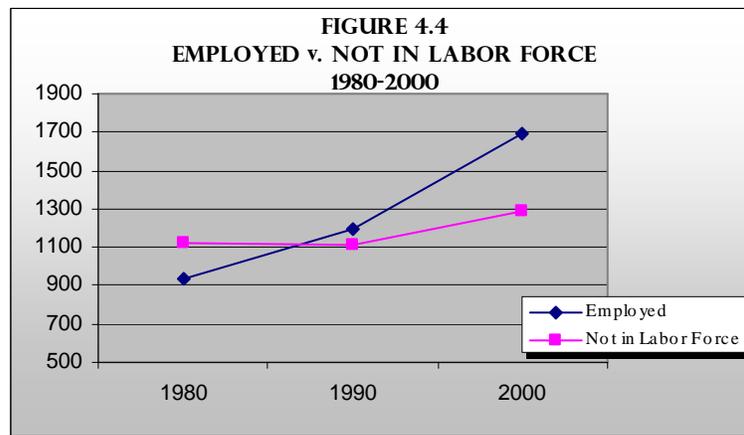
Total Number of Employed. The total number of people employed in Polson who were 16 years of age or older at the time of the 2000 Census was 1,692. This represents an increase of 81 percent since 1980. The rate of growth in employment correlates with expansion in the number of working-age people (ages 16-62) over the twenty-year period. (Refer to Table 4-3.)



Table 4-3 Total Number Employed, 1980 – 2000			
	1980	1990	2000
Employed	935	1190	1,692
Unemployed	86	126	140
Not in Labor Force	1,127	1,112	1,290

Source: US Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing; 1980, 1990, 2000.

The economy of Polson has seen a shift in the ratio of people employed to the number not in the labor force. In 1980, the number of people counted in the Census who were not part of the labor force exceeded the number employed. By 2000, the number of employed surpassed



the number not in the labor force. (Refer to Figure 4.4.) Of those not in the labor force, 58 percent are of retirement age, 17 percent are likely students, and 25 percent are people of working age.

Employment Projections The number of jobs in Lake County is expected to grow by 46.5 percent between 2005 and 2025 for a gain of 7,080 jobs. The total number of jobs is expected to reach 22,320. Applying the same growth rate to the number of employed people in Lake County indicates the county could add up to 6,564 employed people for a total of 17,633 by 2025.

Polson’s portion of the total employed in Lake County is currently 15.3 percent. Assuming the percentage remains the same through the projection period, Polson would gain 1,004 employed people for a total of 2,696 and a growth rate of 42.5 percent between 2005 and 2025. (Refer to Table 4-4.) The labor participation rate would increase under this scenario as measured by the ratio of employed to the population. The ratio would reach 46.8 percent by



2025 compared to the current ratio of 41.9 percent. Polson’ rate of 46.8 percent would still be less than the current national rate of 62.7 percent.

	Total Employed 2000	Gain	Total Employed 2005	Gain	Total Employed 2015	Gain	Total Employed 2025
Lake Co.	11,069	1,314	12,383	2,625	15,008	2,625	17,633
Polson	1,692	200	1,892	402	2,294	402	2,696

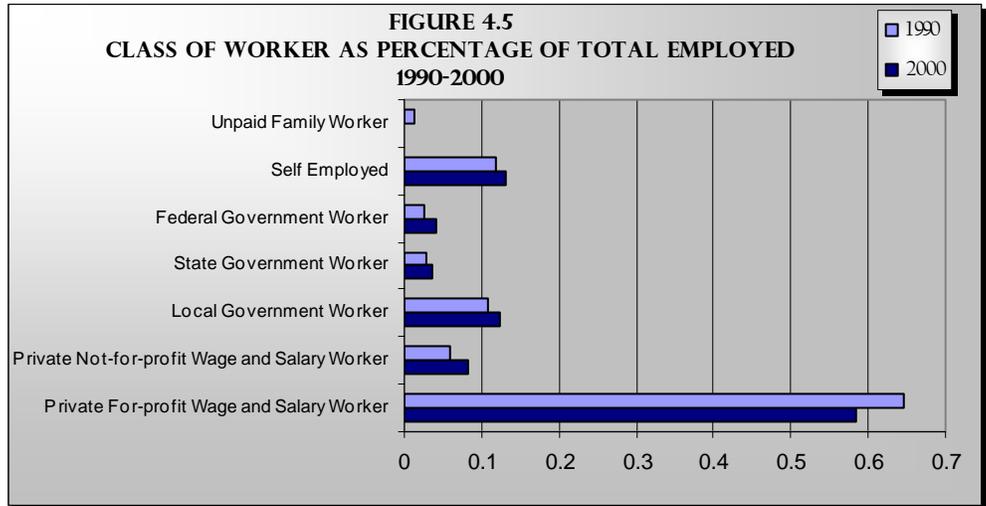
Worker Classification According to Census data, the greatest number of working people in Polson are employed by private, for-profit companies. This group comprises 58 percent of the civilian labor force, followed by government workers who make up 20 percent (this figure includes local, state, and federal government workers). Self-employed people comprise 13 percent of the civilian labor force. (Refer to Table 4-5.) Additionally, the CSKT employs between approximately 200 and 300 workers. This data is not included in Census counts.

Classification	1990		2000	
	Total Employed	Percent	Total Employed	Percent
Private For-profit Wage and Salary Worker	769	65%	989	58%
Private Not-for-profit Wage and Salary Worker	71	6%	140	8%
Local Government Worker	129	11%	210	12%
State Government Worker	33	3%	63	4%
Federal Government Worker	32	3%	70	4%
Self Employed	142	12%	220	13%
Unpaid Family Worker	14	1%	0	0%

Source: US Census Bureau: Census of Population and Housing; 1990, 2000.



A shift in worker classification occurred between 1990 and 2000. In 1990, private sector for-profit workers comprised 65 percent of the civilian labor force, compared to the current 58 percent. The difference appears to have spread somewhat evenly over the other categories, as evidenced by percentage changes in all other categories. (Refer to Figure 4.5.)



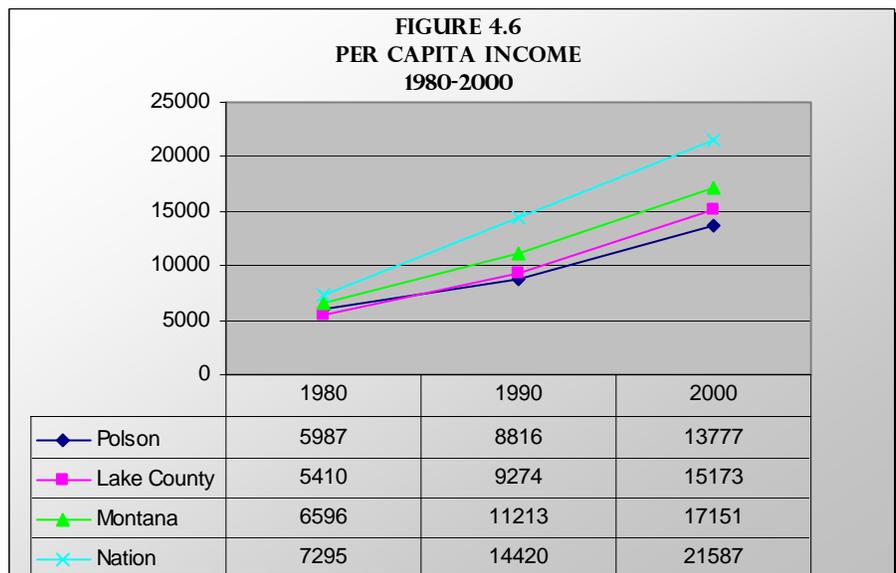
Working Outside Polson A notable fact about the Polson workforce is the percentage of people who work outside their place of residence. In 1990, almost 33 percent of workers did their work outside of Polson. By 2000, the percentage increased to 40 percent. The Jore Corporation, located 14 miles south of Polson in Ronan, currently employs 220 workers.

Economic Indicators

Per Capita

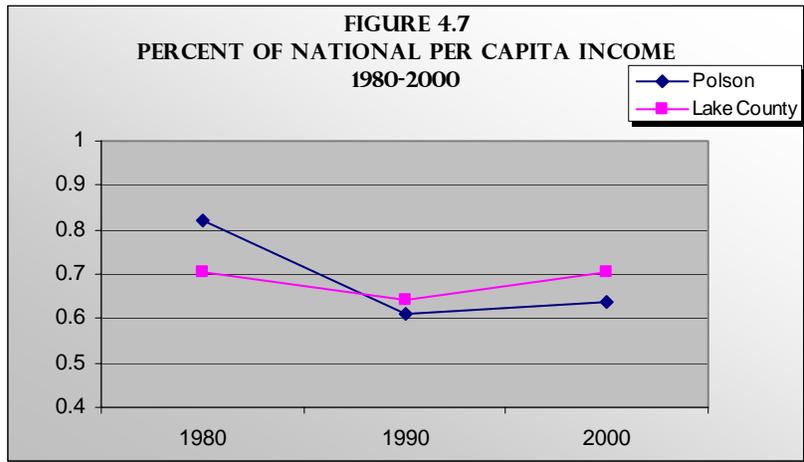
Income According to 2000 Census reports, per capita income for Polson is \$13,777, and is lower than figures for Lake County, the state of Montana, and the nation (Refer to Figure 4.6).

Historical trends



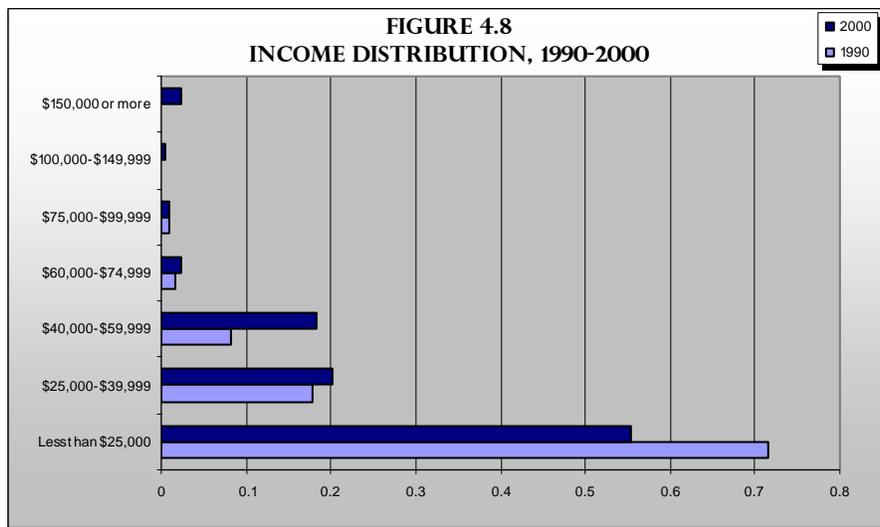


back to 1980 show that while Polson had a slightly higher per capita income than Lake County in 1980, it has fallen behind since the early 1990's. Further, per capita income for Polson lagged considerably behind the nation in 1990, falling from 80 percent of national in 1980 to just 61 percent in 1990. Per capita income rose slightly during the last decade reaching 64 percent of national by 2000. These changes are represented in Figure 4.7.



A relatively low per capita income exists in Polson during a time when a shift is occurring in household income

distribution. There are now fewer households in Polson who have an annual income less than \$25,000. At the same time, the percentage of households in all higher income groupings have increased since 1990. However, households with annual income less than \$25,000 continue to make up over 55 percent of all Polson households, as illustrated by Figure 4.8.





Poverty Rate The percent of individuals in Polson who have an income below the poverty level is 19.8 percent (745 people), a higher rate than the rate for Lake County overall, as well the rate for Montana and the nation. The percent is down from 1990 when it was 22.89 percent (673 people). Table 4-6 provides 2000 poverty rates for Polson, Lake County, Montana, and the nation.

Table 4-6 Poverty Rates, 2000	
	2000
Polson	19.8%
Lake County	18.7%
Montana	14.6%
Nation	12.4%
<i>Source: US Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing; 2000.</i>	

4.4 Community Economic Development Activities

Polson Chamber of Commerce

The Polson Chamber of Commerce has 254 members (2004 figures) representing all sectors of the economy. The Chamber works with the school district, the local government, and other economic organizations to promote the community. They are working to bring year-round economic activity to Polson through events, promotions, and other economic development efforts.

Polson Community Development Agency

The Polson Community Development Agency (PCDA) is a volunteer, private, non-profit organization that focuses its efforts on making local improvements that will in turn attract new investment. The PCDA has initiated a number of local projects. It often acts as the initiator and also provides support to help get projects started, helping them to become self-sustaining over time. For example, the recreational development currently under way at Salish Point was originally a project of the PCDA.

The agency was established in 1980 with an initial grant to purchase a commercial property for development purposes. More recently, the PCDA planted 12 trees on Main Street



using a combination of local and federal funds. The project is expected to provide the impetus for others to continue streetscaping efforts. The PCDA is working with Lake County on a \$30,000 capacity building grant for community economic development. Grant funds will be matched by the sale of the commercial property originally purchased in 1980. The funding will be used to hire a community economic development director whose job responsibilities will include assembling the information needed to more effectively market the community of Polson.

The Polson Redevelopment Agency – Downtown Polson

During the summer months of 1997, the Polson Development Corporation’s (“PDC”) Board of Directors assisted the city in evaluating the social and physical aspects of the central business district and adjoining areas. The PDC determined that several indicators of deteriorated conditions were found that directly relate to the definition of a “blighted area” as contained in the State Urban Renewal Law (§ 7-15-4206 MCA).

The study resulted in the finding of several blighted conditions, as follows:

- 1) Present urbanized land use patterns incorporate a haphazard and incompatible mix of uses;
- 2) Many of the existing commercial structures appear to be structurally substandard and several appear to be severely substandard when viewed from the outside;
- 3) Interaction of pedestrians, bicycles, and vehicles can create dangerous situations;
- 4) Growth within the areas is resulting in increased strains on infrastructure, parking, streets, sidewalks, and other city services; and
- 5) Dilapidated buildings, refuse, and overgrown weeds all create an unappealing area, which restricts both residential and economic development.

As a result of their findings, the PDC concluded that adequate information existed to qualify the area for designation as a blighted area and recommended to the City Council a declaration of blight be adopted. At its regular meeting on November 3, 1997, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 739 declaring the five areas described above as a blighted district. Upon adoption of the resolution, they instructed the PDC to prepare an Urban Revitalization Plan for the district.

The Polson Redevelopment Agency (PRA) was appointed by the PCDA to review the 1997 Polson Redevelopment Plan, *Consider the Possibilities for Polson!* Subsequently, the PRA was



officially authorized by the local government to foster redevelopment activities in the following areas:

- Salish Point
- The Central Business Urban Renewal District
- The Railyard District
- The Commercial/Light Industrial District

However, its primary focus is the revitalization of Polson's downtown as stated in the following:

“The mission of the Redevelopment Agency is to work with the City Council and the public at-large to create a vision for the Urban Renewal District; to develop a comprehensive set of development plans through which the vision may be made manifest; then to create financial alternatives by which the plans may be implemented.”

The PRA is governed by a volunteer board of directors and manages the city's tax increment financing (TIF) district for downtown Polson. The TIF district includes the area bounded by Salish Point, south to the central business district, east to the catholic church, west to the soccer fields/Kerr Dam Road, and back to the lake. To date, the TIF fund has not realized any positive increment, primarily due to the loss of the property taxes associated with the Security State Bank when its ownership was transferred to the CSKT Natural Resources Department, which is not subject to property tax.

In addition to the Polson Redevelopment Agency, the Chamber of Commerce and various retail groups are working on the revitalization of the downtown area. A report prepared by the Montana Rural Development Partners, Inc, in 2002, at the request of the city of Polson and the Chamber of Commerce identified the beautification of downtown as a critical component of community development.



5.0 Local Services

Chapter Five discusses Polson's existing local services. The location and adequacy of these facilities plays an important role in determining future land development patterns. The existing level of local services, such as law enforcement, emergency services, and public health services, is evaluated with respect to population, housing needs, and economic conditions to provide a framework for identifying planning goals and objectives.

5.1 Key Findings

Law Enforcement

- The Polson Police Department answered 6,744 calls in 2004, compared to 4,933 calls in 1999, an increase of nearly 2,000 calls per year over the 1999 figure. Additionally, the department issued 1,066 tickets in 2004, compared to 865 tickets issued in 1999, an increase of 201 tickets over the 1999 number.
- The Polson Police Department would like to increase starting salaries and expand its force by adding two more officers.

Polson Fire Department

- The number of service calls has varied over the past eight years with a low of 182 calls in 1997 and a high of 323 calls in 2003. Personnel hours have also varied, with a low of 1,750 hours in 2002 and a high of 3,368 hours in 2003. Training hours have increased an average of 9.5 hours per year from 73 hours in 2004 to 92 hours in 2005
- The department expects that service demands will increase as the area population continues to grow and building conditions worsen with age.
- The department feels that current staffing levels are not adequate to accommodate the community's needs.

Healthcare

- The number of employees at St. Joseph Medical Center grew from 145 in 2001 to 163 in 2005. Emergency room visits increased from 4,695 in 2001 to 5,011 in 2004, and laboratory visits increased by more than 16,000 visits over the same time period. Inpatient admissions declined from a high of 1,005 in 2001 to a low of 831 in 2004.

Social Services

- As Polson's population ages and as the city continues to experience an in-migration of older residents, Polson's senior services will likely experience greater pressures.
- Coordination between local, state, Tribal, and private organizations is important in order to address growing needs and avoid duplication of programs.

Utilities

- Utility services are provided by several private companies in the area. At the present time, these services are generally expected to meet current and future demands.



5.2 Law Enforcement

Polson Police Department

The Polson Police Department (PPD) provides law enforcement services for the citizens of Polson. The PPD has approved positions for ten full-time officers, with nine patrol units and two reserve officers. Additionally the PPD employs a full-time animal control officer and a part-time clerk. The PPD operates patrol and detective units for the city. Polson’s emergency calls are routed through the Lake County 911. The city also houses prisoners in the Lake County jail for a fee.

As shown in Table 5-1, the crime index for Polson as reported by the PPD has varied between 1996 and 2004, with a low of 217 in 1996 and a high of 319 in 2003. Similarly, the crime rate has varied, with a low of 5,247 in 1996 and a high of 7,338 in 2003.

Year	Crime Index*	Crime Rate**	Homicide	Rape	Robbery	Aggravated Assault	Burglary	Larceny	MVT
1996	217	5,247	0	0	3	9	21	169	15
1997	292	7,060	1	0	8	21	249	13	N/A
1998	291	6,627	0	1	4	26	96	141	23
1999	251	5,451	0	1	3	2	71	150	24
2000	257	4,996	0	1	2	9	32	207	6
2001***	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2002	252	6,187	0	1	1	13	18	209	10
2003	319	7,338	0	3	0	15	29	254	18
2004	234	5,383	0	3	0	15	21	188	7

*CRIME INDEX: Total of the seven most serious crimes used to measure the crime rate. The seven crimes are: homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny and motor vehicle theft.
 ** CRIME RATE: The rate of the seven index crimes per 100,000 people.
 *** Data for 2001 was reported in combination with data from Lake County.

Source: Montana Board of Crime Control Database, May, 2005.

While the crime index and the crime rate have varied over the past ten years, the PPD has seen an overall increase in the number of calls per year since 1999. As shown in Table 5-2, the PPD answered 6,744 calls in 2004, an increase of nearly 2,000 calls per year over the 1999 figure. Additionally, the PPD issued 1,066 tickets in 2004, compared to 865 tickets issued in 1999, an overall increase of 201 tickets. Calls relating to domestic violence nearly doubled from 16 to 30 between 2003 and 2004. DUI citations increased from 15 in 2003 to 36 in 2004.



Table 5-2 Police Department Statistical Data, 1999 – 2004

Year	Number of Calls	Number of Tickets Issued
1999	4,933	865
2000	5,816	977
2001	5,528	1,031
2002	5,409	1,055
2003	6,479	1,252
2004	6,744	1,066

Source: Shelly Wheeler, Police Clerk, May 17, 2005.

The PPD strives to respond to calls within ten minutes and generally meets that goal at the present time. The addition of proposed subdivisions, however, will increase the PPD service area. As a result, the PPD anticipates more difficulty in reaching response time goals unless additional officers are added.

The PPD works closely with Tribal and county law enforcement officials due to overlapping jurisdiction. Generally, the PPD responds to calls within the Polson city limits, and the county responds to calls outside the city limits. Tribal law enforcement officers investigate misdemeanor crimes committed by Tribal members on Tribal lands. Felonies committed by Tribal members are handled either by the PPD or the county depending on the location of the incident. The city, county, and Tribal departments all characterize their relationship as very cooperative.

The PPD considers drug crimes, specifically relating to alcohol, methamphetamine, and marijuana use, as one of its biggest challenges. Drug use is prevalent, especially along the Highway 93 corridor from Arlee to Dayton. Other problem areas for the PPD include traffic violations and monitoring of school zones.

In order to address these concerns, the PPD would ideally like to expand its force with an additional two officers. Unfortunately, the PPD has difficulty retaining officers. The PPD feels that turnover rates are high due to low starting wages in comparison to wages for the Lake County Sheriff’s Department and the Missoula and Kalispell Police Departments. There is an internal perception that the PPD too often serves as a training ground for other law enforcement agencies. Accordingly, the force continually operates below capacity and experiences a significant loss in investment in terms of training hours. The PPD feels that it will never be able to compete with wages offered by the Missoula and Kalispell forces, but would like to compete



with starting wages offered by the Lake County Sheriff's Department in order to increase retention rates.

The PPD budget is approximately \$650,000 to \$700,000 and is financed exclusively through the general fund. The city has supported equipment purchases and upgrades. The PPD's major concern is low starting wages for its officers. In the future, the PPD would like to see additional funds raised through a law enforcement levy. Until more funding can be secured, the PPD has no plans to expand its services.

Lake County Sheriff's Department

The Lake County Sheriff's Department (LCSD) is the primary public safety agency for Lake County. The LCSD consists of 22 deputies, including four school officers and one Northwest Drug Task Force member. The LCSD is divided into patrol, investigative, and administrative units, in addition to a reserve force of 15-20 volunteers.

The LCSD runs a 911 call center with ten dispatch officers. The center fields calls from the entire county and routes them to appropriate state, city, and Tribal law enforcement agencies. In 2004, the center received about 25,000 calls, approximately 10,000 to 14,000 of which originated in the city of Polson.

The LCSD also operates a detention facility staffed by ten detention officers. The facility contains 42 holding cells, including one juvenile holding cell with limited function. Youth are held only temporarily before being sent to facilities in Missoula, Kalispell or Libby. In 1999, the LCSD completed an expansion that added a recreation room and two solitary confinement cells to the facility. The expansion did not increase the facility's holding capacity. The LCSD characterizes the jail facility as inadequate to meet the county's needs. Often, the LCSD practices a "catch-and-release" policy in which inmates are booked, but discharged immediately due to limited bed space.

Confederated Salish-Kootenai Tribal Law and Order Department

The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribal Law and Order Department (TLOD) was established in 1986. Today it consists of 21 officers, including one investigator and two Northwest Drug Task Force members. The TLOD also employs eight jail and dispatch staff and one cook.



The TLOD has limited jurisdiction to investigate misdemeanor incidents involving Tribal members on the Flathead Indian Reservation. The two members of the Northwest Drug Task Force also investigate felony drug crimes. The TLOD provides services 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In addition to investigating crimes and taking reports from individuals, the officers also provide security for various Tribal functions, including meetings, polls, Pow-Wows, funerals, and sites which may require extra patrol.

The TLOD also operates a jail facility that houses up to 22 inmates. Currently, the jail is often full to capacity. The TLOD hopes to expand the current facility to increase inmate capacity and create a new juvenile facility to house youth offenders. At present, there are no firm plans regarding such an expansion.

State and Federal Agencies

The Montana Highway Patrol operates a detachment office in Polson staffed by five officers and one sergeant. The office provides traffic enforcement for state highways, including Highways 93, 35, and 354 in the Polson area. Officers primarily respond to calls in Lake County, but may also be called to Flathead, Lincoln, and Sanders counties.

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks and the U.S. Forest Service provide wardens and law enforcement officers who enforce regulations on public lands.

5.3 Polson Fire Department

The Polson Fire Department (PFD) provides fire protection, public education, fire prevention, and code management to the citizens of Polson and the surrounding 129 square miles. The PFD operates out of two fire stations and answers close to 300 calls of assistance per year, not including emergency medical service calls. Station one is located in Polson and station two is located 14 miles north of Polson on Highway 93 in Big Arm. The Polson Fire Department has nine senior officers, 22 firefighters at station one, and six firefighters at station two. The Fire Chief is a full-time employee of the city of Polson, and the fire inspector is a part-time paid employee. All other staff work on a volunteer basis.

The PFD's mission statement is: "Serving the community of Polson by responding to preserve life and property." The PFD also has the following goals:



1. To reduce the frequency and severity of fire, injury, and hazardous materials emergencies through prevention and education.
2. To minimize suffering, loss of life and property from fires, hazardous materials, and medical and other emergencies through response programs.
3. To ensure preparedness through training and district-wide community training and education.
4. To provide the resources and support necessary for the Polson Fire Department to accomplish this mission.

The number of service calls has varied over the past eight years with a low of 182 calls in 1997 and a high of 323 calls in 2003. Personnel hours have also varied, with a low of 1,750 hours in 2002 and a high of 3,368 hours in 2003. Training hours have increased an average of 9.5 hours per year from 73 hours in 2004 to 92 hours in 2005. (See Table 5-3 below). Although there are no clear trends in the number of service calls or personnel hours, the PFD expects that service demands will increase as the area population continues to grow and building conditions worsen with age. The PFD feels that staffing levels are not adequate to accommodate the community's needs. Although volunteer firefighters are essential to the function of the program, the PFD would like to compensate staff in some way, perhaps by implementing a system of payment for each service call.

Table 5-3 Fire Department Statistical Data, 1997 – 2005			
Year	Total Service Calls	Total Personnel Hours	Average Training Hours Per Firefighter
1997	182	Not Available	Not Available
1998	209	Not Available	Not Available
1999	279	Not Available	Not Available
2000	223	2,726	Not Available
2001	202	2,302	Not Available
2002	212	1,750	Not Available
2003	323	3,368	73
2004	283	2,578	82
2005*	64	512	92
*As of March, 31, 2005.			
<i>Source: Tom Maloney, Fire Chief, May 2005.</i>			

The National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA's) standard response time is six minutes or less to 80 percent of incidents in urban cluster areas. The PFD meets this six-minute goal on 53 percent of its calls. The PFD is unable to improve its response times given current staff levels and outdated equipment, some of which is over 30 years old. Ideally, the PFD would like to add new stations to cover outlying areas, add additional paid staff positions, improve



training programs in structural firefighting, and purchase updated firefighting equipment in order to meet the standards set by the NFPA.

The PFD has a \$200,000 budget including \$58,000 for the rural area. The rural district provides \$15,000 directly to the PFD's budget, participates in cost-sharing for staff vehicles, and alternates fuel costs with the city. In addition, the city charges a subdivision fire service fee of \$100 per subdivided lot. The PFD has experienced budget shortfalls in recent years. In 2004, the PFD applied for and received \$200,000 in grants for equipment upgrades in order to meet these shortfalls.

Recently Polson received a better ISO rating for fire insurance (ISO is a private firm that provides risk assessments). The city maintained a fire protection class rating of 5. The rural area was able to lower its rating from 9 to 5/9. The PFD missed receiving a rating of class four by three points due to the low number of paid staff and lack of a training facility. Good insurance ratings can be an important economic factor in attracting new businesses to the community.

The PFD does not believe that new subdivisions will negatively impact quality of fire service to the community as a whole. It is generally true that as a city's population grows, the more service delivery will be required. It is typical in any city, however, that middle to higher income areas are less demanding of fire services than lower income areas. As an example, the PFD currently makes calls to recently constructed subdivisions only about twice a year. The homes are well-maintained and newer construction doesn't burn as readily as older buildings. In addition, the newer subdivisions add to the tax base, thus compensating for increased service demands.

The PFD is currently involved in a strategic planning process. The PFD has identified two areas where it would like to add new fire stations, one in the Mission Bay area on Highway 35 and one at the intersection of Tower Road and Highway 93. Some subdivisions are setting aside land for fire stations.



5.4 Healthcare

Hospital

St. Joseph Medical Center provides medical and healthcare services for the city of Polson and the surrounding area. St. Joseph offers a full-service emergency department; surgical services; support services including cardiac, obstetrical, pediatric and newborn care; diagnostic imaging and testing; cardiopulmonary care; rehabilitative care; a full-service laboratory; and pharmacy services. Additionally, the hospital provides dietary and nutritional services and community education.

In 1999-2000, a 60,000 square-foot addition was annexed onto a structure built in 1955, replacing a section of the hospital built in 1933. The new addition included a modern imaging suite, a new emergency room, a new surgical suite, patient rooms, an onsite retail pharmacy, medical office space, and administrative office areas. The Family Maternity Center was also expanded. The cost of the project was estimated at \$10 million, \$1.6 million of which was contributed by the community, with the remaining amount funded through a Providence Bond Issue.

Over the last five years, the hospital's gross revenues have steadily increased. Net revenue has also increased between 2001 and 2004. The number of employees grew slightly from 145 in 2001 to 163 in 2005. The number of emergency room visits increased from 4,695 in 2001 to 5,011 in 2004. Laboratory visits also increased over the same time period, with over 16,000 additional visits in 2004 as compared to 2001. Inpatient admissions into the hospital actually declined, from a high of 1,005 in 2001 to a low of 831 in 2004. (See Table 5-4 below).

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005*
Gross Revenue	\$15.2 M	\$16.3 M	\$18.3 M	\$20.5 M	\$5.1 M
Net Revenue	\$11.6 M	\$11.6 M	\$12.8 M	\$14.2 M	\$3.6 M
Total Employees	145	150	152	163	163
Inpatient Admissions	1,005	925	883	831	148
Emergency Room Visits	4,695	4,823	4,989	5,011	1,250
Laboratory Visits	39,437	47,820	49,922	55,788	14,535

*First Quarter of 2005.
Source: John Glueckert, CEO of St. Joseph Medical Center, June 2005.



In addition to the hospital facility, St. Joseph's provides home health care services. The program is relatively small, with five to six employees and approximately 20 to 25 patients located across Lake County. Services include skilled nursing, in-home chores, and physical and occupational therapy.

St. Joseph's also operates an assisted living center. The facility was opened in 2000 and contains approximately 40 units. It operates at full capacity with a waiting list. The center feels that it is not able to fully meet the needs of the community and that additional living centers are needed that offer relative independence, but also provide for residents' nutritional needs. A center catering to residents with Alzheimer's disease is also needed for the Polson community.

Ambulance

Ambulance services are provided by a private organization, Polson Emergency Services, on a direct bill basis. Emergency calls are routed through the Lake County 911 call center to the ambulance service. Four ambulances are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Patients are transported to the closest medical facility or to another facility of their choice.

Public Health

The Lake County Public Health Department (LCPHD), located in Polson, provides health services for the county. Services include immunizations, family planning, well child, communicable disease prevention and testing, tobacco education and prevention, and emergency preparedness. The LCPHD currently employs 14 staff, including nurses, program coordinators, and administrative assistants.

Demand for exotic travel vaccines has increased in the past few years. Additionally, the LCPHD has seen an increase in service demands for high-risk populations. The LCPHD feels that due to stretched resources and current staffing levels, it is unable to fully meet the growing needs of the community. Ideally, the LCPHD would like to add another full-time nurse to its staff, but space is limited in the current facility. Further, the current nursing staff's salaries fall well below the market average.

Tribal Healthcare

The Tribal Health and Human Services Department provides health care services to Tribal members and their descendants. The Tribal Health Center in Polson provides pharmacy,



dental, and mental health services. Additionally, the center provides immunizations, obstetrical services, prenatal and postnatal care, and services for the elderly including blood pressure and diabetes monitoring. The center accommodates both home and clinic visits. The center also operates a transport service to medical appointments outside of Polson. The center employs two dental assistants, one dentist, one nurse, two pharmacists, one pharmacy technician, a secretary, a part-time mental health counselor, and a part-time drug and alcohol counselor.

The center has seen an increase in service demands over the past five years. Currently, there is a one-year waiting list for routine dental services. There has been an increase in demand for transport services. There has also been an increase in drug and alcohol abuse services and elder care needs. The center feels that it does not have adequate staff or enough physical space to address the community's growing needs. The center is considering a move to a larger clinic and would also like to hire a doctor, an additional nurse, and an additional dentist.

5.5 Social Services

Aging

The Western Montana Area Six Agency on Aging, located in Polson, serves a seven-county area. The agency contracts with state, federal, and local agencies to provide subsidized meals at senior centers and for home-bound seniors. The agency also provides case management services, ombudsmen services, volunteer opportunities, information assistance, and referral services to connect senior citizens with other local service agencies.

A senior citizens center located in Polson provides transportation and nutritional services for local residents. The center employs two cooks, one director, three drivers, and also relies on volunteer staff.

The CSKT also operate a senior citizens center in Polson. The center provides meal services to approximately 50 to 60 Tribal senior citizens twice a week. Meals are also delivered to approximately seven home-bound Tribal seniors twice a week. The center coordinates with other social service organizations in Polson to ensure that senior citizens have meal services five days a week. In addition to meal services, the center also provides referral services and transportation to Tribal elders and needy families for work, school, and medical needs.

The Tribes also run the Kerr Elderly Program, which is funded by monies received from the Kerr Dam electric project. The program provides a wide variety of services, including food



stamps and fuel, power, and rent assistance. Additionally, the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funds workers in a six-month training experience with the Kerr Elderly Program. These workers repair and replace appliances and furnaces, build grab bars and handicapped accessible shower stalls, and provide a number of other services enabling elderly Tribal members to continue living independently in their homes.

A number of subsidized housing units for senior citizens are available in Polson. Lakeview Village provides 40 subsidized apartment units for senior citizens and Cherry Hill Village provides an additional 22 subsidized units for seniors. Ten rental units are also available for low-income elderly Tribal members through the Tribal Housing Authority.

Low-Income, Disabled and Special Needs

The Lake County Office of Public Assistance is a branch office of the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS). It administers various public assistance programs, including food stamps, Medicaid, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), low income energy assistance, and children's health insurance. Demand for these services has increased in the last five years. In Lake County, the number of Medicaid recipients has increased by 40 percent from 2,627 in 2000 to 3,686 in 2005. Lake County recipients of financial assistance increased nearly 22 percent from 91 in 2000 to 111 in 2005. Information specific to the city of Polson is not available.

The Northwest Montana Human Resource Council District Ten, located in Kalispell, serves the Lake County area. This private, non-profit organization provides programs for low-income, elderly, minority, and disabled Montanans aimed at alleviating poverty and providing educational and training opportunities. Services include employment and training programs, energy programs, housing programs, business development programs, and in-home care services.

5.6 Public Transportation

Rail / Bus

There is no general public transit system in the city of Polson. Rimrock Trailways runs a north-south bus service through Polson from Missoula to Kalispell, with two daily stops in Polson. The Crow's Nest Gallery just off Highway 93 in Polson serves as the bus depot for the city. The Salish-Kootenai College also leases buses and vans for special transportation needs



associated with education-related activities. Montana Rail Link provides freight service on a spur line running from Missoula to just south of Polson on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Special Needs

Cheerful Heart, Inc. is a non-profit organization that provides free transportation services for Lake County residents undergoing cancer treatment. Approximately 15 volunteer drivers provide transportation for medical appointments in Kalispell and Missoula, in addition to in-town transportation for shopping and social visits. The drivers use their own cars and pay for their own fuel costs. The organization is funded through donations from the community and proceeds from an annual fundraiser.

The Lake County Council on Aging, located in Ronan, provides senior citizens with transportation to doctor appointments in Polson, Missoula, Kalispell, Ronan, and St. Ignatius. The council operates three vehicles Monday through Friday and relies on volunteer drivers. Senior citizens are asked to donate what they can toward fuel costs.

The Polson Senior Center also provides transportation services for senior citizens. The center runs a shuttle service Monday through Friday for shopping, medical appointments and other transportation needs. There is a fee charged for each trip based on in-town or out-of-town service and the number of stops requested. If a client is not able to pay for medical transportation needs, the center will waive the fee and apply for reimbursement through Medicaid.

The Salish-Kootenai Tribal Health Services provides free transportation for Tribal seniors who do not have a vehicle or a family member with a vehicle. This service is strictly for transportation to and from medical appointments in the Polson, Missoula, or Kalispell area. The Tribal Health Department requires 48 hours notice before an appointment. The service operates Monday through Friday from 8am to 4:30pm.

The Tribal senior citizens center also provides transportation to Tribal elders, needy families, and disabled Tribal members for work, school, and medical needs. The center has five drivers and seven vehicles, including two new buses. Runs to Missoula are scheduled on Wednesdays. All other services are provided by appointment.

South Lake Taxi operates a general taxi service for the Lake County area seven days a week from 7am until 2am. The taxi offers service from Polson to Missoula and Kalispell in addition to in-town service. For senior citizens with Medicaid coverage, medical transportation



services are provided free of charge with no co-pay. All senior citizens receive a discount on fares for both in-town and out-of-town trips. The taxi service does not operate wheel-chair vans due to high insurance costs. The taxi can transport people in wheel chairs who are able to stand on their own with the aid of a driver.

Polson Airport

Located one mile northwest of downtown Polson off of Highway 93, the county-owned Polson Airport has a 4,250-foot paved and lighted runway. Parking, flight instruction, charter services, aircraft maintenance, and fuel services are provided. In 1999, the Polson airport completed a \$2,000,000 improvement project that included runway and taxiway additions and other upgrades. New privately-owned hangars are added on an ongoing basis. Commercial jet services are offered at the nearby Missoula International and Glacier Park International.

Bike/Pedestrian Pathways

Plans for bike paths have been incorporated into three MDT reconstruction projects on U.S. 93. The CSKT were instrumental in ensuring the inclusion of these paths in the project design. At the intersection of U.S. 93 and Highway 35, the bike path will be directly connected to the roadways. On the sections of U.S. 93 from Polson to Spring Creek, the bike paths will be separated from the main roadway by a boulevard. MDT is also constructing bike paths on a two to three mile stretch of Highway 35 directly east of Polson. As on U.S. 93, these paths will be separated from the main roadway by a boulevard. There are tentative plans to extend these paths to Ronan.

Currently, the city of Polson has not constructed a connected system of bike paths. Hillcrest Drive currently has a narrow two-foot pavement walkway alongside the main roadway. The county Roads Department has characterized the surface of this pathway as being in poor condition. The city Roads Department completed a one- to two-mile section of bike path from Hillcrest to South Bayshore Drive in the spring of 2005. The pathway is covered in asphalt chips recycled from local highway projects. Eventually, the city hopes to pave the path. The city and county have discussed a “Rails to Trails” project consisting of bike paths around Flathead Lake. This project has been on hold for the last five years.



5.7 Utilities

Electricity

Mission Valley Power, (MVP) is the sole supplier of electricity for the city of Polson and all of Lake County within the Reservation boundary. MVP is federally owned and is managed under contract by the CSKT. The utility buys its power from several sources, including Bonneville Power Administration, PPL Montana, and Boulder Creek Hydroelectric Project. MVP characterizes the power supply as adequate to meet current and future demand and does not anticipate supply concerns.

Currently, there are no major expansion or improvement projects planned. MVP does continue to upgrade its facilities on an ongoing basis. These improvements include rebuilding substations, distribution lines, and transformers; increasing voltage on some lines; replacing power poles; and other general maintenance.

Telephone

CenturyTel, based in Kalispell, provides telephone service for the city of Polson. The company offers individualized service plans, including long-distance, call waiting, three-way calls, busy redial, voice mail, caller ID, last call return, speed dial, call forwarding and selective call forwarding, and distinctive rings.

The state of Montana is divided into three long distance telephone service areas. The two main local access and transport areas (LATAs) roughly divide the state in half from the northeast to southwest. The third LATA is located in the upper northwest corner of the state, and includes the Libby, Eureka, and Troy area. Polson is located in the state's western LATA. Generally, calls originating in one LATA and terminating in another are subject to long-distance fees. In addition to the LATA boundaries, CenturyTel operates a market area, including the city of Polson. Calls within the market area are not subject to long-distance fees.

Cellular Phone Service

Cellular phone service is provided by Alltel Wireless, Verizon, and Blackfoot communications. None of these three companies operates a store in Polson. Alltel Wireless operates three transmission towers within 20 miles of Polson, and Blackfoot Communications operates one transmission tower in Polson.



The location of wireless communication towers can be a controversial subject, especially in residential areas. In 2002, Lake County and Polson adopted detailed performance standards for wireless communication facilities within the *Polson Master Plan* area. These performance standards are intended to accommodate the provision of wireless communication services to residents, businesses, and visitors while protecting residential property values and the visual environment.

Cable Television

Bresnan Communications offers digital cable television as well as a high definition television subscriber service in the Polson area. Subscribers must have a high definition television in order to receive the high-definition channels offered through Bresnan. Eagle Satellite, based in Missoula, is the local retailer for Dish Network. Eagle Satellite offers satellite television services in the Polson area.

Internet

SKC-Compuplus is an internet service provider owned by the Salish-Kootenai College. Compuplus offers dial-up, dedicated lines, and DSL internet services for the city of Polson. Compuplus has recently purchased a new remote access server to improve dial-up internet services. Additionally, the company has recently finished improvements for high-speed wireless services, and replaced email and web servers. Technical support services are offered via telephone during business hours. CenturyTel offers local dial-up and high-speed DSL internet services to the Polson area. Bresnan Communications also provides high speed internet services to the Polson area. Access Montana, a division of the Ronan Telephone Company, provides dial-up internet services to Polson and plans to offer satellite broadband services beginning in July, 2005.



6.0 Public Facilities

Chapter Six discusses Polson's existing public facilities. The public facilities or capital improvements element of this growth policy identifies, in general terms, the capital improvement needs, goals, and policies of the community. As required by Montana statute, this growth policy includes a strategy for the development, maintenance, and replacement of public infrastructure.

6.1 Key Findings

Water and Sewer Facilities

- Although there is enough water to meet current demands, the lack of adjudicated water rights continues to hamper further development and expansion of the municipal water system.
- Water pipes in the older sections of town are in poor repair and may need to be replaced in the future.
- The city's wastewater system meets current demand. At some point, existing wastewater mains may need to be replaced with larger pipes in order to accommodate the growing service population.
- The city's stormwater system is fairly weak and may need upgrades in the future to [address treatment of water before it is discharged into Flathead Lake](#).

Solid Waste

- The Lake County landfill is nearly at capacity, with an additional 2.3 years of lifetime expectancy. The landfill currently accepts construction and wood waste, but all municipal waste is shipped to Missoula.

Roads and Transportation

- Reconstruction projects are currently underway on U.S. 93 and Highway 35 to improve safety conditions on these transportation corridors.
- A proposed bypass project to re-route U.S. 93 along the west side of the city is currently on hold.
- The roads and curbs in the older section of Polson are in poor repair and may require upgrading in the future.
- Polson experiences high traffic volumes and high parking utilization during the summer months.

Parks

- The parks department would like to add additional recreational areas within the city of Polson and increase its staffing levels.



Polson Public Schools and Library facilities

- Enrollment in the Polson School District has remained steady since 1990, and significant growth is not expected over the next ten years.
- The school district has identified several maintenance projects, including a new roof and exterior renovation for the Linderman Elementary School, improvements to the heating system at the Cherry Valley School, and expanded storage facilities for the district.
- The Polson City Library's facilities are becoming increasingly crowded as the number of people using the facilities increase.

6.2 Water Facilities

The city of Polson operates a municipal water system that provides water for residential, business, fire protection, and irrigation uses. The water system serves the city of Polson, with main line extending to Hell Roaring Creek, about four miles outside the city limits.

From 1919 to 1985, Polson primarily relied on surface water from Hell Roaring Creek, with 1,100 gallons per minute from the upper reservoir. During this period, the city used groundwater only during unusually cold weather or high turbidity in Hell Roaring Creek. Contaminants were found in the Hell Roaring Creek supply in 1985. In response, the city of Polson began developing groundwater supplies to replace the surface water system. This shift to groundwater has apparently eliminated the contamination problem. There are no known drinking water quality standard violations for Polson in the last five years.

The municipal water system currently draws from six wells, which supply an average total of 1,505 gallons per minute. The city has an additional well that was taken out of service in 1999 due to mud contamination. The wells range in age from 4 to 45 years. Water is stored in six reservoirs. The city provides water to approximately 1,890 city connections. The CSKT have an agreement with the city to connect with city water and sewer for Tribal trust land just outside the city limits that cannot be annexed to the city, per the Code of Federal Regulations. The Turtle Lake Housing Addition, located in the eastern portion of the Polson planning area, includes approximately 80 homes, many of which are connected to a centralized water system operated by the Salish Kootenai Housing Authority.

In 1999 and 2001, Polson drilled two high-capacity wells (Wells No. 6 and 7) on the west side of Flathead River to increase the city's water supply. In April 2003, the city applied for CDBG grant monies to help fund a project to pipe water from the two wells across the Flathead River to the heart of the city. The cost of the project was estimated at \$1.5 million to be provided



by local and federal monies. As of 2004, this project was completed and the wells now provide water to the city of Polson.

Due to the water system's limited capacity, the city instituted water usage restrictions for summer use beginning in 1999. Additionally, the city only allows 30 new water connections per year per developer, which limits growth to a certain extent. The city is hoping to build a treatment plant that would enable it to draw water from Flathead Lake to add to its current water supply. This project is dependent on the resolution of Tribal water rights issues. The treatment plant would cost approximately \$8,000,000 and require the addition of two new reservoirs. By tapping into the lake water, Polson could potentially alleviate the current water supply concerns.

In 1994, Polson adopted the "Polson Wellhead Protection Plan" to maintain a safe water supply. The plan identified potential sources of contamination and instituted prevention strategies. In January 2005, a source water delineation and assessment report was written to facilitate updating the city's wellhead protection plan. A private consultant is currently preparing a water facilities plan that will help in developing future scenarios for the municipal water system. The city has identified a number of goals for the municipal water supply, including the addition of a new reservoir on Skyline Drive, the replacement of the old reservoir on Hillcrest, and the drilling of new wells in the future as needed.

The city water department is supported by fees that go into an enterprise fund. Currently, there is a capital improvement fee assessed for sewer usage. The city plans to use this fee to maintain both the sewer and water systems. A water and sewer committee meets periodically to determine community needs, address concerns, and develop plans for growth.

The primary obstacles to expanding the community water system are cost and the lack of adjudicated water rights on the Flathead Indian Reservation. Several new housing development projects have been proposed in the immediate Polson area that may impact the city's limited water resources. Additionally, Polson may soon face deteriorating water system infrastructure. In the older section of downtown, cast iron pipes are very brittle and may need to be replaced in the future.



6.3 Wastewater Facilities

The city's sanitary sewer collection and partially aerated facultative lagoon systems were constructed in 1980. The sewage collection system includes about 30 miles of mains and 11 lift stations. Pipe materials include polyvinyl chloride (PVC), asbestos cement, (AC), and clay tile. The treatment plant consists of three aerated lagoons, a polishing pond, and a surface discharge of treated effluent to the Flathead River. The three lagoons have a combined effective volume of approximately 29 million gallons. Aeration is tapered from pond one to pond three. A polishing pond follows pond three. The pond's liner was constructed from local clays and is two feet thick. Adjacent and north of the aerated lagoons is a large pond covering approximately nine acres which can be used for overflow if necessary. The aeration system is composed of blowers, distribution piping, and submerged aeration diffusers. A lake aid mixer was added to pond one to improve mixing and relieve odor problems. The mixer is a surface fixture which operates from wind energy or electrical power. The mixer was placed near the influent discharge and has improved odor problems. The wastewater system currently serves approximately 2,000 customers.

Currently, all sewage generated in Polson is pumped to the wastewater treatment system on the west side of Polson near the Flathead River. The sewer system only serves Polson residents; septic systems are used outside the city limits. Polson's sewage treatment plant has a peak capacity of 675,000 gallons per day and is currently operated at less than 78 percent of its capacity. Treatment capacity should be adequate in the near future. Existing wastewater capacity will accommodate 430 additional residential connections.

The Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) completed a comprehensive performance evaluation of the Polson treatment plant in 1995 and identified two areas as limiting factors: plant organic loading at 83 percent of design capacity, and plant hydraulic loading at 71 percent of design capacity. A system evaluation and facility plan were conducted to identify needed improvements. Recommended improvements at the existing treatment plant site included replacement of the failing aeration system, sludge removal, installation of an effluent disinfection system, and reconstruction of the existing lagoon discharge to the Flathead River. These improvements have been completed.

In 2002 to the present, two sewage lift stations were added to the system, bringing the total number of stations to eleven, and the sewage lagoon was rebuilt and upgraded, at a cost of



over \$40,700. The system discharge permit has been renewed and more stringent discharge limits have been set, requiring a higher level of treatment. The Polson sewer and water department has successfully adapted to meet these new discharge limits.

As illustrated in Figures 6.1 and 6.2, the areas served by both the city wastewater system and private septic tanks have expanded since 1990, matching Polson's population growth. In 1990, the city sewer system served areas within the city center, east along U.S. 93 until just past the intersection with Highway 35, and on the west side of the Flathead River along the Flathead Lake and Flathead River shorelines. By 2000, the area served by the city sewer system expanded on the east side of the Flathead River, in the southeast corner of the city, to the northeast along the lakeshore, and further extended along U.S. 93 south of the intersection with Highway 35.

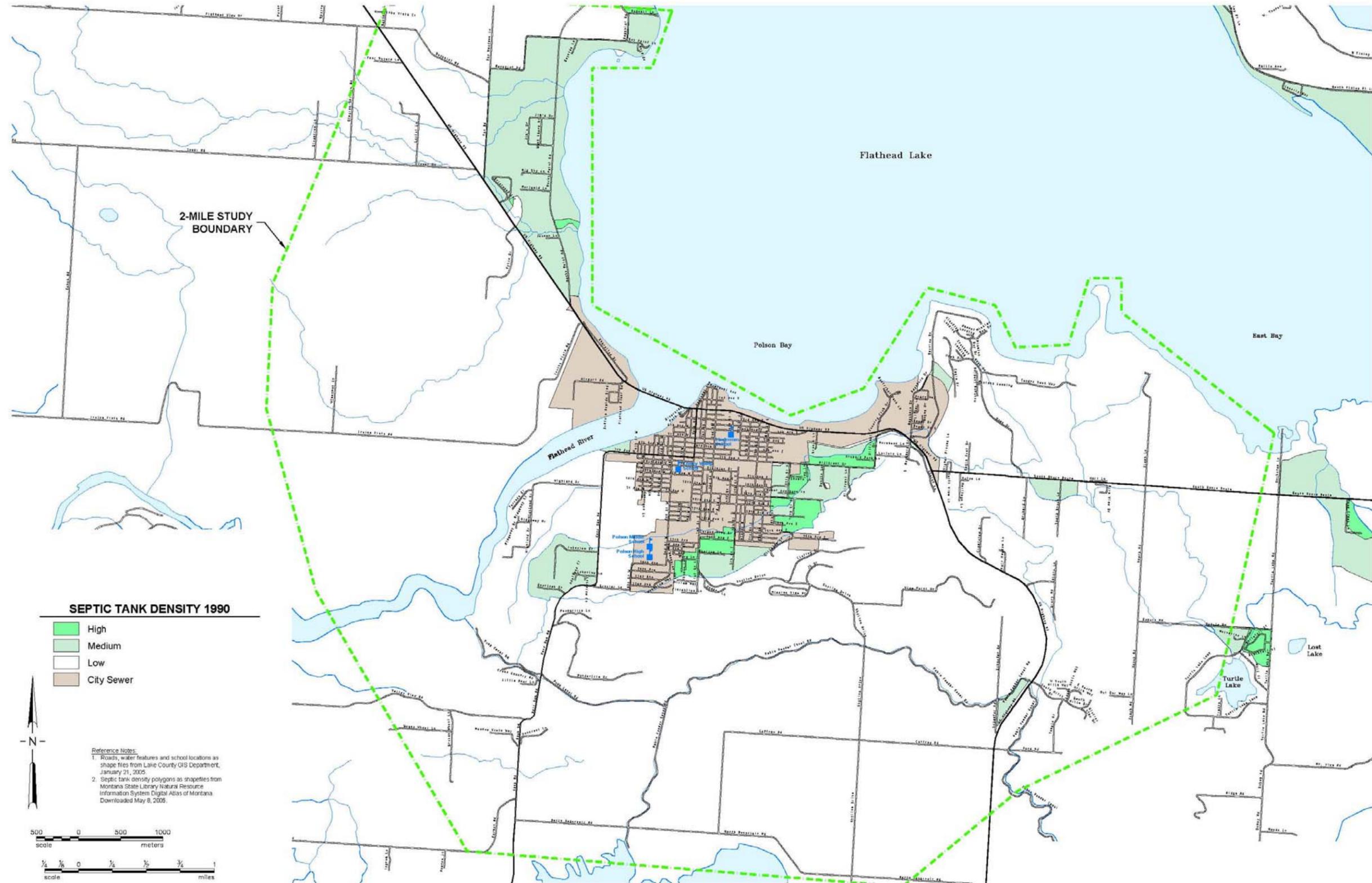


Figure 6.1 Septic Tank Density, 1990

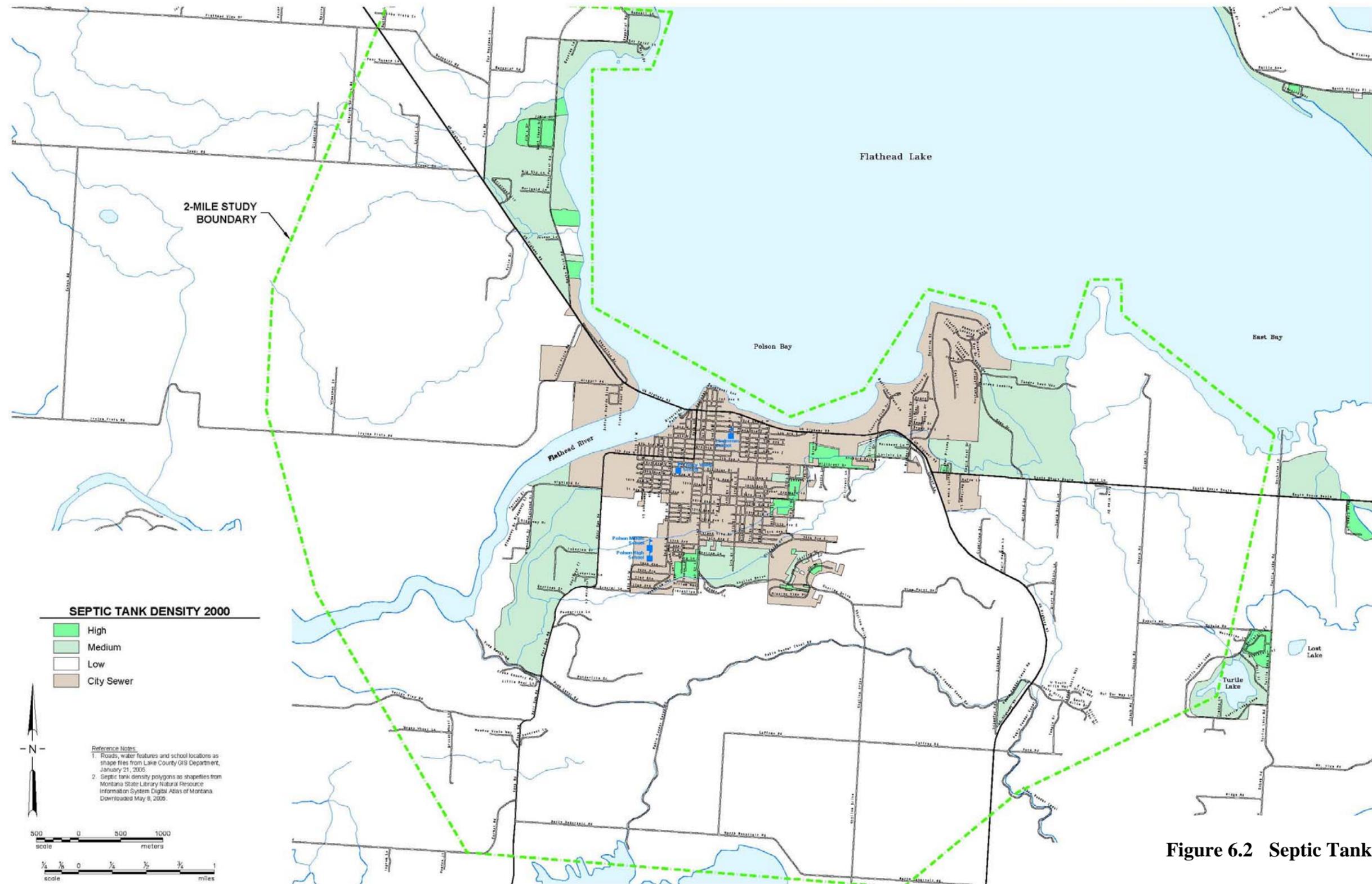


Figure 6.2 Septic Tank Density, 2000



In 1990, areas of medium and high density septic tank usage were primarily located northwest of Polson along the lakeshore, in a southwest pocket along Kerr Dam Road, along the southeast edge of the city, and in isolated sections along Highway 35 east of the city, northeast of the city, and along U.S. 93 south of Polson. By 2000, medium density septic tank usage covered a larger area on the eastern edge of the city between the lakeshore and Highway 35. To the southwest of the city center, medium density septic tank usage spread in the area between the east side of the Flathead River and Kerr Dam Road, extending south to Pump Road Canal. Northwest of the city along the lakeshore, several medium density areas shifted to high density areas. Within the city center, septic tank usage actually declined, with some high and medium density areas shifting to medium density or low density, and some areas served by the city sewer system. The Turtle Lake Housing Addition, located in the eastern portion of the Polson planning area, is served by a separate sewage treatment system operated by the Salish Kootenai Housing Authority.

As the Polson service area and population grows, portions of the collection main system may need to be replaced. Carrying capacity can only be increased by replacing the existing mains with larger pipes. Currently, a new force main is being added from Ducharme Park to the treatment plant in an effort to reduce the impact on the Riverside lift station, which is also in need of an upgrade.

6.4 Stormwater System

Polson operates a municipal stormwater system. The city collects runoff in storm sewers and discharges the water into Flathead Lake. The stormwater receives no treatment before entering the lake.

The water and sewer department has characterized the primary system as fairly weak. Rainwater from a large storm can easily flood the storm sewer system. Improvements are needed to the roof drain system to reduce the amount of rainwater that is sent to the wastewater treatment facility. Additionally, the 1998 Polson Facility Plan recommended that the city should inspect sanitary sewer manhole covers and other drain inlets for leaking. A TSEP engineering grant for a storm drain system upgrade throughout the city has been budgeted with a city match of \$45,000.



6.5 Solid Waste Management

The Lake County Solid Waste Management District (SWMD) has operated the solid waste collection and disposal systems in Lake County since 1972. The SWMD operates the Lake County Landfill, located about three miles southwest of Polson. The landfill is a Class II facility licensed for municipal solid waste and meets the DEQ requirements for operation. The landfill provides service to a unique mix of urban, rural, and Tribal residents in Lake County.

The landfill has a short life expectancy due to limited capacity. The SWMD has requested an amended permit to increase the vertical height and therefore the volume available. The vertical expansion is still awaiting final approval. Due to ongoing capacity concerns, the landfill is now used only for construction and wood wastes. Even with a vertical expansion, the landfill will soon reach capacity and ultimately close. At present, the SWMD estimates that the landfill will continue to accept construction waste for another 2.3 years.

In addition to the county municipal landfill, the SWMD also maintains a class III landfill for inert waste. The landfill accepts wood wastes and non-water soluble solids including untreated wood, tree trimmings, concrete, brick, rock, and tree stumps. The SWMD estimates that the inert waste landfill will not reach full capacity for another 20 years.

In 2004, the SWMD completed a central transfer station at a cost of approximately \$3,000,000. All municipal solid waste is currently routed through the station, which is located on county-owned lands approximately three miles south of Polson. Solid waste is transported to the transfer station by three means. BFI, a commercial hauler, operates a pick-up service for the city of Polson and other urban and rural sites within Lake County. The compactor trucks haul waste directly to the transfer station, which accounts for approximately 50 percent of the volume received. The SWMD also maintains seven rural container sites throughout Lake County where residences dispose of trash. These are loose loads contained in 40-yard boxes. The three containers closest to Polson are located at Woods Bay, Elmo, and outside of Charlo. The SWMD collects the waste daily and transports it to the transfer station. Waste collected in the containers accounts for approximately 25 to 30 percent of all municipal waste collected. Additionally, Lake County residents and businesses may haul waste directly to the transfer station outside Polson. After processing, the SWMD transports waste from the transfer station to a facility in Missoula.

The municipal landfill currently accepts construction waste. Upon full capacity, however, all construction and municipal waste will be shipped to Missoula. The SWMD has recycling



capabilities for scrap metal (excluding cars), oil, antifreeze, and lead batteries. Additionally, the SWMD recycles cardboard, office paper, magazines, and aluminum cans

At present, the primary revenue source for the waste facilities is an annual \$135 charge per household, which is included on the property tax bill for lands held in fee. Fees are collected from some trust land holders (i.e. Tribal lands) on a direct bill basis, but some residents choose not to pay. The Tribal housing authority pays annual fees for approximately 600 housing units. Businesses pay based on the waste they generate by means of property tax bill. Tax-exempt businesses (e.g. churches and Tribal businesses) are directly billed. Some businesses, however, fail to pay the required fees. There are no tipping charges at the landfill for municipal waste. The SWMD does charge a fee for construction and wood waste. The SWMD may consider a “pay-as-you-throw” system instead of the current collection of fees through property taxes and direct billing. Such a system would reward recycling and low consumption. Larger consumers and those choosing not to recycle would be required to pay their fair share. The SWMD believes that a new payment system would enable collection of fees from those residents currently avoiding payment.

The SWMD may also consider implementing more supervisory control over the container sites. The sites are open for 12 hours a day, 7 days a week. Currently, they are virtually unstaffed, with only a roving monitor patrol. Due to the lengthy hours of operation and limited supervision, there have been incidences of people falling into the containers and improper dumping of waste materials. Ultimately, the SWMD may have to limit hours of operation and provide constant monitoring and staffing of the sites.

Additional problems include illegal dump sites on Tribal lands. The SWMD would like to develop a system for encouraging all Lake County residents to use the waste facilities.

6.6 Roads and Bridges

City of Polson

The Polson Roads Department (PRD) maintains approximately 43 miles of roads, and owns six to eight miles of alleyways. Of the 43 miles of roads, approximately 75 percent are finished with chip seal or asphalt. The remaining are untreated clay roads. The PRD also maintains approximately 3 blocks of sidewalks on 16th Avenue E and 4-5 blocks of sidewalks at the Kerr Dam complex. All other sidewalks are maintained by private property owners. The PRD



also provides snow removal on the recently-constructed bike path extending approximately one mile southeast from South Bayshore Drive adjacent to U.S. 93.

The entire annual budget for the PRD is approximately \$98,000. The budget is funded in part by the state gas tax and also by the city's general fund. Gas tax revenues are used for general street maintenance, while the general fund provides money for supplies, equipment purchases under \$5,000, and equipment repairs.

Road construction estimates provided approximately six to seven years ago were \$45-50,000 per block. Repair work consisting of asphalt overlays costs approximately \$5,000 per block. Over the past three to four years, the PRD has completed about 30 blocks of repair work per year. The PRD does not regularly execute total reconstruction projects. On the east side of the city, most roads have been either chip-sealed or overlaid with asphalt and are generally in good condition. The roads and curbs in the older section of Polson to the west are in poor repair. Due to budget constraints, the PRD has not been able to address the upgrade and maintenance needs for this section of town.

In addition to general repair work, the PRD is faced with budget challenges due to the deteriorating water system infrastructure. In the older section of town to the west, original galvanized pipes are beginning to rot. Leaks in the water pipes necessitate tearing up sections of city roads, sometimes just after these roads have been repaired or replaced.

At present, there is no comprehensive road repair plan or street board in place to rank or evaluate proposed maintenance and expansion projects. The PRD staff simply survey existing roads and identify maintenance projects based on apparent disrepair. The PRD is also lacking a detailed snow removal policy that specifically addresses primary routes and snow removal schedules. Currently, the PRD plows city streets with three inches of snow. In addition, staff are available from November through March to respond to calls from the police or city residents.

Traffic congestion is acute in the summer months corresponding to the tourist season. The PRD feels that this problem has steadily increased in the past few years. Parking issues are also heightened in the summer months, and there is very little RV parking accessible to downtown.

Currently, the PRD feels that the roads in new subdivisions do not pose a serious concern. Most roads constructed in new subdivisions are privately funded, constructed, and maintained. The PRD maintains only one such road totaling one-half block in length. Recently-



constructed subdivisions has added to the economic base of the city. New property taxes have helped the PRD secure new equipment. At present, new subdivisions have not significantly impacted the PRD's resources. New subdivisions could pose a greater concern to the PRD in the future if there are requests for city-funded road construction.

Lake County Road and Bridge Department

The Lake County Road and Bridge Department (LCRD) is responsible for maintenance and construction of county roads and bridges. The county maintains three roads in the Polson area. Skyline Drive is located just south of Polson and joins First Street East, which is a city road, and then trends east and south about 3 to 4 miles. In 2004, the county conducted traffic counts on Skyline Drive, with average daily traffic (ADT) totaling 1700. The LCRD feels that traffic on this road has increased over the past five years. They plan to conduct more traffic counts to more accurately determine traffic trends. Hillcrest Drive is also a county road and is an extension of Seventh Avenue East, a city street. From 7th Avenue East, Hillcrest extends east and north approximately one mile and intersects U.S. 93 south of the golf course. The county has not conducted traffic counts on this road. Irvine Flats Road is located on the west side of the Flathead River. It is not a high-volume road. It serves as an access road for a KOA campground and farming and ranching properties, and extends about 12-13 miles to the west. These three roads support two-lane traffic and are chip-sealed.

The LCRD has concerns about the condition of the roads. The chip-seal surfaces are not in good condition. Hillcrest has a narrow two-foot walkway with pavement in poor condition. The intersection of Hillcrest and U.S. 93 experiences high volume and there is limited sight distance. The LCRD considers this issue within the state's jurisdiction.

Skyline has steep grades, sharp curves, a narrow roadway, and a narrow bridge. The Skyline bridge is approximately 35 feet in length and 20 feet in width. The bridge's wooden deck is paved over with asphalt. The LCRD characterizes the bridge as near its life expectancy due to substandard railing and width and a steep grade. Accordingly, the bridge will require replacement in less than five years. The LCRD is currently working cooperatively with Tribal authorities to place the bridge on a replacement list, but there are no firm plans regarding the project.



In addition to condition concerns, Skyline may serve as an access for a new subdivision. The intersection at the proposed access point has very poor site distance. The LCRD characterizes Skyline as a sub-standard road. Additional traffic from a new subdivision will compound this problem. Because of the topography, Skyline will be very expensive to improve.

The county regularly performs maintenance on its roadways. Patching, mowing, and striping are done on an annual basis. Roads are also re-sealed every 6-7 years. The Lake County Commissioners select major road improvement projects based on perceived public need, traffic volume, and maintenance requirements. Once a project has been identified, the county strives to complete the improvement within five years. At present, there are no plans for major improvements or upgrades on the three county roads within the Polson area.

These roads are somewhat unique in that they are surrounded by city land. For example, the city has annexed land on each side of Skyline for about half a mile, but has not chosen to annex the road itself. The county hopes that the city will someday accept maintenance responsibility for these three roads, but there are no current plans for such a transfer.

Confederated Salish and Kootenai Roads Program

The Tribal Roads Program has paved the streets in the Turtle Lake Housing Addition, located in the eastern portion of the Polson planning area. The paved vehicle and pedestrian travel-way connects this subdivision with newly-constructed Highway 35 improvements.

Montana Department of Transportation

The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) maintains three highways running through the Polson area. U.S. 93 is a major north-south route running north from Florence through Polson and continuing up the western side of Flathead Lake. The highway is part of the national highway system and is classified as a principal arterial.

Highway 35 is part of Montana's highway system and serves as a minor arterial. It intersects U.S. 93 east of Polson's city center and continues north up the eastern side of Flathead Lake. Apart from the project at the intersection with U.S. 93, MDT is currently conducting a total reconstruction project on Highway 35 on a two to three mile stretch directly east of Polson. Previously, the highway was a two-lane roadway. MDT is now widening the road by adding additional center turn lanes and right turn lanes at certain intersections. When finished, the



highway will have three- and four-lane segments. Additionally, MDT is constructing bike paths on the entire length of the reconstruction project. These paths will be separated from the main roadway by a boulevard. Apart from this current project, there are no other improvement projects planned.

Highway 354 (also known as Kerr Dam Road) is a secondary highway within Montana's highway system. It runs south from Polson to the intersection with Highway 211 west of Ronan. In 1995-1996, MDT completed an alignment and general improvement project on a section of the road heading directly south from Polson. Just south of the upgrade, the highway currently turns into a two-lane gravel road. A redesign on this gravel portion is planned for February 2008.

MDT performs regular maintenance on all three highways. Signage and drainage areas are assessed annually and repairs are made according to need. Striping is performed on a regular basis depending on wear patterns, but usually every one to two years. Roads are repaired with asphalt patches or overlays as needed. MDT also performs snow removal during the winter months.

U.S. 93

U.S. 93 provides interstate, regional, and local access to the Polson area. It is the most heavily traveled non-interstate corridor in Montana and has been characterized as one of the most dangerous roadways in Montana. The highway experiences high traffic volume and high accident and fatality rates (See Table 6-1 below). Approximately 750 accidents occurred between 1990 and 1994 on U.S. 93 from Evaro through Polson. There were 16 fatal accidents resulting in 24 fatalities. An additional 320 accidents resulted in injuries. There were 2.66 accidents per mile on U.S. 93, as compared with 0.53 accidents per mile for the statewide average.



Table 6-1 U.S. 93 Average Daily Traffic and Vehicle Miles

Mile Post	Segment	Segment Length	Total ADT	Commercial ADT	Total Vehicle Miles	Commercial Vehicle Miles
16 + 0.645	Junction S-559	10.853	7,440	714	80,746	7,751
27 + 0.503	Junction P-6	5.114	6,330	683	32,371	3,496
32 + 0.613	Entering St. Ignatius	0.148	6,745	*	998	*
32 + 0.761	Leaving St. Ignatius	9.284	7,335	681	68,098	6,329
42 + 0.064	Junction S-212	4.012	11,665	677	46,799	2,719
46 + 0.071	Entering Ronan	1.013	14,011	*	14,193	*
47 + 0.118	Junction S-211	0.254	11,620	*	2,951	*
47 + 0.372	Leaving Ronan	11.523	11,200	681	129,064	7,858
59 + 0.004	Junction P-52	0.331	13,590	312	4,498	103
59 + 0.335	Entering Polson	1.580	12,889	*	20,366	*
60 + 0.927	Junction S-354	1.265	7,830	*	9,904	*
62 + 0.227	Leaving Polson	15.267	4,827	311	73,699	4,749
77 + 0.572	Junction P-36	5.296	3,670	311	19,436	1,652

*Data Not Available
 Source: MDT, April 29, 2005.

Currently, there is a total reconstruction improvement project underway at the intersection of U.S. 93 and Highway 35. The project includes lane configuration changes and widening. When complete, U.S. 93 running southbound will have two left turn lanes onto Highway 35 and one through lane. On the northbound section, there will be one turn lane onto Highway 35 and two through lanes. U.S. 93 will merge back into two through lanes as it runs north through Polson.

In addition to the intersection project, MDT has planned for total reconstruction of a 2.5 mile-section of U.S. 93 running south from Polson to Minesinger Trail and on another section running south from Minesinger Trail to Spring Creek, located just north of Ronan. MDT plans to begin construction on the section from Polson to Minesinger Trail after completion of the intersection with Highway 35 and will begin construction on the last section from Minesinger



Trail to Spring Creek in approximately one year. MDT hopes these reconstruction projects will improve safety conditions on the U.S. 93 corridor.

Plans for bike paths have been incorporated into these three projects on U.S. 93. The Tribes were instrumental in ensuring the inclusion of these paths in the project design. At the intersection of U.S. 93 and Highway 35, a bike path will be directly connected to the roadways. On the sections of U.S. 93 from Polson to Spring Creek, bike paths will be separated from the main roadway by a boulevard. There are tentative plans to extend these paths to Ronan.

U.S. 93 currently runs directly through the city of Polson. A bypass project was proposed some years ago to re-route U.S. 93 along the west side of the city. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was drafted in 1996, in which eight possible new alignments were proposed. The Preferred Alternative consisted of an undivided four-lane highway with turn bays at intersections and an alignment that followed Caffrey Road south of Polson for approximately 3.5 miles, curved north and then across the Flathead River. It then continued north along an alignment just west of the airport. Additionally, a new bridge across the Flathead River was included in the plan. This alternative minimized socioeconomic impacts to residential areas, effects on local schools, grade and ice concerns, and noise impacts.

The project has been on hold since that time. Although the Polson City Council voted in favor of the proposed alternative at the time the EIS was drafted, the Polson Planning Board currently feels that about half of the population favors a bypass, while the other half prefers the road to directly pass through Polson as it does currently. A new EIS would need to be completed before project planning could resume. Further, MDT cannot bypass a community without the community's approval. In terms of the planning process, the bypass concept may still be a consideration, but funding is unavailable until 2009 at the earliest.

6.7 Parks

The Polson Parks Department is responsible for the maintenance of parks and recreational resources for the city. The parks department employs one full-time parks superintendent, one full-time nine-month seasonal worker and two part-time seasonal workers from April through October. The parks department also utilizes volunteers to help with various maintenance tasks during the summer months.



The parks department is funded entirely by tax revenue through the general fund. Last year, the department's budget was cut by approximately 20 percent. The parks department anticipates another budget cut of 15 percent this year. Although the parks department has been able to maintain services to this point, the department anticipates that services will be affected eventually. The parks department describes the current budget as inadequate to meet the growing needs of the community. In addition to budget cuts, weather patterns have stretched already thin resources. Due to warm winter weather in the past few years, the city's parks have opened earlier in the spring and later in the fall, creating a longer (and costlier) maintenance schedule.

The city currently contains 11 parks or grassy areas under the supervision of the parks department:

1. A small park area at the north end of the Mission Bay subdivision
2. Boettcher Park, located along Flathead Lake on Country Club Drive
3. DuCharme, located at the intersection of 3rd Avenue East and 7th Street East
4. Sacajawea, located along Flathead Lake on Kootenai Avenue
5. Riverside, located along the Flathead River below 1st Street West
6. The Sports Complex, located on 7th Avenue West
7. Pomajevich, located on 12th Avenue East
8. O'Malley, located at the intersection of 5th Street East and 11th Avenue East
9. Noreen Mosley, located on 14th Avenue East
10. Jorgenson-Heglie, bordered by US 93 and Shoreline Drive
11. Jana-Campbell, located on 22nd Avenue West

Overall, the parks department characterizes the parks as being in good condition. Nevertheless, the department would like to see improvements and further expansion of the parks system.

The parks department would like to expand the Sports Complex to add another soccer field and two additional baseball fields in the hopes of attracting regional tournaments. More restrooms are needed at all the major park facilities, including a new restroom for the skate park. The parks department would like to add additional storage spaces at the Sports Complex and at O'Malley Park, and more playground equipment at the Sports Complex and at Boettcher and Riverside parks. The parks department would also like to acquire more park spaces in the middle of the city. Montana Rail Link owns a parcel in the city center near the former (illegal) skate park and may be selling a portion of its land. The parks department would be very interested in such a purchase, depending on the asking price and budget issues. The parks department would like to add another full-time staff person to address this list of desired parks projects.



Currently, there are plans for several new facilities. A private entity, the 7th Avenue Wheelpark Association, hopes to create a skate and bike park at the Sports Complex. The Association plans to raise funds necessary for construction of the facility, and then donate the new park to the city. At that time, the parks department would be responsible for its maintenance. The parks department does not anticipate that the addition of this new park would negatively impact its resources. The park will be constructed mainly from metal and concrete, requiring little maintenance. A new bathroom facility at the park would require minimal care.

Mission Valley Aquatics, another private non-profit organization, is working to raise funds for an indoor pool for the city. A community member has donated land for the proposed pool. The parks department does not expect to be involved in this project in any way. Unless additional staff is added, the parks department would not have sufficient resources to maintain the proposed facility.

The parks department feels that it must grow and change along with the city's changing demographics. The parks department sees a continuing need for the provision of recreational activities for both the young and older populations. For kids, opportunities must be provided outside of structured activities, such as sports teams.

6.8 Golf Course

The Polson Country Club's 27-hole municipal golf course opened in 1936 and boasts lake and mountain views with fairways adjacent to the shores of Flathead Lake. The club's mission statement is "To provide an affordable top quality golf experience through superior playing conditions and customer service for the citizens of Polson and their guests." The club offers practice and putting facilities, a driving range, chipping green, a PGA professional on staff, and a full-service restaurant. The club experiences volume between 47,000 and 53,000 starts per year. The Polson Country Club is credited with a four-star rating in "Places to Play" by "Golf Digest" and is annually rated among the best golf values in Montana. Currently, there are no plans for major expansions. The club continually upgrades its facility, including adding bunkers, paving cart paths, and building onto the clubhouse facility.



6.9 Fairgrounds

The Polson Fairgrounds are located adjacent to the Polson Airport on the west bank of the Flathead River. The fairgrounds cover approximately 40 acres and include a large grandstand with a capacity of 2,500 people, a large arena, two horse barns, a concession stand, bathroom facilities, and access to the Flathead River. The fairgrounds host equestrian events, concerts, mud races, and other events. The facility is located on county-owned property that has been leased by Polson Fairgrounds, Inc. (PFI) for the last twenty years. PFI is a non-profit organization that serves as the facility manager. Members of PFI are charged a nominal membership fee in exchange for personal access to the fairgrounds. PFI also rents out the arena and grandstand for larger events for approximately \$200 per day. PFI is governed by a volunteer board of directors.

The Lake County Fair Board operates a fairgrounds facility in Ronan that serves the entire county, including the Arlee, Ravalli, Polson, and Ronan communities. The fairgrounds host a county fair and rodeo in August. Up to six vendors can be accommodated at the event. The current facilities include a baseball field used for rodeo activities and four outbuildings. Three of the buildings are connected and are used for livestock exhibitions during the county fair. The fourth building is used as space for horticulture exhibits. The fairground facilities are relatively small and cannot accommodate large events, such as concerts. The board employs one full-time employee and a part-time crew to help with the summer fair. The board does not plan to upgrade or expand its current facilities, but hopes instead to move the fairgrounds to an area west of Ronan within five years. A parcel of land has been purchased for this purpose, but no firm plans have been established regarding the proposed relocation.

6.10 Polson Public Schools

Polson's first public school, located on the second floor of a building which also housed a pool hall, opened in 1911 with 143 students, four teachers, and a grade school principal. Today, the district employs 112 teachers and other staff, and as of April 1st, 2005, its enrollment was 1,646. The district is comprised of four schools: two kindergarten through fourth grade schools, one middle school for fifth through eighth grade students, and a four-year high school. The district serves an area somewhat larger than the incorporated limits of the city of Polson. In addition, the elementary school districts in Dayton and Valley View send students to the Polson Middle and High Schools. Enrollment by school is presented in Table 6-2 below.



Table 6-2 Polson School District – Enrollment by School	
School	Enrollment, April 1st, 2005
Linderman Elementary School ~ K-4	301
Cherry Valley Elementary School ~ K-4	296
Polson Middle School ~ 5-8	507
Polson High School ~ 9-12	542
Total	1,646
<i>Source: Sue McCormick, Superintendent of the Polson School District, April 14, 2005.</i>	

Overall, enrollment has remained steady for the period beginning in 1990. The district is not anticipating significant growth over the next ten years. Newcomers to the community are typically either past the child-bearing age or have chosen not to have children. For example, at Mission Bay, a new housing development in the Polson area, only four households out of 100 have children. However, proposed new development may affect enrollment over time. The school district reviews proposed subdivisions on a regular basis, but future impacts to the school system have not yet been evaluated.

While the district does not currently anticipate the need for additional schools, it does have some urgent maintenance needs. The Board of Trustees has established a facilities and planning committee made up of three trustees, the director of maintenance, the superintendent, the high school principal, and members of the community. Community members serve on a project basis. The committee is currently addressing the Linderman Elementary School which is in critical need of a new roof and exterior renovation. Less urgent needs include improvements to the heating system at the Cherry Valley school and expanded storage facilities for the district. In addition, the community as a whole has pointed to the need for an event pavilion in support of the recently completed stadium at the high school.

6.11 The Polson City Library

The Polson City Library, constructed in 1989, is located at Two First Avenue East and houses approximately 41,000 titles and six computer stations with public access to the Internet. The library also contains a community meeting room with a seating capacity of 75. A portion of the library is leased to a private, non-profit art gallery. The library has a wireless connection, courtesy of an anonymous donor.



There are 7,200 library card holders, however, a total of about 12-15,000 people use the library each year. Circulation was at 82,934 items for fiscal year 2004, placing it 14th among the state's 79 libraries. The library is currently gathering user demographic data, and while the data collection is not yet complete, it is estimated that two thirds of the card holders reside outside the city limits of Polson. One of the largest user groups appear to be young children who take advantage of the library's active youth services department and retirees, many of whom have recently moved to the Polson area.

The Polson City Library is one of an original 17 libraries that established the Montana Shared Catalogue in 2002. Currently 53 libraries across the state participate. In addition, the library is one of six libraries who make up a "partners" group that shares items among themselves and offer free shipping to library patrons. The group works together to create a single entity to provide a broader range of resources to their communities. The library also subscribes to national databases to provide access to these resources for patrons. These were purchased in collaboration with other libraries, through the facilitation of the State Library.

The library is funded through a combination of city and county general funds as well as grants and donations. Approximately 88 percent of its general fund dollars come from the city and the remainder comes from the county, despite the fact that only about one third of the users reside within the city limits of Polson. The 2003-04 budget for the library was \$214,498, of which \$78,383 came from other sources (grants, donations, etc.). General fund dollars are used for salaries and a small portion of maintenance of the library building, but general funds have not supported the library's collections since 1992.

The library is working with the community to create a library district. The district would enable the library to levy mills specifically for library use, rather than relying on an annual general fund appropriation. The library district would encompass the geographic area that includes the Polson School District #23 and adjoining school districts.

The library serves as headquarters and provides supervision for the Lake County Libraries Bookmobile. It was originally created and funded in 2000 through a federal grant program. Federal funding ceased in 2002. Since then, its operation has relied on donations and other grants. The bookmobile requires \$50,000 per year in addition to the regular budget and is expected to be a component in the library district effort. The bookmobile program serves 800 residents in rural areas and also supports the library's extensive summer family reading program.



The library's facilities are becoming increasingly crowded as the number of people using the facilities increase. The children's and staff areas are particularly congested and there is very little storage space. The location of the library does not easily allow for expansion. The building is surrounded on three sides by streets and by the fire department on the fourth side. It was built on the former city shop site and contaminants in the soil limit the ability to add a lower level. The structure itself would not allow the addition of a second story. Expansion at the current site would be limited to interior renovations and changes in how current space is used.



7.0 Natural Resources

Chapter Seven assesses the natural environment surrounding the Polson community, including area topography, slope, geology, soils, vegetation, hydrology, wildlife, climate, and other topics. This information is used to determine health concerns, environmental impacts and safety requirements for the construction of houses, streets, utility and drainage improvements, and various other land development activities.

7.1 Key Findings

Water Resources

Groundwater

- Groundwater generally meets or exceeds state and federal drinking water standards; no drinking water quality standard violations have been reported since 1995.

Surface Water

- Flathead Lake is a relatively clean natural freshwater lake, although water quality has declined over the last decade.
- The primary source of surface water contamination is nutrient pollution from nitrogen and phosphorus, originating from point, non-point, and atmospheric discharges.

Wetlands

- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has identified twenty palustrine wetland areas within five miles of the city of Polson, three of which are within the main portion of the city.

Irrigation Systems

- The Flathead Indian Irrigation Project provides irrigation water on 134,790 acres, with less than 10 percent of irrigated lands held in trust for the CSKT and individual Tribal members, and all other irrigated lands owned by non-Indians.
- The BIA intends to transfer operation and management of the project to the Flathead Joint Board of Control and the CSKT by 2006.

Water Rights

- The Montana Reserved Water Rights Compact Commission (RWRCC) is in the process of negotiating with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes regarding federal reserved water rights on the Flathead Indian Reservation. The commission hopes to have a completed compact with the Tribes by 2009.



Air Quality

- Polson meets national air quality standards for all criteria pollutants, with the exception of particulate matter (PM10). Polson was classified as a nonattainment area for PM10 in 1987, although Polson's PM10 measurements have fallen within acceptable ranges for the last ten years.

Fish and Wildlife Resources

- There are a number of threatened and sensitive animal and plant species located within several miles of Polson, including the grizzly bear, Canada lynx, bald eagle, common loon, bull trout, lake-bank sedge, sweetflag, and yellow-staining collomia.

Geology, Soils, Topography

- A number of soils surrounding the Polson area are characterized as prime farmland or farmland of statewide importance. Other soils exhibit slope and erodibility concerns.

Vegetation

- Several noxious weeds are present within a two-mile radius of Polson, including spotted knapweed, houndstongue, whitetop, and meadow hawkweed.

Hazard Areas

Floodplains

- The city of Polson is outside of both the 100-year and the 500-year floodplains.
- Lake County officials have determined there is little risk of flooding from either Flathead Lake or Flathead River absent a dam failure.

Scenic Resources

- Polson is surrounded by scenic views of Flathead Lake and the Mission and Swan mountain ranges.



7.2 Climate

Based on records collected from 1906 through 2004, Polson’s average annual precipitation is 15.29 inches. Nearly 60 percent of the annual precipitation falls from April through September. Average annual snowfall is 25 inches. Average minimum temperatures are 50.9°F for summer (Jun-Aug), 36°F for fall (Sept-Nov), 21.2°F for winter (Dec-Feb), and 34.1°F for spring (Mar-May). Average maximum temperatures are 78.5°F for summer, 55.5°F for fall, 33.9°F for winter, and 55.4°F for spring.

Table 7-1 Monthly Climate Summary for Polson, Montana													
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual
Average Max. Temperature (F)	31.3	36.5	45.1	56.1	65.0	72.7	82.1	80.7	68.8	56.4	41.5	34.0	55.9
Average Min. Temperature (F)	19.2	21.9	27.2	34.3	40.8	47.7	53.0	52.2	44.2	36.1	27.8	22.6	35.6
Average Total Precipitation (in.)	1.02	0.86	0.95	1.24	1.93	2.24	1.05	1.10	1.37	1.16	1.19	1.17	15.29
Average Total Snowfall (in.)	8.5	3.9	2.6	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	2.8	6.6	25.0
Average Snow Depth (in.)	5.0	4.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	3.0	1

Period of Record : 7/ 1/1906 to 12/31/2004
 Percent of possible observations for period of record:
 Max. Temp.: 85% Min. Temp.: 85.1% Precipitation: 85.7% Snowfall: 37.7% Snow Depth: 38.5%
 Source: Western Regional Climate Center website, accessed April 2005.

7.3 Water Resources

Aquifers

Groundwater is held in aquifers, which are rock units that will yield water in usable quantities to wells or springs. The water-bearing rocks that compose aquifers consist of either unconsolidated soil-like deposits or consolidated rocks. Consolidated aquifers are commonly composed of sandstone, limestone, granite, or lava. Water flows through fractures, gas pores, and other openings in these rocks. Most unconsolidated materials consist of fragmented consolidated rocks. Unconsolidated deposits may include soil-like materials, gravel, sand, silt, clay, and shell fragments. Water flows through these materials through the natural openings between particles.

Aquifers are generally classified as confined or unconfined. In unconfined aquifers, groundwater only partially fills the aquifer. The upper surface of the groundwater, known as the water table, is free to fluctuate. Unconfined aquifers, especially those close to the surface, may be vulnerable to contamination from activities on the land surface. Confined aquifers, also



known as artesian aquifers, are contained between confining layers of impermeable materials. These materials impede the movement of water into and out of the aquifer. Confining beds serve as a barrier to the flow of contaminants from overlying unconfined aquifers. Contaminants that reach a confined aquifer, however, can be extremely difficult and expensive to remove.

The city of Polson operates six wells for its public water supply, with one additional well maintained as a backup. Wells No. 1 through 5 obtain groundwater from a confined unconsolidated to semi-consolidated valley-fill aquifer. These wells are constructed within materials that comprise the Polson Moraine, located on the east side of Polson. The aquifer utilized by these wells consists of permeable layers of moderately to well-sorted gravel and sand with varying amounts of silt and very little clay. In certain portions of the aquifer, sediments are cemented together resulting in a hard, rock-like consolidated material. Poorly sorted gravels, sands, silts, and clays exist on the surface and are combined with the permeable layers. These materials are relatively impermeable and serve as confining units. Groundwater flows within the aquifer to the north toward Flathead Lake. The aquifer is not hydraulically connected to the lake in the area of the wells.

Wells No. 6 and 7 derive groundwater from a confined bedrock aquifer on the west side of Polson and west of the Flathead River. The aquifer is composed of fractured argillite and siltite overlain by glacial and lacustrine (lake sediment) units and is at least 363 feet in thickness. Groundwater flows within the bedrock aquifer from west to east towards Flathead Lake and the Flathead River.

Aquifers are replenished with surface water through the recharge process. This process occurs naturally when rainfall infiltrates the land surface and water percolates into underlying aquifers. Bodies of water at the surface may also recharge aquifers, with water seeping from the sides of these water bodies into the groundwater. Aquifers that are replenished at a high rate are generally more vulnerable to pollution. Unconfined aquifers that lack a cover of dense material and bedrock areas with large fractures are also susceptible to contamination.

Aquifers in the Mission Valley are primarily recharged from rainfall and snowmelt. Recharge water enters the aquifer system by direct infiltration by leakage from streams and irrigation canals and by irrigation return flows.



Municipal Wells

Municipal Well No. 1 is located on the eastern edge of town at the golf course. This well was constructed in 1969 at 12 inches in diameter and at a total depth of 525 feet. The well was rated at 450 gallons per minute (gpm) in 1989. In 1999, however, the well suffered mud contamination and was taken out of service. The city does not currently use the well for routine purposes, but it is maintained as a backup. The well currently yields 100 gpm.

Municipal Wells No. 2 and 3 are located on the south side of Polson in the old Claffey gravel pit. Well No. 2 was constructed in 1960 and is the oldest well in the water supply system. The well is 14 inches in diameter and has a total depth of 165 feet. The reported pumping capacity for the well is 650 gpm, although average production is 457 gpm. Well No. 3 was constructed in 1976. It is 16 inches in diameter and is 200 feet in total depth. Its pumping capacity is 575 gpm. Both wells No. 2 and 3 are treated by chlorine injection at the wellhead.

Municipal Wells No. 4 and 5 are located in a semi-rural/residential area of the city. They were both constructed in 2000 at 10 inches in diameter with total depths of 150 and 135 feet, respectively. Each of the wells has a pumping capacity of 250 gpm. The wells are disinfected through the injection of sodium hypochlorite at the wellheads.

Municipal Wells No. 6 and 7 are located in a rural area on the west side of Flathead Lake and the Flathead River, immediately west of the airport. The wells were constructed in 1999 and 2001, respectively. The aquifer tapped by these wells is capable of producing in excess of 600 gpm. Well No. 6 is 14.75 inches in diameter from surface to 22 feet below ground surface (bgs), 12 inches in diameter from 22 to 260 feet bgs, and 8 inches in diameter from 260 feet bgs to total depth of the well at 385 feet bgs. Municipal Well No. 7 is 17.25 inches in diameter from surface to 40 feet bgs, 14.25 inches in diameter from 40 to 239 feet bgs, and 10 inches from 239 to the total depth of 350 feet bgs.

Groundwater Quality

The quality of the groundwater source for the Polson municipal water supply is generally good and meets or exceeds state and federal drinking water standards. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Safe Drinking Water Information System (SDWIS) lists the water supply's most recent drinking water quality standard violation in April 1995 for coliform bacteria. No other health-based violations have been reported since that time. Water quality



testing in the Polson area is performed by the Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology (MBMG) and the United States Geologic Survey (USGS).

Groundwater Contamination

Contamination sources can be characterized as point or non-point sources. A point source of water pollution is a discharge of waste from a single identifiable site, such as a municipal sewage system or an industrial facility. Most point sources of pollution are addressed through state and federal regulations. Non-point source (NPS) contamination is more diffuse, and commonly originates from a wide array of urban and rural sources. NPS pollution is caused by rainfall or snowmelt moving over and through the ground. This runoff picks up and carries away natural and human-made pollutants, depositing them into lakes, rivers, wetlands, and groundwater sources.

Agricultural sources of groundwater contamination include pesticides, fertilizers, and animal waste. These pollutants reach the groundwater system through accidental spills, runoff, and the use of chemicals uphill from or within a few hundred feet of a well. Residential sources of pollution include outflow from septic tanks and cesspools; household chemicals; fertilizers, herbicides and other chemicals applied to lawns and gardens; and road salt. These contaminants may be carried to aquifers through rainwater runoff over paved areas, leaking landfills, and faulty septic systems.

Groundwater Protection

The Source Water Delineation and Assessment Report for the city of Polson has identified three management areas within the land area that contribute water to the city's municipal water system. These areas include the control zone, inventory region, and recharge region. The control zone is an area with at least a 100-foot radius around a well. The inventory region represents the zone of contribution of the well, which approximates a three-year groundwater time-of-travel. The recharge region represents the entire portion of the aquifer, which contributes water to the city of Polson public water system.

The city of Polson has enacted zoning and ordinances establishing wellhead protection zones and limiting or regulating activities within the protection zones. Within these zones, land



uses, developments, or improvements may not expose the public water supply's source water to moderate or high susceptibility to contaminant sources (See Table 7-2 below).

Use / Activity	Control Zone	Inventory Region
Floor drains, sumps, and injection wells (not to include runoff catchments from roofs of individual homes)	PROHIBITED*	PROHIBITED*
Generation, storage, or handling of hazardous materials**	PROHIBITED	PROHIBITED
Gravel mines or other excavations that are open for over six months	PROHIBITED	Special use permit required
Storm sewers	PROHIBITED	Permitted, in compliance with an approved runoff management plan
On-site sewage disposal	PROHIBITED	Permitted
Underground storage tanks	PROHIBITED	Development permit required

*Drainage from a building interior shall be through an approved sewage disposal system with pre-treatment being provided as required by the city, Lake County, and the Montana Dept. of Environmental Quality of the EPA.
 **In quantities regulated by state and federal law.
 Source: *Polson Development Code, 1993.*

Flathead Lake

Flathead Lake is the area's most prominent body of water. It is one of the 300 largest natural lakes in the world and is the largest natural freshwater lake in the western United States. Flathead Lake's major tributaries are the Swan and Flathead rivers. Many smaller streams flow directly into the lake at the shoreline, most notably on the eastern side. Kerr Dam, located on the Flathead River at the outlet of Flathead Lake near Polson, regulates outflow and maintains the lake's level between 2,883 and 2,893 feet above sea level. Absent flood threats, the lake level is generally brought to 2,890 feet by the end of May and to full pool by June 15.

Flathead Lake does not freeze over most winters due to its massive volume and normally active winds over the surface. Average surface temperatures of the lake range from 2.3°C (36°F) in mid-January, to 13.5°C (56°F) in mid-June, to 20.3°C (68°F) in mid-August.



Maximum Length	27.3 miles	43.9 km
Maximum Width	15.5 miles	24.9 km
Maximum Depth	370.7 feet	113.0 meters
Mean Depth	164.7 feet	50.2 meters
Area Covered by Lake	191.5 sq miles	495.9 sq kms
Area Covered by Islands	5.5 sq miles	14.2 sq kms
Volume of Water	5.56 cu miles	23.2 cu kms
Length of Shoreline		
Mainland	161.4 miles	259.7 km
Island	26.2 miles	42.2 km
Total	187.6 miles	301.9 km
Curvature of Lake Surface		
Length	13.2 feet	4.02 meters
Breadth	5.2 feet	1.58 meters
Flushing Time		3.4 years

Source: Flathead Lake Biological Station website, accessed May 2005.

Flathead Lake is known as one of the cleanest natural freshwater lakes in the world. Despite this reputation, studies have shown that the water quality of the lake has declined over the last decade. The University of Montana’s Flathead Lake Biological Station (FLBS), located at Yellow Bay on the east shore of Flathead Lake, has documented the lake’s water quality since 1899, with measurements obtained monthly since 1977. FLBS has found a significant increase in growth of algae (primary productivity) over time. An increase in algal production reflects a decrease in water quality, thus high numbers reflect poorer water quality while low numbers reflect better water quality. Primary production in Flathead Lake in 2003 was the third highest value since monitoring began in 1977.

In 2004, FLBS identified the lake’s primary source of algae growth as nutrient pollution, specifically nitrogen and phosphorus. Both have been shown to stimulate algae growth in Flathead Lake. Nutrients arrive at the lake via point source discharges, nonpoint sources, and atmospheric wetfall and dryfall (e.g. wind-carried smoke and dust particles). The high primary productivity in 2003 may have been caused in part by the high ammonium nitrogen concentrations from wildfire smoke.

In addition to nutrient loading, food web changes caused by introduction of nonnative species of invertebrates and fish, changes in water flux caused by regulation of runoff by Kerr and Hungry Horse Dams, and changes in algal metabolism caused by increasing lake water temperatures associated with two decades of warm weather may also be responsible for elevated productivity levels.



Other Water Features

In addition to Flathead Lake and Flathead River, other important surface water features in the area include the Pablo Reservoir located approximately two miles south of Polson, the Pablo Feeder Canal which is located approximately one mile south of Polson, and the B and C irrigation canals which pass through the city limits of Polson.

Wetlands

As defined by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) in the Wetlands Delineation Manual of 1987, wetlands are areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Generally, three attributes are present in wetlands: hydrophytic vegetation adapted to life in wet soils; hydric soils that are poorly drained and develop certain soil characteristics due to the presence of water and absence of oxygen; and hydrology such that water is at or near the land surface all or part of the year. The amount of moisture in a wetland can vary during the year. During some seasons, a wetland may actually be dry.

For many years, wetlands' important functions were poorly understood. Wetlands were often seen as wastelands that could not be used for residential or commercial development or for agricultural purposes. It was commonly believed that wetland areas bred pests and diseases. As a result, wetlands were lost in every state. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) estimates that about 25 percent of Montana's wetlands have been lost due to agriculture and urbanization since the 1870's.

Wetlands are now recognized as vital ecosystems that provide a number of services to human, animal, and plant populations. Wetlands serve an important role in maintaining and improving water quality. Wetlands filter pollutants from water and naturally enhance water quality. This filtering effect prevents harmful nutrients and pollutants from entering nearby lakes, streams, and groundwater sources. Wetlands help to reduce flooding by storing flood waters and help to recharge wells and aquifers. Wetlands also provide habitat for many fish and wildlife species.

A number of harmful effects can occur when wetlands are destroyed, including a decline in wildlife populations; an increased potential for flood damage; an increase in sediment,



nutrients, and toxins in lakes and streams; and possible contamination of drinking water and irrigation wells.

Wetlands near Polson

As illustrated in Figure 7.1, the USFWS has identified twenty palustrine wetland areas within five mile of the city of Polson. Three of these are within the main portion of the city. Another seven areas are located on the western edge of the city, primarily south of the wastewater treatment plant. There is a high concentration of wetland areas just to the east of the city limits along the shore of Flathead Lake. Palustrine wetlands may include marshes, swamps, bogs or tundra. Of the twenty, eighteen are seasonally or temporarily flooded emergent wetlands, and two are semi-permanently flooded or impounded aquatic beds. This count only includes those wetlands visible from aerial photographs, and may not include drier wetlands or those located in forested areas.

The Pablo Reservoir and National Wildlife Refuge is an important wetland resource located on Tribal trust lands south of Polson. The refuge consists of 2,500 acres of water, marsh and grassland. The area provides important habitat for migratory birds and other wildlife species.

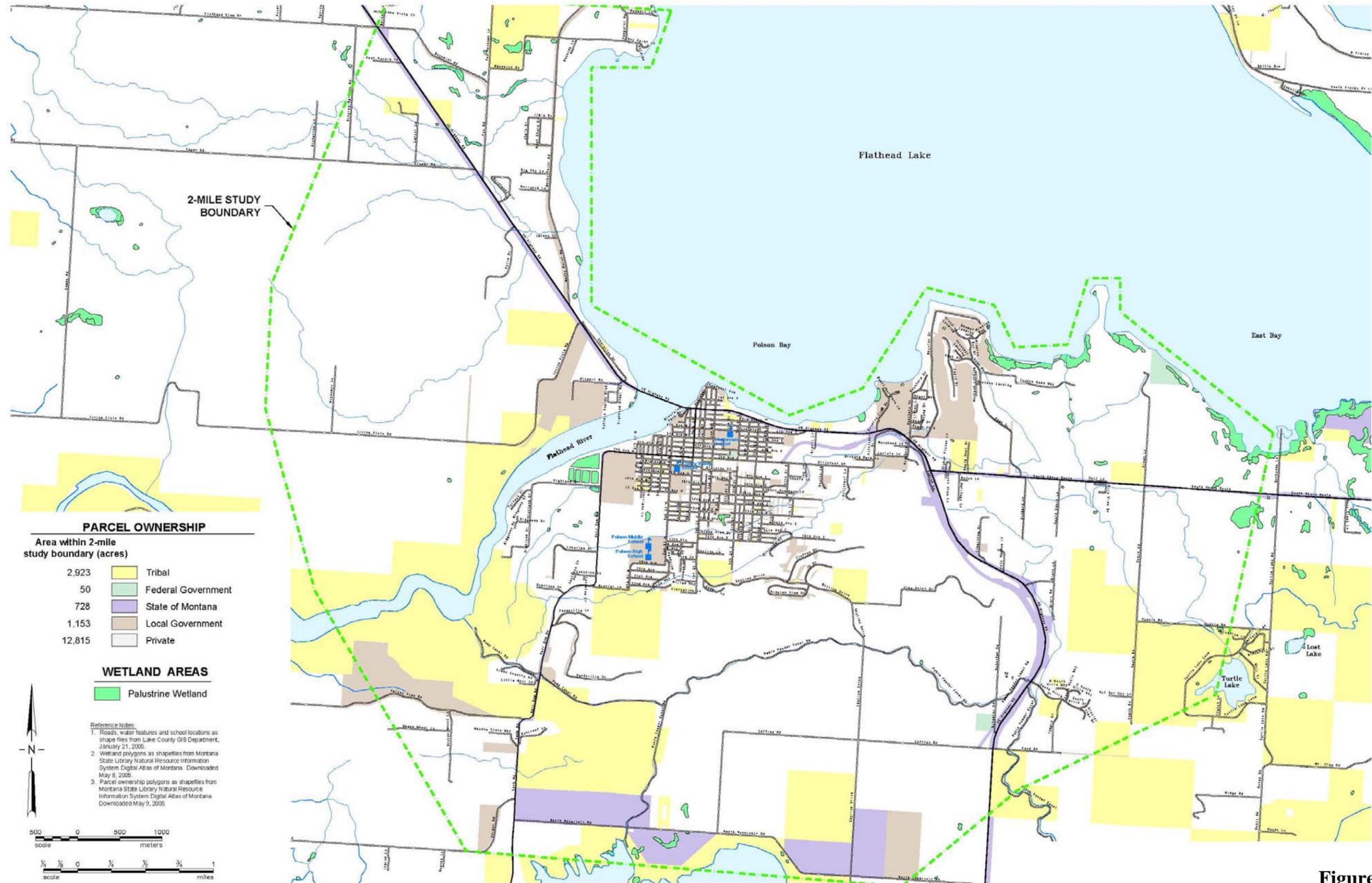


Figure 7.1 Wetlands



Preservation and Protection

Wetlands located on governmental lands are subject to local, state, federal and Tribal legislation protecting wetland areas. Additionally, the CSKT have developed a wetlands management plan after a ten-year planning process. The plan includes a no net loss policy, wetlands guidelines, and wetlands mitigation for the 1.3 million acre Flathead Reservation. Reservation wetlands are regulated under the Tribal Aquatic Lands Conservation Ordinance. Permits can be obtained from the Tribal Natural Resources Department in Polson.

Irrigations Systems

The BIA (Bureau of Indian Affairs) currently owns and manages the Flathead Indian Irrigation Project (FIIP). The project is located primarily within the Flathead Indian Reservation, with all irrigated lands located on the reservation. The FIIP was originally authorized in 1904 to provide irrigation water for the benefit of the Indians on the Flathead Indian Reservation. In 1908, the project was authorized to also serve non-Indians who had started to homestead on unallotted lands within the reservation. The project includes 17 reservoirs, four pump facilities, over 1,300 miles of canals and laterals, and over 10,000 structures for diversion, control, and delivery of water. The Tribes own much of the land upon which these structures are located. The project encompasses approximately 134,790 irrigated acres.

Approximately 11,770 acres, or less than ten percent, of the irrigated land is currently held in trust for the CSKT and a small number of individual Tribal members. The remaining land irrigated by the project is owned by fee land owners (both Indian and non-Indian). Non-trust land irrigation interests are represented by three irrigation districts and are collectively represented by the Flathead Joint Board of Control.

The BIA plans to transfer the operation and management of the Project to a Cooperative Management Entity composed of the Flathead Joint Board of Control and the CSKT. The BIA would continue to own the project following transfer of operation and maintenance. Because significant environmental impacts could result from the new rules and regulations implemented after the transfer, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is currently being drafted to comply with the procedures outlined in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). At this time, the NEPA process is scheduled to be completed by December 2005. In addition to the EIS, an engineering assessment of the current facilities and a plan of operation for the project following



transfer are currently being drafted and should be completed by July, 2005. The transfer is scheduled to be completed by 2006.

Dams

The Bureau of Indian Affairs owns and operates 15 dams on the Flathead Indian Reservation and an additional two dams just north of the Reservation. Of these, four are within eight miles of the city of Polson.

Turtle Dam

Turtle Lake (also known as Twin Lake) Dam is located on the Dupuis Creek five miles southeast of Polson. It was constructed in 1932 for irrigation purposes and consists of a dike structure and a dam structure. Both structures have a maximum height above ground of approximately 20 feet, a crest width of 35 feet, and a crest elevation of 3,100 feet. The combined crest length of the structures was originally documented at 2,340 feet, but based on new survey data, is now estimated to be 1,200 feet long. The combined earthfill for the dam and dike structures is estimated to be about 9,000 cubic yards. In 1998-1999, structural improvements were made, including the insertion of a polyethylene liner inside the existing conduit. No other reconstruction projects are currently planned.

Hell-Roaring Dam

Hell-Roaring Dam and Reservoir is located on Hell Roaring Creek at the base of the Mission Mountains. The dam was constructed in 1914-1916 to provide electric power for a flour mill operation. It is now used for irrigation purposes. The dam has a crest length of 313 feet, a crest width of 16 feet, and a maximum structural height of approximately 30 feet. There are no reconstruction projects currently planned for this facility.

Pablo Dam

The Pablo Dam is located just north of Pablo Reservoir, south of Polson. Construction on the dam started in 1912 and was completed in 1932 by the Reclamation Service (now the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation) for the U.S. Indian Service (now the Bureau of Indian Affairs). The dam is an earthfill structure. The main embankment has a maximum height of 43 feet above



streambed, a crest length of 10,550 feet, and a crest width of 20 feet at elevation 3,220 feet. The Pablo Reservoir has a capacity of 28,400 acre feet at an elevation of 3,211 feet. It occupies an off-stream basin fed by the Pablo Feeder Canal.

The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribal Safety of Dams Office contracts with the BIA and the Bureau of Reclamation to provide construction services for dams on the Flathead Indian Reservation. In 1995, the Tribal Safety of Dams Office completed a Phase 1 embankment reconstruction on the Pablo Dam. Additionally, a piping and outlet work project was just completed in April, 2005 to correct a deficient conduit at a cost of \$4.5 million dollars. Apart from monitoring performed for the next year, no other projects are planned for this facility.

Kerr Dam

Kerr Dam is located eight miles south of Polson on the Flathead River. The dam is 204 feet high, 450 feet long at the top, and 100 feet long at the base. The dam is constructed from 85,000 cubic yards of concrete. The dam stores 1,217,000 acre/feet of water maintained at an elevation between 2,883 feet and 2,893 feet above sea level.

Construction of Kerr Dam began on May 23, 1930 by Rocky Mountain Power, but was stalled from 1931 until 1936 due to funding shortfalls. Construction was resumed in 1936 by the Montana Power Company (MPC) and the dam was completed on August 6, 1938. The dam originally consisted of one powerhouse and one generator. Additional power units were built in 1949 and 1954. In 1999, MPC sold Kerr Dam to PPL Montana. The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes operate the facility and have an option to take over ownership in 2015.

Water Rights

There are currently 523 claims to water within a two-mile radius of Polson listed in the Montana Department of Natural Resources (DNRC) database. Of these, 241 are used for irrigation purposes, 90 of which are held by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and an additional 89 of which are held by the Flathead Joint Board of Control. The remaining 62 irrigation water claims are owned by individuals, corporations, and the city of Polson. Apart from irrigation purposes, water claims in the Polson area are used for domestic, lawn and garden, and municipal purposes.

The Montana Reserved Water Rights Compact Commission (RW RCC) was established by the Montana Legislature in 1979 as part of the statewide general stream adjudication process



(MCA § 85-2-701). The commission is authorized to negotiate settlements with federal agencies and Indian tribes claiming federal reserved water rights within the state of Montana. A federal reserved water right is a right to use water implied from an act of Congress, a treaty, or an Executive Order establishing a Tribal or federal reservation. In Montana, reserved water rights have been claimed for seven Indian reservations, including the Flathead Indian Reservation. The commission is in the process of negotiating with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes regarding federal reserved water rights on the Flathead Indian Reservation. The commission hopes to have a completed compact with the Tribes by 2009.

7.4 Air Quality

Air pollution comes from many different sources, including stationary sources such as factories, power plants, and smelters; mobile sources such as cars, buses, planes, trucks, and trains; and naturally occurring sources such as windblown dust and wildfires.

The Clean Air Act provides the principal framework for federal, state, Tribal, and local efforts to protect air quality. Under the Clean Air Act, the Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards (OAQPS) is responsible for setting standards for air quality. Six principal pollutants, called “criteria pollutants,” are used as indicators of air quality. These pollutants include carbon monoxide, lead, nitrogen dioxide, particulate matter (PM10), particulate matter (PM2.5), ozone, and sulfur dioxide. PM10 and PM2.5 standards include only those particles with an aerodynamic diameter smaller than 10 micrometers or 2.5 micrometers, respectively. For each of these pollutants, the EPA has established a maximum concentration, called a National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS).

National Air Quality Standards are separated into two types. Primary standards are limits intended to protect human health, including sensitive population subgroups such as asthmatics, the elderly, and children. Secondary standards protect against decreased visibility and damage to animals, crops, vegetation, and buildings. In cooperation with state, Tribal, and local governments, the OAQPS is responsible for ensuring that these national air quality standards are attained.

When an area does not meet the air quality standard for one of the criteria pollutants, it may be subject to the formal rule-making process which designates it as a nonattainment area. Nonattainment classifications may be used to specify what air pollution reduction measures an



area must adopt, and when the area must reach attainment. The technical details underlying these classifications are discussed in the Code of Federal Regulations (40 CFR 81).

The city of Polson’s air quality falls within acceptable margins for all criteria pollutants, with the exception of PM10. Polson was classified as a non-attainment area for PM10 in August, 1987. For the last ten years, however, Polson’s annual and 24-hour measurements for PM10 have not justified its status as a nonattainment area. From 1999-2004, Polson’s annual measurements for PM10 fell well below the standard of 50 micrograms per cubic meter (ug/m³). Additionally, measurements for 24-hour ambient air quality also fell well below national air quality standards, with the exception of several measurements in 2003 that were due to forest fire impacts. The EPA concurred that these measurements were an anomaly and, accordingly, they are not included in the 24-hour measurements for the year. (see Table 7-4 below).

Year	1st Max*	2nd Max*	3rd Max*	4th Max*	Arithmetic Mean**
1999	99	91	60	54	19.3
2000	80	56	46	43	20.5
2001	44	39	37	35	17.4
2002	45	40	39	36	16.1
2003	98	89	62	52	19.3
2004	61	52	49	39	16.2

* Measurements of 24-hour ambient air quality for PM10 should not exceed 150 micrograms per cubic meter (ug/m³) more than once per year.
 ** Annual arithmetic mean concentrations for PM10 should not exceed 50 micrograms per cubic meter (ug/m³).
 Source: EPA data provided by Elton Erp, DEQ Air Monitoring Department, May 4, 2005.

Transition from a nonattainment to reattainment status is very difficult under EPA regulations. Even once reattainment status is achieved, maintenance monitoring of air quality is still required, resulting in a similar financial commitment. In many cases, communities may simply accept nonattainment status, even though current measurements no longer support the classification.

The CSKT have authority over the airshed within the exterior boundaries of the Flathead Indian Reservation. The Tribal Air Quality Program is currently reviewing the re-designation



process and requirements, and is planning to apply for reattainment status for PM10 levels in the future.

7.5 Fish and Wildlife Resources

Birds

One hundred seventy-three species of birds have been observed from 1999 through 2004 in the Polson latilong (14B), a larger region than the Polson planning area. Of these, there has been direct evidence of breeding for six species, including the American crow, bald eagle, boreal owl, great horned owl, long-eared owl, and western kingbird. There has also been indirect evidence of breeding for 135 species, and transient or migrant records reported for 32 species.

Mammals

The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Wildlife Management Program has identified numerous mammal species on the Flathead Indian Reservation. There are six shrew species, nine bat species, and four rabbit or hare species. Eight ungulates are found on the reservation, including moose, elk, deer, bison, goat, and sheep species. Twenty-two rodent species have been identified, two of which, the northern flying squirrel and the hoary marmot, are rare in the area. There are eighteen carnivore species, including bear, fox, and wolf species. The gray wolf is listed as an endangered species, and the grizzly bear is listed as a threatened species. The lynx, wolverine, and fisher are state species of concern. Several of these species are discussed further in the following section.

Amphibians

The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Wildlife Management Program has identified nine amphibian species on the Flathead Indian Reservation, including toad, frog, and salamander species. The Van Dyke's salamander is listed as a species of concern.

Reptiles

The Tribal Wildlife Management Program has identified nine reptile species on the Flathead Indian Reservation. These include skink, lizard, turtle, and snake species. Although the northern alligator lizard is rare on the Reservation, there are no reptile species of concern.



Fish Species in Flathead Lake

The Tribal Fisheries Program co-manages the Flathead Lake fisheries along with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (MFWP). The Flathead Lake Co-Management Plan identifies westslope cutthroat and bull trout as native species of special concern. Other native species include mountain whitefish, pygmy whitefish, northern pike minnow, redbelt shiner, peamouth minnow, northern pike minnow, largescale sucker, longnose sucker, and sculpin. Non-native species include black bullhead, brook trout, lake trout, lake whitefish, largemouth bass, northern pike, rainbow trout, and yellow perch. Of these, lake trout, lake whitefish, and yellow perch are the most common of the non-natives and have increased in abundance since 1980s, whereas native salmonid species have declined.

Threatened and Endangered Species

In 1973, Congress passed the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The purpose of the Act is to conserve “the ecosystems upon which endangered species depend” and to conserve and recover listed species. Species may be listed as either “endangered” or “threatened.” Endangered is defined as a species that is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range. Threatened means a species is likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future. All species of plants and animals, except pest insects, are eligible for listing as endangered or threatened. As illustrated in Figure 7.2, there are a number of threatened and endangered wildlife and plant species in the Polson area.

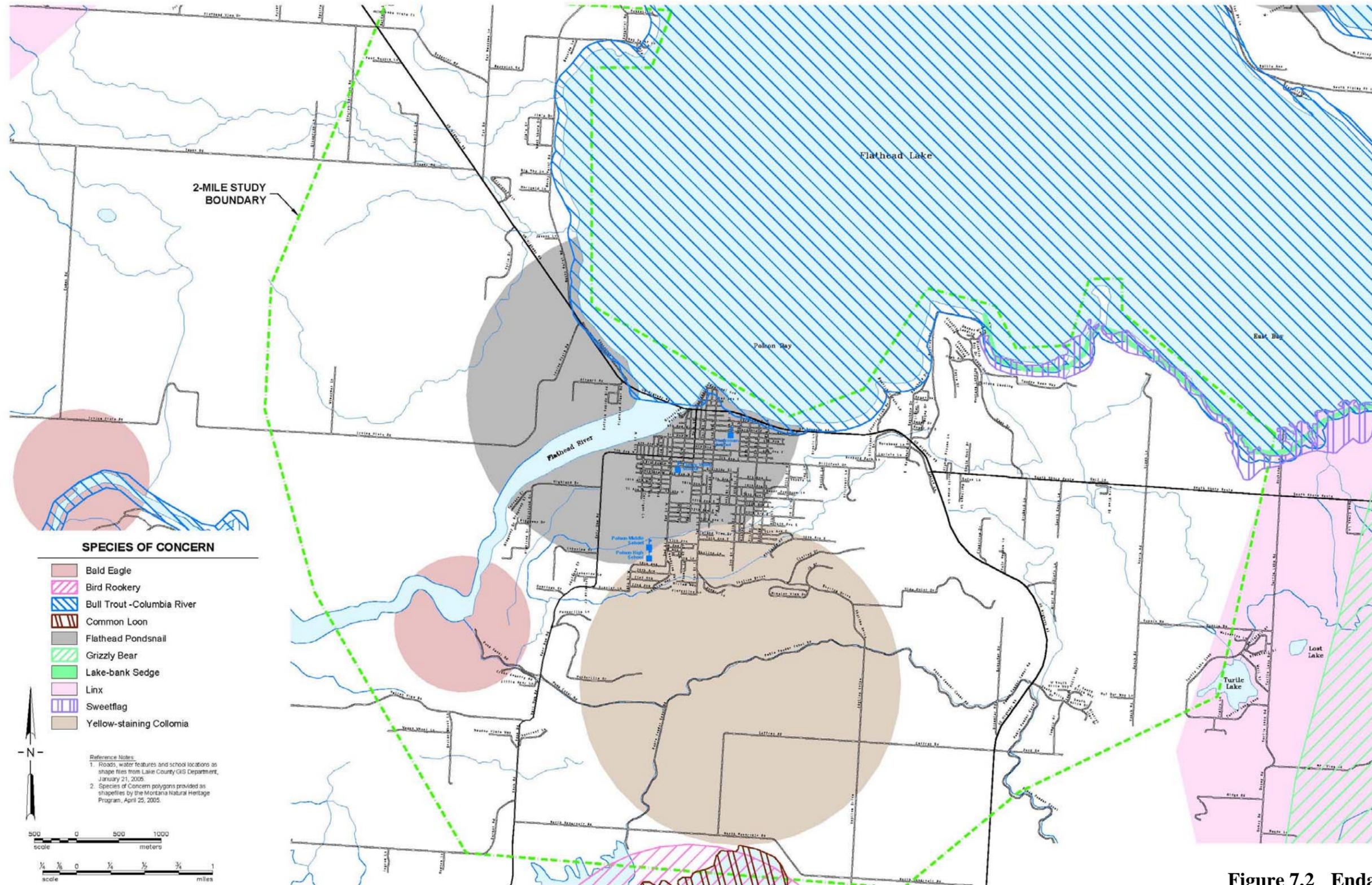


Figure 7.2 Endangered Species



Grizzly Bear

The grizzly bear is listed as threatened by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Additionally, the Montana Natural Heritage Program (MNHP) characterizes the species as potentially at risk because of limited and/or declining numbers, range, and/or habitat, even though it may be abundant in some areas.

As illustrated in Figure 7.2, a population of grizzly bear inhabits an area east of Polson that is separated from the Northern Continental Divide area by roads (primarily Highway 83) and considerable human presence in the Seeley and Swan valleys, although there is some movement between these areas. This habitat range is just to the east of the Polson two-mile study area. The population is estimated to contain approximately 25 bears.

Current grizzly bear management is dictated by the species' threatened listing under the ESA, which mandates that no federal actions can cause further endangerment of grizzly bears. Federal agencies such as the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) must conduct management actions on their lands such that grizzly bear populations are not harmed. Additionally, the state of Montana has a grizzly bear policy (§ 12-9-103, MCA) that specifies policy guidelines for MFWP to promote the conservation of grizzly bears in Montana. Other management plans include various Tribal, National Forest, and National Park policies. Most of these management plans identify three objectives: management and protection of grizzly habitat to ensure that grizzly bears have large expanses of suitable interconnected lands; management of grizzly/human interactions; and research to determine population size and trends.

Canada Lynx

The Canada lynx is also listed as threatened by the USFWS and potentially at risk by the MNHP. This species inhabits an area east of Polson that overlaps with the above-mentioned grizzly bear habitat. The very western portion of this habitat range is within the Polson two-mile study area, as illustrated in Figure 7.2. Canada lynx prefer subalpine forests between 1,220 and 2,150 m (4000 and 7050 ft). The species is non-migratory, but movements of 145 to 200 km (90 to 125 mi) have been reported between Montana and Canada.

In 2000, the Canada Lynx Conservation Assessment and Strategy was drafted to guide conservation measures on federally managed lands. The document specifies critical habitat management practices to ensure that lynx populations are not further jeopardized.



Bald Eagle

The bald eagle is listed as threatened by the USFWS and potentially at risk by the MNHP. It is believed that this species occurs in the Polson area based on observations of nesting sites. Nesting sites have been observed on both the east and west sides of Flathead Lake north of Polson, along the Flathead River, and along the Pablo National Wildlife Refuge, south of Polson. One of these areas is located within the two-mile study area along the Flathead River southwest of Polson, as illustrated in Figure 7.2.

The Montana Bald Eagle Management Plan and the Habitat Management Guide for Bald Eagles in Northwestern Montana guides management of the species in the state. Habitat management goals for the species include maintaining forest stands currently used for nesting and roosting, maintaining prey bases, and minimizing human disturbance in nesting areas, communal roosts, and at important feeding sites. Other management goals include continued population increases and maintenance and improvement of nesting success rates.

Common Loon

The U.S. Forest Service lists the common loon as sensitive. This term indicates that population viability is a concern as evidenced by a significant downward trend in population or a significant downward trend in habitat capacity. The BLM also lists the species as sensitive, which denotes that the species is proven imperiled in at least part of its range and is documented to occur on BLM lands. The MNHP describes the species as at risk because of very limited and/or declining numbers, range, and/or habitat, making it vulnerable to global extinction or extirpation in the state. For the years 1987, 1990, 1996, and 1999, nine adults, including one pair, and two chicks were observed on the Pablo Reservoir. As illustrated in Figure 7.2, the northern portion of this habitat range is within the Polson two-mile study area.

Management practices for the common loon and its habitat include monitoring, protection from disturbance by human activity, and protection of nesting and nursery habitats. Floating signs can be used to protect nesting sites and nursery areas. Limitations on lake access can also be implemented, including closing or moving existing access points or trails away from nesting and nursery areas. Construction, dredging or filling of habitat areas should be avoided. Loon



populations are threatened by human activity associated with recreational water use. These activities should be limited in important breeding areas.

Bull Trout

The bull trout is listed as a threatened species by the USFWS. The Flathead Lake and Flathead River bull trout population was healthy and robust until the mid-eighties when its precipitous decline resulted in local conservation groups petitioning for protection under the ESA. This species' Flathead Lake habitat range is located adjacent to the Polson study area, as illustrated in Figure 7.2.

The bull trout is a sensitive native species that does not tolerate high sediment in spawning streams. Factors contributing to decline in bull trout populations include habitat degradation and loss; isolation and fragmentation of populations by both structural (e.g. dams) and environmental (e.g. thermal or pollution) barriers; and introduction of non-native fish species resulting in competition, predation and hybridization.

Pondsnails

Several populations of Flathead pondsnails have been observed in Flathead Lake at Polson and at Skidoo Bay-West, just north of Polson. Within the two-mile study area, this species' habitat range overlaps with the Polson city boundaries and extends to the southwest and west across the Flathead River, as illustrated in Figure 7.2. The MNHP characterizes the species as at high risk because of extremely limited and/or rapidly declining numbers, range, and/or habitat, making it highly vulnerable to global extinction or extirpation in the state.

Plant Species

In addition to animal species, several sensitive plant species are located within the Polson two-mile study area, as illustrated in Figure 7.2. Lake-bank sedge is a vascular plant located in the swamps on the south shore of Flathead Lake to the east of Polson. The USFS characterizes this species as sensitive. It was observed in July of 1952 over an 89-acre area. Sweetflag is a vascular plant observed from 1908 to 1968 in 300 acres of swampland at the East Bay of Flathead Lake in an area overlapping with lake-bank sedge habitat, described above. The yellow-staining collomia is a vascular plant located in palouse prairie in an area directly south of



Polson. A specimen was collected in June of 1953. This plant grows at elevations of approximately 3,000 feet. The MNHP has categorized all three of these plant species as at high risk because of extremely limited and/or rapidly declining numbers, range, and/or habitat, making them highly vulnerable to global extinction or extirpation in the state.

Unique and Important Habitats

The Endangered Species Act provides for designation and protection of “critical habitat.” Critical habitat includes geographic area “on which are found those physical or biological features essential to the conservation of the species and which may require special management considerations or protection.” Critical habitat may include areas not occupied by the species at the time of listing, but that are essential to the conservation of the species. Critical habitat designations affect only federal agency actions or federally funded or permitted activities.

As illustrated in Figure 7.2, a bird rookery is located south of Polson on the Pablo Reservoir that supports great blue heron and double-crested cormorant, among other species. In 1988, five separate great blue heron nests fledged twelve young. Nest records for the species have been recorded on Rock Island since 1983. In 1982 and 1983, mainland nesting sites were observed approximately a quarter mile southwest of the reservoir. No herons were observed prior to 1982. Double-crested cormorant nesting sites were observed from 1985 through 1998. In 1985, ten nests with twenty-two young were observed. There were 12 nests and 27 young in 1986; 21 nests and 46 young in 1987; and 30 nests with 65 young in 1988.

The Pablo Reservoir and National Wildlife Refuge is an important wetland resource located on Tribal trust lands approximately two miles south of Polson. The refuge consists of 2,500 acres of water, marsh, and grassland. The area provides important habitat for migratory birds and other wildlife species. The refuge is managed by the BIA FIIP. Water levels are controlled primarily for irrigation purposes and flood control, although the water levels are also maintained to accommodate nesting waterfowl. Each spring, a portion of the refuge is closed to minimize disturbance to nesting areas and the refuge is closed entirely during the hunting season.

In addition to the rookery and the refuge, critical habitat areas include nesting, breeding, and all other areas associated with the threatened plant and animal species discusses above.

7.6 Geology and Soil



Geology

Polson is located on the south shores of the Flathead Lake. The city sits at the base of a terminal moraine that forms the prominent hill just south of the lake. Elevations rise from 2,892 feet above mean sea level (msl) at the lakeshore to approximately 3,300 feet above msl one mile south of the lakeshore. Slopes range from zero percent to greater than 25 percent. Areas adjacent to U.S. 93 and west to the wastewater treatment plant are relatively flat. Slopes increase near the glacial moraine on the southern boundary of the city. The Polson Moraine is an east-west elongated glacial feature formed at the end of the Pleistocene glacial epoch by the receding valley glacier. The Flathead River and its tributaries drain the entire area (USGS hydrologic unit code 17010208). The Flathead River flows from the south end of Flathead Lake at Polson along the west side of the Mission Valley until its confluence with the Clark Fork River.

Area geology is characterized as glacial till, glacial outwash, and glacial lacustrine deposits in level to strongly sloping fans, terraces, and benches. The USGS geologic map of the area indicates that Quaternary glacial and lacustrine deposits cover the majority of the Mission Valley, including the Polson area. These deposits include till or ground and end moraines, outwash and other fluviological deposits, and lake sediments from Glacial Lake Missoula.

The area east of the Flathead River is characterized as unconsolidated to semiconsolidated valley-fill deposits. These deposits include glaciofluvial/lacustrine sands and gravel interbedded with varying amounts of clay-rich glacial tills, lacustrine silts, and clay that are cemented or lithified in certain areas. The area west of the Flathead River is predominantly fractured bedrock aquifer overlain with a thin layer of lake deposits. In comparison to the valley-fill deposits to the north, the Polson Moraine is more poorly sorted, contains more clay and silt as typical of glacial till, and in general is a poorer aquifer.

Soils

The United States Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides an online database containing soil characterization data. Within a two-mile radius of Polson, soils are generally gravelly loam, loam, and silty loam. Soils covering approximately 57 percent of the total two-mile area surrounding Polson are classified in the soil groups listed below (See Table 7-5). An additional 35 percent of the total area is water.

Table 7-5	Soil Conservation Service Soil Classifications
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Soil Series	Soil Type	Mapping Unit	Percent of Total Area
Niarada / Niarada-Kerl	Gravelly Loam	120, 121, 123, 124, 125	16.1
Truscreek / Truscreek Polson	Silt Loam	165, 166, 167, 168	15.2
Kerl	Loam	84, 85	13.5
Polson	Silt Loam	130, 131, 132	5.1
Jocko	Gravelly Loam	81, 82	4.2
Belton / Belton-Kerl	Silt Loam	5, 8, 9	3.4

Source: NRIS website, accessed May 2005.

A number of soils surrounding the Polson area are characterized as prime farmland or farmland of statewide importance (see Table 7-6 below). The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) defines prime farmland as having the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and other crops and is generally available for these uses. It may be cultivated land, pastureland, forestland, or other land, but it is generally not urban or built-up land or water areas. Prime farmland is not excessively erodible or saturated with water for long periods. It is either not frequently flooded or is protected from flooding. Farmland of statewide importance is designated as such by state agencies. Generally, these soils almost meet the requirements for prime farmland and produce high yields of crops when managed according to acceptable farming methods.

Table 7-6 Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance

Soil Series	Slope	Farmland Classification	Mapping Unit
Gird	0 to 2 percent	Prime Farmland	63
Gird	2 to 4 percent	Prime Farmland	64
Kerl	2 to 4 percent	Prime Farmland	84
Kerl	4 to 8 percent	Farmland of Statewide Importance	85
Lonepine	0 to 2 percent	Prime Farmland	94
Lonepine	2 to 4 percent	Prime Farmland	95
McCollum	2 to 4 percent	Prime Farmland	102
McCollum	4 to 8 percent	Prime Farmland	103
Ninepipe	0 to 2 percent	Prime Farmland	126
Walstead	0 to 2 percent	Farmland of Statewide Importance	174

Source: NRIS website, accessed May 2005.

As illustrated in Figure 7.3, prime farmland and farmland of statewide importance are primarily located directly south of Polson and southwest, southeast, and east of the city. Other isolated sections are located to the west and northwest. In several cases these areas are within or directly adjacent to Polson’s incorporated boundaries.



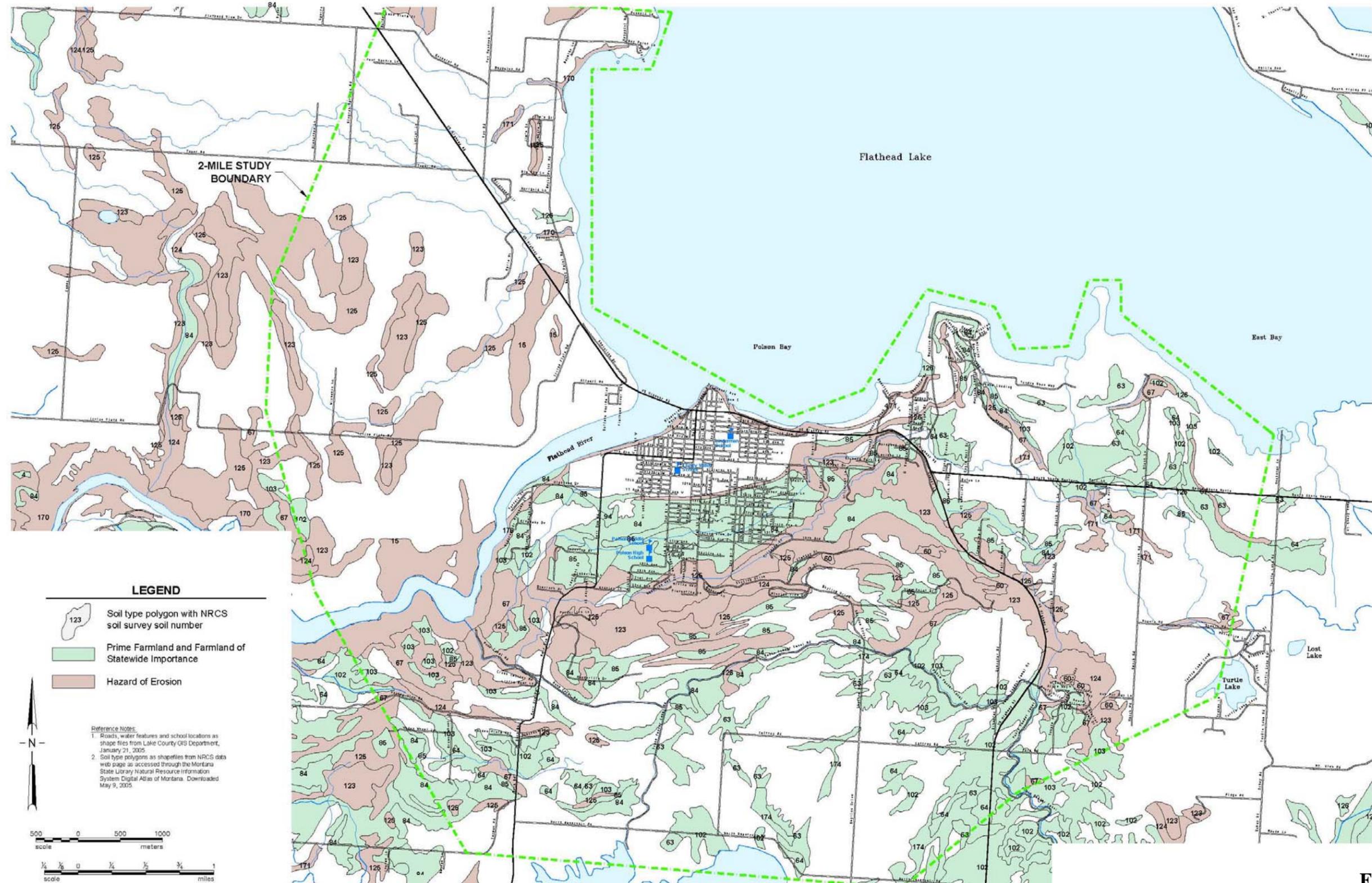


Figure 7.3 Soils



The NRCS database also contains a soil interpretation report characterizing hazard of soil erosion on roads and trails and in off-road areas. (See Table 7-7 below). This data is primarily intended for forest management practices, but may also be useful in planning for future land uses. Several soils in the Polson area exhibit slope and erosion concerns. As illustrated in Figure 7.3, scattered sections of erosive soils surround the city. The niarada, kerl, and flott, soil types are located within or directly adjacent to the Polson incorporated city boundaries along the southern and eastern sections of the city, with a section of vincom/lonepine soil running along the northern border of the city along the Flathead Lake shoreline. Additionally, erosive soils are located northwest of Polson across the Flathead River.

Table 7-7 Hazard of Erosion and Suitability for Roads on Forestland

Soil Series	Hazard of Off-Road Erosion	Hazard of Erosion on Roads and Trails	Suitability for Natural Surface Roads	Mapping Unit
Bigarm	Severe	Severe	Poorly suited	15
Flott	Severe	Severe	Poorly suited	60
Gird / Vincom	Moderate	Severe	Moderately suited	67
Niarada	Moderate	Severe	Poorly suited	123
Niarada	Severe	Severe	Poorly suited	124
Kerl	Slight	Severe	Moderately suited	125
Vincom	Moderate	Severe	Moderately suited	170
Vincom / Lonepine	Moderate	Severe	Moderately suited	171

Source: NRIS website, accessed May 2005.

The hazard of off-road erosion rating is based on slope and soil erodibility. Soil loss is caused by erosion in areas where 50 to 75 percent of the soil surface has been exposed by logging, grazing, mining, or other kinds of disturbance. A rating of “slight” indicates that erosion is unlikely to occur under ordinary climatic conditions, “moderate” indicates that some erosion is likely, and “severe” indicates that erosion is very likely and that erosion-control measures are advised.

The hazard of erosion on roads and trails rating is based on soil erodibility, slope, and content of rock fragments. The ratings apply to unsurfaced roads and trails. A rating of “severe” indicates that significant erosion is expected and roads and trails constructed on these soils will require frequent maintenance and costly erosion-control measures.

Soils classified as “poorly suited” for natural surface roads indicates that the soil has one or more properties that are unfavorable for the practice. Special design, extra maintenance, and costly alteration may be required for roads constructed on such soils.



7.7 Vegetation

Native vegetation in the Polson area consists of native grass, forbs, shrubs, and other plants. Primary crops include wheat and barley, alfalfa, and grass for grazing. Vegetation within the city includes shade trees, ornamental shrubs, and lawn grasses.

Noxious Weeds

In 1997, the Montana Noxious Weed Trust Fund requested that the Weed Survey and Mapping System Project undertake a section-based mapping project focused on surveying the distribution of five important noxious weeds within Montana counties, namely leafy spurge, dalmatian toadflax, sulfur cinquefoil, Russian knapweed, and spotted knapweed. Maps generated by the project show whether each of the weeds is present, absent, or status unknown in each map section. The section-based maps show general areas where these infestations occur. An area showing the presence of a weed should not necessarily be interpreted as 100 percent infested.

Of the five weeds mapped by the project, spotted knapweed is the only one shown to be present in the Polson area. Spotted knapweed is classified by the Montana Noxious Weed Program as a category one weed, or a weed that is currently well-established and generally widespread in many counties of the state. These weeds are capable of rapid spread and render land unfit or greatly limit beneficial uses.

Other weeds that have not yet been mapped are also present in the Polson area. The Lake County Weed Control Program has identified houndstongue, whitetop, and meadow hawkweed within a two-mile radius of Polson. Houndstongue and whitetop are category one weeds. Meadow hawkweed is a category two weed, or a noxious weed recently introduced to the state or rapidly spreading from its current infestation sites. Category two weeds are also capable of rapid spread and invasion of lands. In addition to these three weeds, the Lake County Weed Control Program believes that the category one weed sulfur cinquefoil is also present in the Polson area, although the weed did not register on the section-based map of Polson.

In January 2005, the Weed Summit Steering Committee and the Weed Management Task Force published the Montana Weed Management Plan intended to strengthen and coordinate private, county, state, and federal weed management efforts in Montana.



7.8 Hazard Areas

Floodplain Management

The most recent floodplain maps of the Polson area were issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in December, 1987. The city of Polson is located in Zone X, which is an area determined to be outside of both the 100-year and the 500-year floodplains. A 100-year flood is a flood that has a one-percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. The area inundated during the base flood is called the 100-year floodplain. The 100-year flood is used by the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) as the standard for floodplain management and to determine the need for flood insurance. Zone X is an area of low to moderate flood hazard and no flood insurance is required in this area. Lands located on the perimeter of Flathead Lake and Flathead River are located in Zone A, which is located inside the 100-year floodplain as determined in the Flood Insurance Study. These areas are unstudied (i.e. detailed hydraulic analyses have not been performed), and no base flood elevations (BFEs) or depths have been determined within the zone.

The Flathead Lake and Flathead River water bodies are regulated by the Kerr Dam facility. Peak lake elevations reach 2,893.2 feet above sea level in June. According to Lake County officials, there is little risk of flooding from either the Flathead Lake or Flathead River absent a dam failure. Several irrigation canals located just south of Polson are regulated for irrigation purposes and pose little flood risk to the community. The Pablo Reservoir is located south of Polson. All of the reservoir's tributaries run to the southeast, away from the city. This water body also poses little flood risk to Polson.

Lake County has developed a set of regulations that designate appropriate land uses within the 100-year floodplain and floodway fringe areas. The Lake County Floodplain Administrator governs a floodplain permitting process for proposed development projects subject to the requirements of the regulations. The regulations are designed to protect the public health, safety, and welfare from flood hazards and to minimize flood losses by promoting wise use of vulnerable floodplain areas.



Steep Slopes

The *Polson Development Code* sets forth maximum lot coverage standards according to slope percentages (See Table 7-8 below). Slopes up to eight percent are generally suited for development and are governed by the character of the zoning district.

Table 7-8 Maximum Lot Coverage for Zoning Districts with 0-8 Percent Slope	
Zoning District	Maximum Lot Coverage
Productive Lands Zoning District (PLZD)	20%
Rural Residential Zoning District (RRZD)	20%
Low Density Residential Zoning District (LRZD)	35%
Medium Density Residential Zoning District (MRZD)	55%
Mixed Used Residential Zoning District (XRZD)	Single family lot \geq 10,000 sq. feet – 35% Single family lot <10,000 sq. feet – 55% Townhouse lot with townhouse – 65%
Transitional Zoning District (TZD)	Generally – 55% Residential Conversions – 55% Block Conversions – 75%
Resort Zoning District (RZD)	55%
Highway Commercial Zoning District (HCZD)	80%
Central Business Zoning District (CBZD)	100%
Commercial/Industrial Zoning District (CIZD)	80%
<i>Source: Polson Development Code, 1993.</i>	

Land areas with slopes between 8 and 15 percent are restricted to a maximum lot coverage of 15-20 percent. Land areas with slopes between 15-25 percent have extensive engineering limitations. These areas are restricted to a maximum lot coverage of 5 percent. Slopes over 25 percent are generally unsuitable for development. These areas may only be developed on one percent of the lot.

As illustrated in Figure 7.4, the city of Polson is generally located in an area with slopes between zero and eight percent. Areas adjacent to U.S. 93 and west to the wastewater treatment plant are relatively flat. Slopes increase near the glacial moraine on the southern boundary of the city.

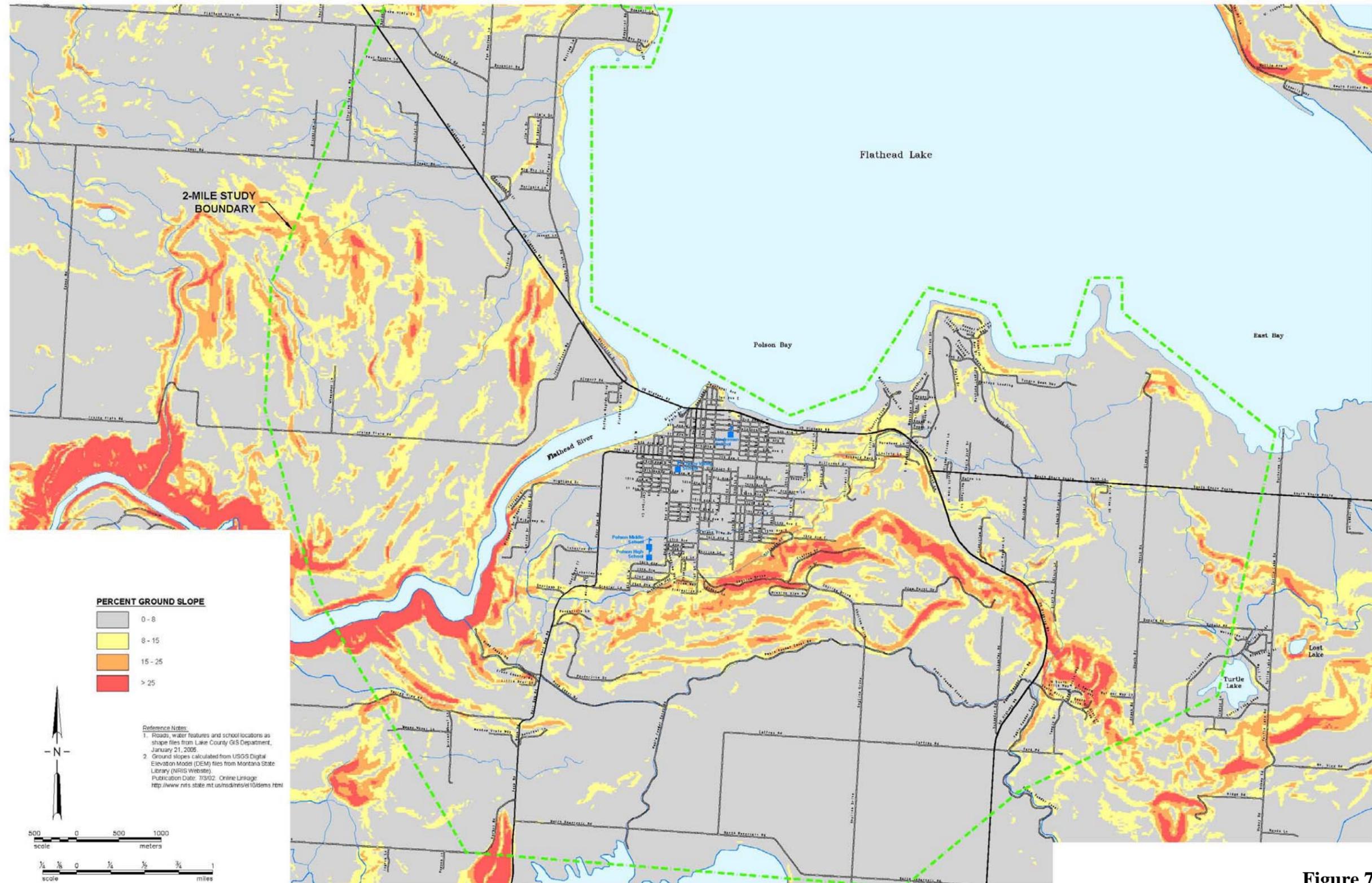


Figure 7.4 Land Slope



7.9 Scenic Resources

The Polson area is surrounded by beauty. Polson is bounded on the north by Flathead Lake. Upon descending the Polson moraine and entering the city from U.S. 93, views of the lake extend on the horizon to the north, with portions of Glacier National Park and the Whitefish and Swan mountain ranges visible. Several small islands termed the Narrows group (Narrows Island, Big Bull Island, and Little Bull Island) are located in the narrow channel between Polson Bay and the lake's main waters to the north. Views of the Mission Mountains extend along the east side of the lake and forested areas are visible along the northern shoreline. Lands bordering the southwest corner of the lake near Polson are characterized by rolling grasslands. The Salish Mountains rise along the western edge of Lake County.

The term “viewshed” signifies the entire area an individual can see from a given point. The *Polson Development Code's* performance standards recognize that views of Flathead Lake from residences and lake-oriented commercial uses are a valuable resource. Pursuant to the performance standards, these views should generally not be blocked, even by proposed developments that otherwise comply with zoning regulations. Although permitted uses within zoned areas are generally assumed to be in compliance with viewshed protection standards, approval of a development permit may be conditioned upon alterations that help retain views from adjoining properties.

Additional performance standards are applicable in the resort zoning district. Developments in these areas must be designed and constructed to afford views from adjoining public streets and sidewalks/trails to the lake. Buildings must be below the grade of adjoining public streets or sidewalks to minimize view impacts or be designed to permit occasional views to the lake through or between buildings.



8.0 Cultural Resources

Chapter Eight considers the community’s cultural resources, and includes information on Polson’s historic resources, downtown area, cultural and recreation resources, and waterfront development. Cultural resources are a critical element in planning for a community’s future. In addition to helping define our sense of place, historic and archeological properties can also enhance community economic development efforts, educational programming, and tourism. Polson is home to a number of local museums and historical sites. Founded in 1972, the Polson-Flathead Historical Museum works to preserve the history of the Mission Valley and the Flathead Indian Reservation. The museum houses Native American artifacts and farm and household items from the opening of the Flathead Reservation in 1910. The Miracle of America Museum features a collection of artifacts from western Montana including displays of Indian items, cars, cycles, toys, dolls, guns, clothing, wagons, and buggies.

Historic Properties

The Montana Historical Society (MHS) maintains historic property records for 33 properties within the Polson city limits. The records have been generated as a consequence of one of the following:

- A property owner has requested information from the Montana Historical Society regarding a site’s eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), or
- A state or federal agency has requested information regarding a site’s eligibility for listing in the NRHP under Section 106 of the Federal Historic Preservation Act or under the provisions of the Montana Antiquities Act.

Thirteen of the properties in the MHS’s database have been characterized as eligible for listing in the NRHP through a “consensus determination” between the NRHP and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) but have not been listed. They include the following properties:

- The Oates Cabin, 1301 East Highway 93
- Cherry Hill Motel, Highway 93
- Morias House, 1711 East Highway 93
- Paul House, 1611 East Highway 93
- Turgeon House, 606 3rd Avenue E.



- Tiddy Duplex, 901 4th Avenue E.
- Poage House, 702 3rd Avenue E.
- Funk and Sons Store, 1 2nd Avenue E.
- Salish Hotel, NW Corner of 2nd Avenue E. and Main Street
- 1927 Polson Post Office, 11 2nd Avenue E.
- Beacon Tire, 14 2nd Avenue E.
- Polson Professional Building, 6,8,10 2nd Avenue E.
- Wildhorse Bar, 9 2nd Avenue E.

The remaining properties in the database are either ineligible or their status is unresolved/undetermined. In addition, the Lake County Courthouse is likely eligible for listing on the NRHP but no request for a determination of eligibility has been made. A comprehensive cultural resource survey of the planning area would go far to identify other potentially eligible buildings, sites and objects, and historic districts.

Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation

The city of Polson is located entirely within the Flathead Indian Reservation. The Reservation is home to two major Salish-speaking Tribes – the Salish and the Pend d’Oreilles and one band of the Kootenai Tribe. Before contact with non-Indians, the Kootenai Nation alone numbered over ten thousand. The Tribes have a rich cultural heritage. Please refer to Chapters 3 and 17 of Volume I of the *Flathead Reservation Comprehensive Resources Plan* for a more complete description of Tribal cultural resources. The National Historic Preservation Act states that properties of traditional religious and cultural importance to Indian Tribes may be determined eligible for listing in the NRHP. Traditional Cultural Properties, including Native American sites, are defined as places that are eligible for NRHP listing because of their association with cultural practices or beliefs of a living community that are 1) rooted in that community’s history, and 2) are important in maintaining the continuing cultural identity of the community. In order to protect the sanctity of these sites, their locations may not be disclosed.

Note: The Tribal Historic Preservation Office will be contacted to learn of any cultural/archeological sites located in the Polson planning area. The location of these sites may not be a matter of public record, but the Polson Planning Department will work with the Tribes to assure that proper respect is accorded these properties in the context of this growth policy and associated development codes, subdivision regulations, and zoning ordinances.



9.0 Goals, Objectives, and Implementation Strategies

Chapter Nine lists Polson’s goals and objectives. These goals and objectives were developed through a public participation process which included public meetings; working group meetings; and informal communication with city, county, Tribal, and state officials, members of private organizations, and the general public. The result of this process is a shared vision for the Polson community that will help shape future development. The chapter also provides a set of specific implementation tools that will be used to address each of Polson’s goals and objectives, including planning strategies, funding options, and regulatory tools. Several of the tools will be formalized with the revision of the *Polson Development Code*, which will include specific criteria for zoning changes, variances, and special uses.

Land Use

1. **Goal: Encourage development mixes and land use policies that minimize sprawl and maximize efficiency of existing infrastructure.**



- a. Objective: Consider allowing additional development mixes within existing density parameters.
 - i. Implementation Strategy: Review and revise Polson’s zoning regulations to include additional transitional zoning districts (TZD).
 - ii. Implementation Strategy: Review and revise Polson’s zoning regulations to include a hospital zoning district allowing small businesses and healthcare offices near the St. Joseph Medical Center.
- b. Objective: Strictly enforce density standards.
 - i. Implementation Strategy: Develop public education campaigns to educate property owners about *Polson Development Code* density requirements.
 - ii. Implementation Strategy: Ensure that property owners comply with land use regulations through increased use of legal action to enjoin prohibited uses.

2. **Goal: Identify appropriate areas for outward expansion.**

- a. Objective: Consider the conditions under which annexation will occur.
 - i. Implementation Strategy: Develop an annexation policy to plan for the expansion of city boundaries and provision of municipal services.



- b. Objective: Require engineered designs in areas with steep slope or erodible soil.
 - i. Implementation Strategy: Review and revise the *Polson Development Code* Performance Standards for Hillside Development to more clearly define the requirements for development on land areas with steep slope.

- c. Objective: When developing adjacent lands, protect and enhance wetlands and sensitive wildlife habitat as referenced in this growth policy and as identified by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetlands Inventory, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Montana Natural Heritage Program, and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes.
 - i. Implementation Strategy: Coordinate planning and management efforts with other land management agencies in efforts to protect and preserve lake and stream banks, floodplains, and riparian areas.
 - ii. Implementation Strategy: Strictly enforce the *Polson Development Code* Performance Standards for Shoreline Buffers, the Lake County Lakeshore Protection Regulations, and the Tribal Shoreline Protection and Aquatic Lands Protection Ordinances that establish buffer zones designed to protect riparian habitat.
 - iii. Implementation Strategy: Research methods to encourage and reward landowners for preserving certain undeveloped lands, including programs for purchase of development rights, transfer of development rights, planned unit development (PUD) regulations, and density bonuses.



Population

3. **Goal:** With the inevitable growth that will occur in Polson, encourage growth of year-round residents in order to sustain and support community services and infrastructure such as schools, healthcare facilities, and local businesses.



- a. **Objective:** Develop community enhancement projects to make Polson a more attractive place to live.
- i. **Implementation Strategy:** Maintain attractive and welcoming infrastructure at all gateways into Polson, including welcome signs at the entrances of neighborhoods and the downtown business district, and directional signs pointing to important destinations in conformance with the *Polson Development Code*.
 - ii. **Implementation Strategy:** Organize an annual cleanup day for individual neighborhoods.
 - iii. **Implementation Strategy:** Consider landscaping and irrigating major intersections within the city.
- b. **Objective:** Develop a broad economic base to attract and retain young working families.
- i. **Implementation Strategy:** Maintain and enhance relationships with the Polson Chamber of Commerce and other economic development groups to promote Polson as a good place to live and attract businesses that advance the goals and objectives of the Polson Growth Policy.



Housing

4. Goal: Encourage the development of additional housing units for low-income and elderly populations.



- a. Objective: Provide incentives for the development of affordable and special needs housing when approving new developments.
 - i. Implementation Strategy: Research incentives and publicize existing incentives that encourage development of affordable and special needs housing, such as a streamlined review and permitting process.
 - ii. Implementation Strategy: Conduct an affordable housing needs assessment every five years to identify short-term and long-term housing needs, and prepare and implement an affordable housing strategic plan.
 - iii. Implementation Strategy: Consider inclusionary zoning and subdivision regulations that require a minimum percentage of housing units for low- and moderate-income households in new housing developments within transitional zoning districts (TZD).

5. Goal: Give the city additional tools to assist with the real costs of development.

- a. Objective: Require the construction of infrastructure that meets current city code concurrent with the construction of all new developments.
 - i. Implementation Strategy: Require subdividers and developers to demonstrate how a proposed subdivision will impact fire and emergency services and existing infrastructure, including public sewer, water, and street facilities.
 - ii. Implementation Strategy: Conduct an impact fee study to determine whether such a measure would be an effective means of financing infrastructure for new developments.
 - iii. Implementation Strategy: Explore public/private funding partnership opportunities for the development of infrastructure for new developments.



Economic Conditions

6. Goal: Encourage economic revitalization in order to provide additional employment and economic development opportunities.



- a. Objective: Engage in additional economic development planning
 - i. Implementation Strategy: Create an economic development plan for the general community.
 - ii. Implementation Strategy: Implement the regulatory and planning recommendations for Salish Point as outlined in *Consider the Possibilities for Polson!*
 - iii. Implementation Strategy: Implement the regulatory and planning recommendations for the railyard district as outlined in *Consider the Possibilities for Polson!*

- b. Objective: Support and strengthen the downtown business district.
 - i. Implementation Strategy: Prepare and implement a downtown revitalization plan to evaluate and address issues such as parking, traffic circulation, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, economic development, marketing and promotion, landscape and streetscape design, signage, building rehabilitation, expansion and solid organization of the downtown business district, and other concerns specific to the area.
 - ii. Implementation Strategy: Create a business improvement district (BID) to organize, facilitate, and coordinate downtown revitalization and promotion efforts.
 - iii. Implementation Strategy: Increase investment and capital improvements in the downtown business district through the use of a special improvements district (SID) or a tax incentive structure.
 - iv. Implementation Strategy: Facilitate programs that would encourage property renovation in the downtown area.
 - v. Implementation Strategy: Foster partnerships between major employers to encourage them to remain or move downtown.
 - vi. Implementation Strategy: Increase parking in the downtown area to encourage economic development.
 - vii. Implementation Strategy: Reevaluate the administration and financial decision-making of the tax increment financing district.



Economic Conditions, cont.

7. Goal: Increase and improve marketing efforts.

- a. Objective: Recruit and retain new businesses.
 - i. Implementation Strategy: Work with the Polson Chamber of Commerce and the Polson Job Center to provide economic development resources to new and existing businesses, including site visit and site selection assistance, labor market analysis, workforce recruitment and job-training assistance, permitting assistance, and information on community characteristics and available incentives programs.
 - ii. Implementation Strategy: Develop collaborative partnerships with other economic development efforts throughout Lake County.

- b. Objective: Advertise and promote Polson's quality of life.
 - i. Implementation Strategy: Promote Polson's unique community amenities and attractions for economic development, including Flathead Lake, museums, fairgrounds, golf course and country club, and Kerr Dam.

8. Goal: Organize economic development efforts.

- a. Objective: Consolidate splinter groups and create a unified economic development committee.
 - i. Implementation Strategy: Create a master economic development board and schedule regular meetings with representatives from independent economic development groups to foster better communication and effectiveness.
 - ii. Implementation Strategy: Define specific roles for different groups to eliminate overlap and conflicts.

- b. Objective: Work cooperatively with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes.
 - i. Implementation Strategy: Establish interlocal agreements to address areas of common concern.



Economic Conditions, cont.

9. **Goal:** Maintain and enhance Polson's natural beauty in order to create a more attractive place to live, work and conduct business.
 - a. Objective: Enforce standards for signs.
 - i. Implementation Strategy: Prepare a detailed study on the status and location of signs and work with sign owners to cure nonconformities.
 - ii. Implementation Strategy: Develop public education campaigns to educate property owners about *Polson's Development Code*.
 - b. Objective: Encourage context sensitive design in commercial developments, particularly along the U.S. 93 and Highway 35 corridors.
 - i. Implementation Strategy: Establish gateway overlay districts along routes leading into Polson with design specifications requiring attractive and welcoming infrastructure, architectural and design standards, tree planting, and landscaping in all gateway areas.



Local Services

10. Goal: Strive to minimize duplication of social and healthcare services in the community to better meet the needs of elderly, disabled, low income, and other special needs populations.

- a. Objective: Identify the needs of underserved populations.
 - i. Implementation Strategy: Conduct an assessment to identify short-term and long-term service needs, issues, and problems.
- b. Objective: Work cooperatively with local, county, state, federal, Tribal, and private service providers.
 - i. Implementation Strategy: Establish strong working relationships with representatives of governmental and non-governmental service providers through regularly scheduled meetings or by other means.



11. Goal: Expand local service programs to meet growing needs of community.

- a. Objective: Add paid staff positions as applicable and consider raising salaries of city employees to compete with surrounding jurisdictions.
 - i. Implementation Strategy: Consider the addition of a grants administrator to identify funding sources other than property taxes.
 - ii. Implementation Strategy: Expand city staff to maintain and enhance routine city services.
 - iii. Implementation Strategy: Pursue adequate emergency services personnel, facilities, and equipment to provide levels of service in compliance with local, state, and national standards.



Sewer and Water

12. **Goal:** Address Polson's sewer and water needs in the most fair, proportionate, and equitable manner.



- a. **Objective:** Expand existing sewer and water facilities to accommodate population growth and economic development.
 - i. **Implementation Strategy:** Create a timeline for review and revision of sewer and water facilities plans.
 - ii. **Implementation Strategy:** Add a 500,000 gallon reservoir on Skyline Drive and replace existing reservoir on Hillcrest.
 - iii. **Implementation Strategy:** Upgrade and loop existing sewer and water distribution systems.
- b. **Objective:** Emphasize the city's responsibility to maintain and repair existing infrastructure before committing resources to new or expanded facilities or developments.
 - i. **Implementation Strategy:** Strictly enforce the *Polson Development Code* Performance Standards for Provision of Adequate Infrastructure (Chp. 18, Division 2, p. 47) to ensure resources are spent on maintaining adequate services.
 - ii. **Implementation Strategy:** Empower the Polson Sewer and Water Board with authority to prioritize maintenance and repair projects according to need.
- c. **Objective:** Identify funding sources for repair and replacement of aging sewer and water infrastructure.
 - i. **Implementation Strategy:** Consider raising utility tap fees to create a sinking fund for major collection and distribution system extensions or repairs and plant upgrades.

13. **Goal:** Obtain and treat water from Flathead Lake to supplement Polson's municipal water supply.

- a. **Objective:** Maintain communication with local, Tribal, and state authorities during the process of federal reserved water rights negotiations.
 - i. **Implementation Strategy:** Establish strong working relationships through regularly scheduled meetings or by other means.



Sewer and Water, cont.

14. Goal: Reduce and treat Polson's roadway runoff.

- a. Objective: Develop stormwater treatment facilities for existing neighborhoods and new developments.
 - i. Implementation Strategy: Assess existing stormwater management resources, conditions in natural and man-made drainageways, and the implications of floods during storm events.
 - ii. Implementation Strategy: Develop a stormwater management plan that requires adequate on-site storm water detention/retention and treatment in conjunction with all development to reduce runoff and prevent flooding and water contamination.

Solid Waste Treatment Facilities

15. Goal: Reduce amount of solid waste that is sent to the Missoula waste facility.

- a. Objective: Work with Lake County officials to encourage recycling, recycling education, and other measures to reduce waste generation.
 - i. Implementation Strategy: Investigate the feasibility of a city- or county-wide curbside recycling service to reduce waste materials sent to the landfill.
- b. Objective: Work with Lake County officials to identify cost-effective landfill options.
 - i. Implementation Strategy: Establish strong working relationships with Lake County officials through regularly scheduled meetings or by other means.



Transportation

16. **Goal:** Engage in additional transportation planning to accommodate population growth and economic development.



- a. **Objective:** Repair and replace aging streets and sidewalks.
 - i. **Implementation Strategy:** Develop an annual work plan to assist in budgeting, establish a list of priority projects to be completed within the year, and to help allocate resources to staffing, operations, and capital purchases.
 - ii. **Implementation Strategy:** Plan for city street improvements through the capital improvements planning process.
 - iii. **Implementation Strategy:** Create a street board to identify and rank maintenance projects.
 - iv. **Implementation Strategy:** Develop a snow removal policy detailing schedule and routes.
- b. **Objective:** Address traffic and parking problems experienced during summer months.
 - i. **Implementation Strategy:** Develop a transportation master plan.
 - ii. **Implementation Strategy:** Conduct a parking needs assessment.
- c. **Objective:** Develop plans for a downtown parking garage.
 - i. **Implementation Strategy:** Consider funding provided through a business improvement district (BID).

17. **Goal:** Address the community's need for a U.S. 93 bypass.

- a. **Objective:** Engage in community discussions to determine level of support for a U.S. 93 bypass.
 - i. **Implementation Strategy:** Conduct surveys, focus groups, town meetings, and design workshops to collect information on community attitudes, opinions, and preferences regarding a U.S. 93 bypass project and various bypass locations.
- b. **Objective:** Consider appropriate development restrictions to preserve a potential U.S. 93 bypass corridor.
 - i. **Implementation Strategy:** With input from the public, identify potential U.S. 93 bypass corridors.



- ii. Implementation Strategy: Utilize various corridor preservation planning tools, including land acquisition, exercise of planning and zoning powers, subdivision regulatory controls, development agreements, density transfers within a parcel for which development is proposed, a development moratorium, voluntary developer reservation, development easements, and exchange of property.
- c. Objective: Ensure that a potential U.S. 93 bypass would not negatively impact Polson's central business district and existing neighborhoods.
 - i. Implementation Strategy: Consider revision of the *Polson Development Code* to create a U.S. 93 bypass zoning district with stipulations restricting commercial development along a U.S. 93 bypass.
 - ii. Implementation Strategy: Design on and off ramps on a future U.S. 93 bypass to allow for easy access to Polson's downtown commercial center.

18. Goal: Enhance Polson's non-motorized transportation systems.

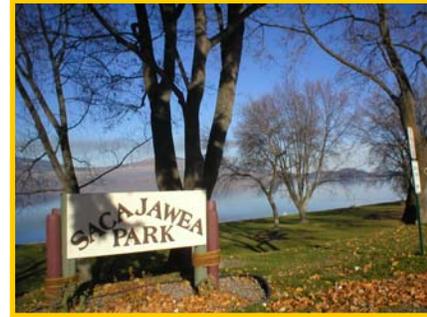
- a. Objective: Expand and improve Polson's sidewalks and trail routes.
 - i. Implementation Strategy: Amend the *Polson Development Code* to require the dedication and development of non-motorized transportation facilities in conjunction with new development.
 - ii. Implementation Strategy: Develop a non-motorized transportation plan highlighting existing multiple-use trails throughout the city planning area and illustrating potential future trail locations.
 - iii. Implementation Strategy: Use CTEP and other transportation funding to sources to construct and maintain trails.
 - iv. Implementation Strategy: Develop policies and procedures for obtaining easements or rights-of-way for non-motorized transportation corridors throughout the community.
 - v. Implementation Strategy: Encourage potential developers, the private sector, foundations and individuals to participate in enhancing non-motorized facilities.
- b. Objective: Link and expand existing bike paths, parks, and recreational areas.
 - i. Implementation Strategy: Work with neighboring jurisdictions to create and connect trails and corridors.
 - ii. Implementation Strategy: Increase interdepartmental cooperation to use public land corridors for multiple purpose trails.
 - iii. Implementation Strategy: Enable neighborhoods and community members to participate in the process of trail placement and design as trails are developed.



Parks and Recreation

19. Goal: Identify appropriate land for future use as park and recreational areas.

- a. Objective: Consider development of Salish Point, the railyard property, the Polson fairgrounds, and other underutilized areas for recreational purposes.
 - i. Implementation Strategy: Prepare a comprehensive plan for parks, recreation, and open spaces.
 - ii. Implementation Strategy: Solicit neighborhood involvement in the preparation of park improvement planning and programming.



20. Goal: Expand and enhance existing recreational areas.

- a. Objective: Prioritize and plan the construction and maintenance of recreational facilities.
 - i. Implementation Strategy: Develop plans for expansion of the existing Sports Complex recreational area, the addition of storage and restroom facilities at various parks within the city, and the construction of a community center with an indoor swimming pool facility.
 - ii. Implementation Strategy: Identify funding sources for public facilities improvements, including bonds, special assessments, private donations, and grants.
 - iii. Implementation Strategy: Utilize the capital improvements planning process to schedule construction of needed facilities.

21. Goal: Consider creating a regional parks district to better manage the area's recreational lands, opportunities, and events.

- a. Objective: Work with city, county, Tribal, and other local authorities.
 - i. Implementation Strategy: Develop a proposal to create a city / county park maintenance district and park improvement district and submit to voters within the city and county planning jurisdiction.
 - ii. Implementation Strategy: Work with various entities to jointly fund, develop, and maintain parks and recreation facilities.



Natural Resources

22. Goal: Preserve and protect Polson's natural resources, including wetlands, surface and groundwater sources, wildlife, and scenic views.



- a. Objective: Provide information to developers regarding the location of sensitive natural resources as identified by this growth policy and other authorities.
 - i. Implementation Strategy: Maintain current mapping of sensitive resources throughout the city planning area.
 - ii. Implementation Strategy: Introduce landowners and developers to voluntary open space preservation programs such as conservation easements.

23. Goal: Reduce sources of non-point pollution affecting water quality in Flathead Lake.

- a. Objective: Consider impacts of new development along the lakeshore.
 - i. Implementation Strategy: Monitor the amount of development adjacent to Flathead Lake in accordance with the *Polson Development Code* Performance Standards for Shoreline Buffers, the Lake County Lakeshore Protection Regulations, and the Tribal Shoreline Protection and Aquatic Lands Protection Ordinances. Adjust zoning regulations to minimize development pressure on the natural system, as appropriate.
 - ii. Implementation Strategy: Promote best management practices to ensure compatible and suitable land development.

24. Goal: Maintain public access to Flathead Lake and other natural resources.

- a. Objective: Preserve a portion of the lakefront for public recreational use.
 - i. Implementation Strategy: Consider publicly acquiring property along Flathead Lake for recreational purposes.
 - ii. Implementation Strategy: Adopt subdivision regulations that prohibit eliminating existing access to public recreational land.
 - iii. Implementation Strategy: Acquire public right-of-way for recreational purposes through existing and proposed development that is acceptable to adjoining residences.



Cultural Resources



25. **Goal:** Identify a central historic and cultural theme for Polson.

- a. **Objective:** Use public art and educational materials to develop public spaces in ways that emphasize Polson's unique history.
 - i. **Implementation Strategy:** Adopt a public art master policy for the downtown area and consider creating a public art board to implement the policy.
 - ii. **Implementation Strategy:** Incorporate public art with major capital fund projects including buildings, parks, recreational facilities, and public service facilities.
 - iii. **Implementation Strategy:** Investigate alternate methods of creating revenue for development of public art.
 - iv. **Implementation Strategy:** Encourage private developments to include art in their projects.
 - v. **Implementation Strategy:** Inventory private and public properties where public art can be viewed and donate space to local organization and artists for approved public art displays.

- b. **Objective:** Create a community gathering area on Salish Point that incorporates an amphitheater, a cultural and/or community center, and adequate parking facilities.
 - i. **Implementation Strategy:** Prepare a development plan for Salish Point that creates attractive recreational space combined with low-impact commercial space as outlined in *Consider the Possibilities for Polson!*
 - ii. **Implementation Strategy:** Develop and promote Salish Point as the cultural center of Polson through support of art in public places, including visual and performing arts on both public and private property.

- c. **Objective:** Promote understanding of important historical and cultural areas.
 - i. **Implementation Strategy:** In cooperation with other public and private entities, design a long-range plan to promote cultural tourism.



9.1 Implementation Resources

The Polson Growth Policy sets forth a wide array of tasks to be undertaken in meeting the goals and objectives of the community. This section provides a list of financial, statutory, and program resources available to local governments and community organizations as they strive to realize their vision for the future.

I. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS FINANCING

A. Local Mechanisms

1. Debt Financing

Municipalities can make use of various kinds of debt financing to meet their infrastructure needs. These include general obligation bonds, special improvement district bonds, and revenue bonds. Debt financing enables local governments to finance major infrastructure projects using future revenue from special assessments, user fees, and other forms of revenue. The city incurs various administrative costs in conjunction with issuing bonds. These costs include the retention of legal counsel and financial consultants, the establishment of reserve funds, and the preparation of the prospectus and various required documents. These bonds provide tax-free interest earnings to purchasers and are therefore subject to detailed scrutiny under both state and federal law. The citations in the Montana Code are listed below, for each type of bond described.

a. *General Obligation Bonds*

Section 7-7-4204, MCA provides for municipalities to issue general obligation bonds (GO bonds). GO bonds are backed by the full faith and credit of the city or town and must be approved by the voters in an election and are typically payable from ad valorem taxes (taxes based on the value of property) and expressed in mils.

b. *Revenue Bonds*

Under § 7-7-4401, MCA, a city or town may issue revenue bonds to finance any project or activity authorized. Revenue bonds are retired through the payment of earnings including user fees incurred by a public enterprise. Revenue bonds have no claim on the city's taxable resources, unless specified (through a special guarantee, for example). Bonds may be issued in the form of general obligation bonds, revenue bonds, or a combination.



2. **Special District Financing**

Cities may use the creation of special districts to pay for a variety of costs.

- a. ***Special Improvement Districts*** – Section 7-12-4102, MCA authorizes the creation of special improvement districts (SID's). The city or town council has the power to create SID's, designating them by number. The creation of an SID can also be initiated by the property owners in the proposed district. Although not required, property owners within the proposed district will often submit a petition to the city council requesting that the district be created. Before any formal action is taken, cost estimates are prepared and include a range of costs anticipated in association with undertaking the proposed construction or maintenance. Once the project has been defined and cost estimates prepared, the council passes a resolution of intent to create the district. The resolution informs the property owners of the size of the district, the nature of the improvements, the project engineer, cost estimates, method of assessment, and duration. The affected property owners are given due notice of the intent to create the district and opportunity to protest. If less than 50 percent of those property owners protest, the municipality may proceed with the creation of the SID. Cities may use SID's to finance a number of improvements including:

- To protect the safety of the public from open ditches carrying water;
- To purchase or build municipal swimming pools and other recreational facilities;
- To grade, pave, and undertake other street improvements;
- To acquire, construct, or reconstruct sidewalks, crosswalks, culverts, bridges, gutters, curbs, steps, parking, and planting;
- To acquire, construct, or reconstruct sewers, ditches, drains, conduits, and channels for sanitary and/or drainage purposes with outlets, cesspools, manholes, catch basins, flush tanks, septic tanks, connecting sewers, ditches, drains, conduits, channels, and other appurtenances;
- To acquire, construct, or reconstruct waterworks, water mains and extensions of water mains, pipes hydrants, and hose connections for irrigating purposes; and
- For a variety of other infrastructure improvements.

The city governing body may order and create SIDs covering projects abutting the city limits and include properties outside the city where the SID abuts and benefits that property. Property owners within the proposed district boundaries outside the city may not be included in the SID if 40 percent of those property owners protest the creation of the SID.

- b. ***Lighting Special Improvement Districts*** – Under § 7-12-4301, MCA, the council of any city or town is authorized to create special lighting districts on any street or streets or public highway for the purpose of lighting, assessing costs, and collecting costs by special assessment against the property.



- c. ***Park Maintenance Districts*** – Section 7-12-4001, MCA authorizes a city or town, upon petition of 10 percent or more of the qualified electors of a proposed park maintenance district, or upon a resolution of intent adopted by the governing body, submit to the electors of the proposed district the creation of a park maintenance district. The district may be created for the purposes of, but not limited to, mowing, irrigation, turf repair, recreation facilities, equipment maintenance, tree trimming, tree replacement, tree removal, and the removal of other debris.
- 3. Capital Improvement Fund**
Under § 7-6-616, MCA, a municipal government may establish a capital improvement fund in an amount not to exceed 10 percent allowed under 7-6-4452 which enables the levying of up to 65 mils for general purposes. Funds may be used for the replacement, improvement, and acquisition of property, facilities, or equipment, provided that a capital improvement program has been formally adopted by resolution of the city or town governing body.
- 4. Sewer and Water Depreciation Schedules**
Municipal governments are authorized to incorporate replacement and depreciation into water and sewer user fees under § 7-13-4307, MCA.
- 5. Resort Tax**
In order to rectify the inequities experienced by Montana resort communities, which must provide services not only for seasonal tourists but for residents, the 1985 Montana Legislature passed the local option resort tax. (§§ 7-6-1501 through 7-6-1550, MCA). Communities wishing to take advantage of the resort tax must meet the following criteria:
- The population of the incorporated community is less than 5,500;
 - The area derives the primary portion of its economic well-being related to current employment from businesses catering to the recreational and personal needs of persons traveling to or through the area for purposes not related to their income production, and demonstrated by an economic analysis of the proposed area using a specific methodology that analyzes income, property income, government transfer payments, and employment data;
 - The area had been designated by the Montana Department of Commerce (MDOC) as a resort area. (MDOC does not conduct the required economic analysis. The candidate area is responsible for securing the professional analysis.)
- The local electorate imposes, amends or repeals the resort tax. The rate may not exceed 3 percent and taxes collected may be used for any local government activity, undertaking or administrative service, including the costs resulting from the imposition of the tax. Bonds may be issued, the debt to be serviced by resort tax receipts. *Contact:* MDOC, Helena (406) 444-4214.



B. State and Federal Mechanisms

1. Treasure State Endowment Program ~ Montana Department of Commerce

The Montana Treasure State Endowment Program (TSEP) is a state-funded program, administered by the MDOC, designed to assist communities in financing capital improvements to public facilities including drinking water systems, wastewater treatment facilities, sanitary or storm sewer systems, solid waste disposal and separation systems, and bridges, and is authorized under §§ 90-6-701 through 715, MCA. Funds are derived from the Montana coal severance tax and made available to local governments as matching grants, loans, and grant/loan combinations. TSEP can also make deferred loans to local governments for preliminary engineering study costs. However, the local government must repay the loan whether or not they succeed in obtaining financing for the construction phase of project. Funds may not be used for annual operation and maintenance; the purchase of non-permanent furnishings; for refinancing existing debt, except when required in conjunction with the financing of a new TSEP project; or costs incurred prior to the grant award.

Allocations and Matching Requirements

Generally, grant awards cannot exceed \$500,000 and the municipality must provide at least a 50 percent match which can include other grant funds. One of the most critical issues that a municipality must address is the ability to commit other funding sources to the project. TSEP grant funds are intended to keep projects reasonably affordable. As stated above, there are a number of ways in which local governments can provide matching funds for projects. In addition to local sources, municipalities should evaluate other potential outside grant and loan sources. A thorough analysis of the feasibility of using these various funding mechanisms is a critical component in developing a proposal to TSEP, and to other grant programs as well. Applications are evaluated based upon the applicant's ability to borrow funds or otherwise finance the project without the use of TSEP funds.

Eligible applicants include incorporated cities and towns, counties, consolidated governments, and municipality or multi-county water, sewer, or solid waste districts. Municipalities may form partnerships with other eligible applicants to provide the most appropriate and cost effective solution. Such partnerships would be particularly useful for bridge projects, which often involve a number of jurisdictions.

Application Information

Project proposals are submitted to the MDOC every two years. Applications are due in May in the year preceding the legislative year. MDOC staff reviews the proposals in a two step process. The first step ranks project applications based on program criteria. In the second stage of review, applications are evaluated based upon the applicant's ability to borrow funds or otherwise finance the project without the use of TSEP funds. This evaluation is based on the premise that applicants should receive grant funds only to the extent that they cannot afford to finance their projects



without TSEP funds. It is clear that the municipality should evaluate the feasibility of using all other available funding sources as a preliminary step to seeking TSEP funding. The Governor reviews the information prepared by the MDOC staff and submits his recommendations to the Legislature, which makes the final decision on funding awards. *Contact:* the TSEP staff in Helena at (406) 444-3757 or write to the Treasure State Endowment Program, Montana Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 200501, 1424 Ninth Avenue, Helena, MT 59620-0501.

2. Montana State Revolving Loan Fund (SRF)

The SRF provides loans for water pollution control systems, wastewater systems, and non-point source control projects. Eligible applicants include counties, municipalities, other legally authorized public bodies, water/sewer districts, and authorized tribal organizations. Planning funds are also available.

Allocation and Matching Requirements

Funds are made available in the form of loans for 100 percent of project costs. There is no local matching requirement. Loans must be repaid over a period of 20 years or less.

Application Information

Applications may be submitted at any time in a continuous cycle.
Contact: DEQ, Helena (406) 444-5322.

3. Renewable Resources Grant and Loan Program

This program provides loans and grants for water and wastewater projects including feasibility, construction, rehabilitation, and for other renewable resource-related projects. Eligible applicants include local governments, water and sewer districts, irrigation districts, conservation districts, school districts, state agencies, and private entities.

Allocation and Matching Requirements

Up to \$100,000 is available for grants and up to \$200,000 for grant/loan combinations. Loans are limited by the ability of the borrower to repay. No local match is required, but local-matching funds can improve a project's ranking.

Application Information

Applications are due on May 15th of even numbered years.
Contact: DNRC in Helena, (406) 444-6668.



4. Water and Waste Water Disposal Loans and Grants (U.S. Rural Economic and Community Development Agency)

This program provides grants and loans for the construction, repair, and expansion of water and wastewater systems.

Allocation and Matching Requirements

Projects may receive up to 75 percent of total project costs in grants and no maximum for loans.

Application Information

Applications may be submitted any time in a continuous cycle. *Contact:* RECD in Bozeman, (406) 585-2520.

5. The Montana Intercap Program ~ Montana Board of Investments

The Montana Intercap program is administered by the Montana Board of Investments (MBI) and provides loans to local governments for a variety of public projects.

Allocations and Matching Requirements

Up to \$500,000 can be made available for each project. The program provides loans at a variable rate plus a one percent loan origination fee on loans over one year and for a term of 5 or 10 years depending on the borrower's legal authority. Short-term loans of less than a year are also available. Interest and principal payments are due bi-annually (February 15 and August 15 of each year). Loans may be pre-paid without penalty with 30 days notice. Types of financing include installment purchase loans, general fund loans, general obligation bonds, revenue bonds, SID bonds, and rural improvement district bonds. Gas tax revenues may not be used to service debt. Projects that will use SID payments to cover the annual debt are limited to a total loan of \$300,000. Intercap funds may be used in association with other grant and loan programs as well as local sources.

Eligibility and Planning Considerations

Intercap loans can also be used to cover preliminary engineering costs. Preliminary engineering studies are those, which are conducted by a professional consulting, engineer. Funds may not be used for studies conducted by municipality personnel. Many funding programs require preliminary engineering studies for funding applications. Intercap loan funds can offer a municipality a reasonable alternative for financing these engineering studies.

Application Information

Monies are continuously available and applications are accepted at any time. *Contact:* MBI at (406) 444-0001 or in writing at 555 Fuller Avenue, Helena, MT 59620



6. Public Facilities Community Development Block Grants ~ MDOC

Authorization

Montana's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program is a federally-funded competitive grant program designed to help communities of less than 50,000, and is aimed at benefiting low and moderate income persons. Grants are administered by the Montana Department of Commerce (MDOC) and awarded in three categories including economic development, housing and community revitalization, and public facilities.

Allocations and Matching Requirements

CDBG grant awards for public facilities projects may not exceed \$400,000 and are most often used in combination with other federal, state, or local funds to make public improvements. The program requires that applicants provide at least 25 percent local match.

Eligibility and Planning Considerations

Eligible applicants are limited to general purpose local governments, cities, and towns with less than 50,000 people, and counties. Municipalities may apply for a project, which will include activities within the jurisdiction of an incorporated city or town if the proposed activity will benefit all municipality residents.

Application Information

Each CDBG project proposal must demonstrate that at least 51 percent of the project's principal beneficiaries will be low and moderate income persons. Applications for public facilities funding are submitted to the MDOC in May of each year. Information regarding applications and application deadlines is available by contacting MDOC (see below). Applicants should initially review potential projects with the MDOC staff to determine their eligibility under program guidelines. Proposed projects must be selected through a community-wide need assessment, which incorporates a strong public participation component. *Contact:* The Community Development office of the MDOC at (406)444-2488 or write to the Community Development Block Grant Program, Montana Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 200501, 1424 Ninth Avenue, Helena, MT 59620-0501.

7. Public Works Program ~ Economic Development Administration

Authorization

The Economic Development Administration (EDA) is an agency within the U.S. Department of Commerce. The purpose of the public works program is to assist communities with the funding of public works and development facilities that contribute to the creation or retention of private sector jobs and to the alleviation of unemployment and underemployment. Such assistance is designed to help communities achieve lasting improvement by stabilizing and diversifying local economies, and improving local living conditions and the economic environment of the area.



Allocations and Matching Requirements

Grants are awarded up to a participation level of 80 percent but the average EDA grant covers approximately 50 percent of project costs. Acceptable sources of match include cash, local general obligation or revenue bonds, Community Development Block Grants, TSEP grants and loans, entitlement funds, rural development loans, and other public and private financing, including donations.

Eligibility and Planning Considerations

Projects *must* result in private sector job and business development in order to be considered for funding. Eligible applicants under this program include any state, or political subdivision thereof, Indian tribe (and other U.S. political entities), private or public nonprofit organization or association representing any redevelopment area if the project is within an EDA-designated redevelopment area. Redevelopment areas, other than those designated under the Public Works Impact Program must have a current EDA-approved Overall Economic Development Program (OEDP) in place.

Application Information

Applications are accepted on an annual-open cycle. The program does not set specific project funding limits. *Contact:* Montana Economic Development Representative at 406-441-1175 or write to the Economic Development Administration, P.O. Box 10074, Federal Building, Helena, MT 59626 for more specific information.

8. Federal Emergency Management Agency Funds

Authorization

In the event of emergencies that affect infrastructure, the federal government provides relief through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Allocations and Matching Requirements

FEMA dollars are for unanticipated needs that result from disasters and emergencies and are typically not included in a municipality's financial planning process.

Eligibility and Planning Considerations

FEMA personnel are dispatched to the site of the disaster and are responsible for addressing all elements of repair or replacement as required. They assess the damage, hire the necessary professional consultants, prepare engineering analyses, bid projects, and manage contracts.

Application Information

Contact the FEMA regional office in Denver, Colorado. Phone: 303-235-4830. Address: Federal Emergency Management Agency, Denver Federal Center, Building 710, P.O. Box 52267, Denver, CO 80225.



II. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT REDEVELOPMENT FINANCING

A. Local Mechanisms

1. Business Improvement Districts

Section 7-12-1101, MCA provides for the creation of business improvement districts (BID's). BID's may be established upon receipt of a petition signed by the owners of more than 60 percent of the area of property proposed in the petition to be included in a district. Once created, a BID is governed by a board of trustees of no less than five and no more than seven persons, appointed by the local governing body. The board is responsible for setting an annual budget and work plan and developing a method of assessment which may include calculations based on area, lot taxable valuation, and/or square footage options. Costs, which may be covered by a BID, include:

- Management and operating personnel
- Special police, maintenance or cleaning personnel
- Landscaping, beautification, and maintenance of public areas
- Contracts with the local governing body to maintain, operate, or repair public parking facilities
- Contracts with the local governing body to maintain streets, alleys, malls, bridges, ramps, tunnels, landscaping, and other public facilities
- Promotion of private business investment and expansion
- Promotion of business activity including advertising, decorating, and events management.

2. Tax Increment Financing Districts

Under the Montana Urban Renewal Law (§ 7-15-4201, MCA), communities may establish tax increment financing districts for the purposes of revitalizing blighted neighborhoods, central business districts, and infrastructure-deficient industrial areas. tax increment financing (TIF) simply means that new property tax dollars resulting from increases in the market value of real property may be directed to the area where the real property is located. The base property tax (before any improvements to real property) continues to be distributed to the local government and school districts. However, tax dollars which accrue from increases in property values (from rehabilitation, new construction, etc.) are available for reinvestment. A TIF program is authorized for 15 years or longer if the TIF revenue is pledged to the payment of TIF bonds.* A municipality must identify the specific geographic area where the program will be implemented. Funds may be used to finance infrastructure within TIF areas. In the case of industrial infrastructure district, funds may also be used to connect districts to other resources. TIF programs depend on substantial investment in property but can work in rural communities that are experiencing some growth.

The use of TIF is restricted to "municipalities" or incorporated areas including consolidated city-county governments. However, as counties are responsible for all off-system bridges, including those that are located in cities and towns, TIF may offer



some local funding for bridge repair or reconstruction if the city, town council, or urban renewal agency approves the use of TIF funds for bridge improvements. In addition, if a bridge is historic or offers additional recreational opportunities (e.g. for pedestrian or cyclists), the city might provide TIF funds for improvements as part of their community revitalization program.

*Note – TIF revenues may be used to retire tax increment revenue bonds *or* can be used to finance revitalization projects directly.

B. State and Federal Mechanisms

1. Community Development Block Grants for Economic Development ~ Montana Department of Commerce

Authorization

Montana's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program is a federally-funded competitive grant program designed to help communities of less than 50,000, and is aimed at benefiting low and moderate income persons. Grants are administered by the MDOC and awarded in three categories including economic development, housing and community revitalization, and public facilities. Eligible applicants for economic development awards are local governments, which in turn lend funds to for-profit businesses that agree to create jobs for low and moderate income persons.

Allocations and Matching Requirements

The maximum funding for economic development is \$400,000 per local government in a program year. Applications are accepted on a continuous basis depending on available funding. The applicant business must prepare a business plan and meet certain thresholds, including providing a dollar to dollar match.

Contact: MDOC, Helena, (406) 444-1759.

2. CDBG Economic Development Technical Assistance Grants

The state of Montana makes a total of \$150,000 available to local governments or local nonprofit community development corporations to provide technical assistance, rural outreach, and training in associated with business counseling and lending activity. *Contact:* MDOC, Helena, (406) 444-1759.



III. HOUSING FINANCING

A. State and Federal Mechanisms

1. CDBG – Community Development Block Grants

Montana's CDBG Program is a federally-funded competitive grant program designed to help communities of less than 50,000, and is aimed at benefiting low and moderate income persons. Grants are administered by the MDOC and awarded in three categories including economic development, housing and community revitalization, and public facilities. Eligible activities include:

- Rehabilitation of substandard housing
- Supporting the construction of new permanent, long-term affordable housing for low and moderate-income families when a local nonprofit organization sponsors the project
- Acquiring, clearing, or rehabilitating sites or structures for use or for resale for new housing
- Converting existing nonresidential structures for residential use
- Home buyer assistance for low and moderate-income persons
- Demolition of vacant, deteriorated housing units with the intent of making the site available for new housing construction
- Providing site improvements or public facilities to publicly-owned land or land owned by as nonprofit organization to be used or sold for new housing
- Complementary community revitalization activities such as clean up campaigns, removal of dilapidated, vacant buildings, improving or constructing sidewalks, streets, street lighting, or neighborhood parks or playgrounds.

Allocations and Matching Requirements

CDBG grant awards for housing projects may not exceed \$500,000 and have no matching requirements.

Eligibility and Planning Considerations

Eligible applicants are limited to general purpose local governments, cities and towns with less than 50,000 people, and counties. Local governments may apply on behalf of private businesses, private nonprofit corporations, or special purpose governmental agencies.

Application Information

Each CDBG project proposal must demonstrate that at least 51 percent of the project's principal beneficiaries will be low and moderate income persons. Program allocations are made annually. *Contact:* the Montana CDBG staff, Helena, (406) 444-2488.



2. Montana Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME)

The HOME program was created by the National Affordable Housing Act of 1990 to expand the supply of decent and affordable housing for low and very low income Montanans. Eligible activities include acquisition, new construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, tenant based rental assistance, home buyer assistance, and transitional housing and single room occupancy units. Eligible applicants include units of local governments and community housing development organizations. *Contact:* Montana Department of Commerce – Home Investment Partnerships Program, Helena, (406) 444-9774.

3. Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program

This program provides a tax credit to owners of qualifying rental housing which meets certain low-income occupancy and rent limitation requirements. Eligible applicants include governmental entities, non-profit entities, and for-profit developers. *Contact:* MBOH, Helena, (406) 444-4688.

4. Multifamily Risk Sharing Program and the Multifamily General Obligation Program

These programs provide permanent mortgage financing for affordable rental housing which meets certain low-income occupancy and rent limitation requirements. Eligible applicants include governmental entities, non-profit entities, and for-profit developers. *Contact:* MBOH, Helena, (406) 444-4688.

5. Single Family Set-A-Side Program

The MBOH has loan prepayments that it can use to purchase FHA insured or VA and RD guaranteed mortgage loans for affordable homes. Innovative techniques in planning, construction, and building design are encouraged. Eligible applicants include governmental entities, non-profit entities and for profit developers. *Contact:* MBOH, Helena, (406) 444-4688.

6. Housing Preservation Grants

Housing Preservation Grants are partnered with housing authorities and/or public bodies for the purpose of rehabilitating single or multi-family units, which are occupied by very low to low income rural persons. *Contact:* USDA Rural Development – Rural Housing Service, Bozeman, (406) 585-2565.

7. Rural Rental Housing 515 Program

This program provides eligible low and very low income persons with economically designed and constructed rental facilities suited to their living requirements. *Contact:* USDA Rural Development – Rural Housing Service, Bozeman, (406) 585-2565.

8. Farm Labor Housing 514 & 516 Program

This program provides loans and grants to finance construction of on- and off-site housing for farm laborers and their families. *Contact:* USDA Rural Development – Rural Housing Service, Bozeman, (406) 585-2565.



9. Section 538 – Guaranteed Rural Rental Housing Program

This program is aimed at those rural residents with low to moderate incomes that are not being served under the 515 program. Eligible applicants include nonprofit corporations, public bodies, and for-profit organizations. *Contact:* USDA Rural Development – Rural Housing Service, Bozeman, (406) 585-2565.

10. Community Facilities Loan and Grant Program

This program assists local governments, nonprofit corporations, and Indian Tribes finance essential facilities such as assisted living centers and group homes. *Contact:* USDA Rural Development – Rural Housing Service, Bozeman, (406) 585-2565.

IV. HERITAGE, RECREATION AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT FINANCING

A. Local Mechanisms

1. Property Tax Abatement Program

In 1989, Montana established a property tax abatement program for the restoration, rehabilitation, and expansion of certified residential and commercial properties listed on the NRHP or located in a National Register District. For up to five years following completion of the construction, the property may receive a tax abatement up to a total of 100 percent of taxes due to the increased value of the property. The tax abatement is only for mills levied for local government and school districts. Local governments establish their own tax abatement program.

2. Mill Levy for Museums

Under § 7-16-2205, MCA, Montana law permits a county government to impose a mill levy for any museum, facility for the arts or collection of exhibits, subject to the provisions of § 15-10-420, MCA. Funds can be used for operations, capital improvements, and program development. *Contact:* The Montana Arts Council, Helena, (406) 444-6514

B. State and Federal Mechanisms

1. Tourism Infrastructure Investment Program

Travel Montana provides grants to tourism-related non-profit groups for construction and rehabilitation of tourism and recreation attractions and historic sites; purchasing new and/or existing tourism and recreation attractions and historic sites; or artifacts and equipment purchased for a specific tourism project operation. Applications are due August 1st of each year. *Contact:* Travel Montana, Helena (406) 444-2654.

2. Community Transportation Enhancement Program (CTEP)

The Montana Department of Transportation makes funds available for projects under the National Intermodal Surface Transportation and Efficiency Act. The Act provides for 10 percent of all surface transportation funds to be used for enhancement projects



including historic preservation. Funds are awarded through local governments on a per capita basis. *Contact:* MDT, Helena, (406) 444-6201

3. Resource Indemnity Trust

The Montana Department of Natural Resources makes grants from mining severance taxes to historic preservation projects that emphasize renewable resource management and community development. *Contact:* DNRC (406) 444-6700

4. Federal Tax Credits for Historic Preservation

The Tax Reform Act of 1986 permits a building owner or long term lessee to elect a 20 percent tax credit on qualified rehabilitation expenditures incurred after January 1, 1987 in connection with a certified rehabilitation. A tax credit provides the property owner with a reduction on his or her federal income tax due. In order to be eligible for the credit, buildings must be used for income producing purposes including industrial, commercial or rental residential uses. The building must be listed individually on the NRHP, be a part of a National Register district or be under consideration in a pending nomination. *Contact:* SHPO, Helena, (406) 444-7715.

5. Certified Local Government Program

The Certified Local Government Program is a partnership program between state and local governments, whereby the SHPO provides preservation and planning assistance. Assistance is in the form of matching funds for local preservation programs. *Contact:* SHPO, Helena, (406) 444-7715.

6. National Trust for Historic Preservation

The trust provides funding for historic preservation projects through a variety of loan and grant programs. *Contact:* The National Trust for Historic Preservation, Mountain/Plains Regional Office, 910 16th Street, Suite 1100, Denver, CO 80202, (30) 623-1504.

7. Montana Cultural Trust

A portion of the interest earned in the investment of the coal tax revenue is available for projects in the arts and historic preservation for operations, capital, special projects and endowment development. Applications are reviewed during the summer prior to each Montana legislative session. *Contact:* The Montana Arts Council in Helena at (406) 444-6514 or the Montana Historical Society (406) 444-2694.

8. Montana Arts Council

The Montana Arts Council administers grant funds (in conjunction with the National Endowment for the Arts -- NEA) for cultural resources planning and to sponsor activities and events. The NEA also supports projects in the field of art and architecture and provides supports the activities of local art agencies. *Contact:* The Montana Arts Council in Helena, (406) 444-6514.



9. Montana Committee for the Humanities

The Montana Committee for the Humanities provides funding for historic and prehistoric surveys, for public forums on a variety of issues, for research, and oral history. The Committee also makes funds available for special speakers and conferences. *Contact:* The Montana Committee for the Humanities, Missoula (406) 243-6022.

10. Private Foundation Grants

Private foundation grants are available to non-profit organizations and local governments (in some cases) for projects, which advance community cultural, historic, and heritage resources. A variety of publications and on-line resources provide information on individual foundation programs.

V. PLANNING ASSISTANCE

A. State and Federal Mechanisms

Planning assistance for engineering costs and other consulting fees associated with capital improvements project is available through the capital facilities grants programs mentioned above. In addition, other types of planning funds are available from a variety of sources including the following entities:

1. The Economic Development Administration (EDA)

The EDA provides funds for technical assistance and planning grants for projects, which result in the creation of new employment. Planning grants usually average about \$25,000 and require a small cash match. *Contact:* EDA Office, Federal Building, Helena, MT (406) 449-5074.

2. CDBG – Technical Assistance Matching Grants – Montana Department of Commerce

The Montana Department of Commerce provides planning grants of up to \$10,000 for affordable housing, capital improvements planning, comprehensive planning, and economic development planning. *Contact:* Montana Department of Commerce, Helena, MT (406) 444-2488

3. Federal Home Loan Bank of Seattle – Community Lending Services

The Federal Home Loan Bank of Seattle provides planning grants of up to \$10,000 for affordable housing, economic development, and neighborhood revitalization. *Contact:* The Federal Home Loan Bank of Seattle, 1501 Fourth Avenue, Seattle, WA 98101 206-340-8737



10.0 Special Requirements Under MCA § 76-1-601

Chapter Ten addresses several additional requirements set out by Montana statute. The chapter describes how the city of Polson will cooperate with other jurisdictions in order to identify common interests and jointly address areas of concern. A timeline for implementing the growth policy and for the review and revision of this document is also discussed. Finally, the chapter addresses the subdivision review process and explains the procedure for subdivision review hearings.

10.1 Implementation of the Growth Policy

Implementation of this growth policy is guided by §§ 76-1-602 through 76-1-604 of the Montana Code. In accordance with these sections, the city of Polson held a number of public meetings and a formal public hearing as detailed below:

The city of Polson held its first public meeting on the growth policy on January 27th, 2005. The purpose of the meeting was to invite the community to help identify what they value and what issues and concerns should be addressed through the policy. Forty-two citizens attended the meeting, which was facilitated by HKM Engineering, the consultant team hired by the city of Polson. Following a presentation about the planning process, participants were asked to write down and then share those things they value about Polson as well as their concerns regarding its future.

On June 7th and 8th, 2005, HKM Engineering conducted working group meetings with more than twenty members of the city and county staff, the Polson City Council, the City / County Planning Board, the Polson Chamber of Commerce, and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. Meeting attendees were asked to review and critique research conducted on Polson's existing conditions.

The city of Polson held a second public meeting on July 7th, 2005. The purpose of the meeting was to review Polson's existing conditions and trends and to identify the community's goals and objectives in order to provide a framework for guiding positive growth. More than twenty-five citizens attended the meeting. Following a brief overview of existing conditions in Polson, meeting attendees were invited to discuss goals and objectives covering a variety of topic



areas relating to Polson's future growth. A revised set of goals and objectives formulated through public comment and input from working groups was circulated to the list of meeting attendees. No public comments were received regarding these revised goals and objectives.

On November 11, 2005, HKM Engineering presented a general overview of the planning process to more than twenty-five members of the Polson Business Community. Meeting attendees were invited to comment on the goals, objectives, and implementation strategies formulated through previous public comment and input from working groups.

The city of Polson held a third public meeting on November 17, 2005. Following a brief presentation, meeting attendees were invited to review and critique the goals, objectives, and implementation strategies formulated through previous public comment and input from working groups.

The city of Polson held a public comment period for public review of the Draft Polson Growth Policy. The comment period was originally set for December 15, 2005 through January 15, 2006, but was extended through January 31, 2006. During this period, the public was invited to formally comment on the Draft Polson Growth Policy. Nearly thirty citizens submitted written comments. These comments are contained in the Appendix.

The city of Polson issued legal notice regarding a City / County Planning Board (CCPB) public meeting on April 5, 2006. Twelve members of the public signed in, but more than this number were in attendance. HKM Engineering provided a brief overview of the growth policy planning process. Following public comment, the CCPB voted unanimously to recommend adoption of the growth policy, with the correction of typographical errors and errors of fact.

The city of Polson issued legal notice and held a public hearing regarding the final Polson Growth Policy on _____. The City Council voted to adopt the Polson Growth Policy.

10.2 Growth Policy Review and Revision

This growth policy is intended to help guide present and future development in the city of Polson. Regular evaluation of the growth policy will help ensure that the information upon which the plan is based is accurate and timely and that the goals and objectives of the plan still reflect the desires of the community. Section 76-1-601(3)(f) of the Montana Code requires governing bodies to prepare a timetable for review of a growth policy to be completed at least every five



years. In accordance with this requirement, the following general guidelines will direct the review and revision of the Polson Growth Policy.

Table 10-1 Timetable for Review of Polson Growth Policy					
	2007-2008	2009-2010	2011-2012	2013-2014	2015-2016
Review and update goals, objectives, strategies, and implementation timetable.	X	X	X	X	
Review/update existing conditions/key findings.			X		
Full Update of Plan.					X

An informal review of the growth policy will occur on an annual basis. Minor changes to the Policy may be made by city staff at this time, including changes to the goals, objectives, strategies, and implementation timeframe. A more extensive review will be undertaken by the City Council, the Polson City / County Planning Board, and the Lake County Board of Commissioners (BOCC) every five years in order to ensure that the policy contains accurate information. Revision of outdated sections will be performed as appropriate. During the five-year review, the following questions will be addressed:

- Are the community’s goals current and valid?
- Have circumstances, information, or assumptions materially changed?
- Does the plan appear to be meeting the current needs of the community?

The growth policy should be rewritten in its entirety every ten years, depending upon whether the policy still accurately reflects the community’s situation and needs.

In addition to the above timetable, significant changes in Polson’s existing conditions will trigger a review of the growth policy before the five-year review. The following list describes various conditions under which a full revision of the growth policy should be performed:

- A significant change in city population or geographic area in a single year.
- A significant change in economic conditions.
- Major impacts to the natural environment.
- Major impacts to city infrastructure.



- Major changes in city government form or services

10.3 Interjurisdictional Coordination and Cooperation

As required under § 76-1-601(3)(g) of the Montana Code, the city of Polson will coordinate on matters relating to the growth policy with neighboring jurisdictions, including Lake County, the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, the state of Montana, various federal agencies, and private agencies and organizations. Most issues of concern facing Polson extend beyond the city boundaries. Many issues may not be adequately addressed if only one party undertakes the effort. It is therefore important for city officials to work cooperatively with other governmental and private organizations in order to identify common interests and jointly address areas of concern. Areas where multi-jurisdictional coordination and cooperation is particularly important include fiscal, land use, transportation, public facilities, and natural resources planning. The city and county have established a joint planning board with regularly scheduled meetings. The city of Polson also has a strong working relationship with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. Additional opportunities should be explored to further cooperation on technical and policy levels. Such coordination could be facilitated through the use of inter-local agreements that establish fixed procedures or mechanisms for coordination.

10.4 Development, Maintenance, and Replacement of Public Infrastructure

This growth policy discusses needed capital improvements in general terms. A much more detailed capital improvements plan (CIP) and capital budget should be prepared as a means to implement the growth policy's public facilities element. The CIP should address the funding and scheduling of specific improvements, typically over a five-year period. The city of Polson should set up a committee to develop the CIP and advise the governing body on the capital budget.

At a minimum the CIP should contain:

1. A list of needed capital improvement projects for all of the public facilities managed by the city of Polson,



2. Prioritization of the improvement projects,
3. Potential and recommended funding sources to pay for each project, and
4. A general timetable for the funding and construction of each project.

10.5 Subdivision Review

State and local subdivision statutes regulate the process of dividing land and providing public facilities and services to the newly-created lots. The platting and creation of lots establishes long term patterns of land use for the community. Proper public review of proposed land division is therefore vital.

The Montana Subdivision and Platting Act requires all units of local government to adopt and enforce subdivision regulations and to review and decide on development proposals. Local officials must also issue written findings of fact that consider the effect the proposed subdivision development would have on a series of criteria set forth in § 76-3-608, (3) (a), of the Montana Code Annotated (MCA). These include agriculture, agricultural water user facilities, the natural environment, wildlife and wildlife habitat, local services, and public health and safety. This section of the Polson Growth Policy addresses the requirements of this statute.

Review Criteria Definitions

1. Agriculture

Agriculture is defined as the use of land for growing, raising, or marketing of plants or animals to produce food, feed, and fiber commodities. Examples of agricultural activities include cultivation and tillage of soil; dairying; growing, and harvesting of agricultural or horticultural commodities; and the raising or tending of animals for commercial sale or use. Agriculture does not include gardening for personal use, keeping of house pets, or landscaping for aesthetic purposes. Agricultural land includes land currently used for agriculture or having a soil type defined by the Natural Resource Conservation Service as having agricultural importance.

2. Agricultural Water User Facilities

Agricultural water user facilities are defined as those facilities which provide water for agricultural land or which provide water for the production of agricultural product and include, but are not limited to, ditches, pipes, canals, and other water conveying facilities.



3. Local Services

Local services are defined as all services provided by governmental bodies for the benefit of citizens. These services include, but are not limited to, law enforcement, fire protection, water supply, recreation, transportation systems, parks, libraries, schools, and the collection and disposal of wastewater and solid waste.

4. The Natural Environment

The natural environment is defined as the physical conditions which exist within a given area, including land, air, surface and ground water, geology, soils, flora and fauna, and objects of historic, prehistoric, or aesthetic significance.

5. Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat

Wildlife is defined as animals existing in their natural environment that are neither human, domesticated, nor feral descendants of commonly domesticated animals. Wildlife habitat is defined as areas containing features essential to wildlife for feeding and forage, cover, migration, breeding, rearing, nesting, or buffers areas.

6. Public Health and Safety

Public health and safety is defined as a condition of optimal well-being, free from danger, risk or injury for a community at large, not merely for a specific individual or a small group of persons.

Evaluation Methodology

The city of Polson may require that subdivisions be designed to reasonably minimize potentially significant adverse impacts identified through the evaluation of a subdivision proposal against the above review criteria. Accordingly, the city of Polson will evaluate and make decisions regarding proposed subdivisions with respect to the criteria identified in § 76-3-608 (3) (a), MCA as follows:

Subdivision applications shall include written documentation as to whether and to what extent the proposed subdivision will impact agricultural, agriculture water user facilities, local services, natural environment, wildlife, wildlife habitat, and public health and safety, as defined in this growth policy.

The Polson City / County Planning Board will evaluate each proposed subdivision with respect to the criteria set forth in § 76-3-608 (3) (a), MCA, and as defined in this growth policy. The evaluation will be based upon the extent of any and all expected impacts to each of the elements, and the degree to which the applicant proposes to mitigate any adverse impacts. The relative value of each criteria and the significance of potential impacts will be weighed in the



context of the goals and objectives expressed in this Policy.

Upon completion of its review and evaluation, the Polson City Council shall render a decision on the proposed subdivision with respect to the requirements of the subdivision regulations of the city of Polson, the outcome of the public hearing(s) and the Polson Growth Policy. In certain circumstances, unmitigated impacts resulting from a proposed development may be unacceptable and may preclude approval under the subdivision review process.

10.6 Public Hearings

The city of Polson's subdivision permit procedure is designed to implement § 76-3-501, MCA, et seq. and ensure that subdivisions comply with the Polson Growth Policy and the *Polson Development Code* regulations, which require that subdivision development be accompanied by the installation of necessary on- and off-site public facilities, and be compatible with neighboring land uses and the landscape setting.

It is important that members of the public be afforded an opportunity to offer comments during the subdivision review process. This opportunity is formally provided by the public hearing process required by state law. The Polson City / County Planning Board shall conduct a hearing on the proposed subdivision following the procedures established below. At that hearing, the board shall determine whether the proposed subdivision is in compliance with the Polson Growth Policy and the *Polson Development Code* regulations. If the board finds that it complies, it shall recommend approval of the application by the City Council and the Lake County Board of Commissioners (BOCC). If the board finds that the proposed subdivision fails to comply, it shall recommend rejection of the application by the City Council and BOCC. Conditions may be attached to a recommended approval, as provided in II.M.

The following procedures shall govern all public hearings before the Polson City / County Planning Board, the Polson City Council and the Lake County Board of Commissioners (BOCC):

1. The public hearing shall be advertised as required by state law and the *Polson Development Code* regulations.
2. The presiding officer shall announce the purpose and subject of the hearing.



3. The presiding officer shall determine whether proper notice of the hearing has been provided. If proper notice has not been provided, the hearing shall be re-scheduled.
4. The presiding officer shall ask if any member wishes to declare a conflict of interest in the matter to be heard, and excuse anyone who declares such a conflict from participation in the hearing.
5. The presiding officer shall ask the administrator to present a report on the proposal being considered.
6. The presiding officer shall direct questions from members to the administrator. Questions asked at this time shall be solely for the purpose of clarifying the location and nature of the proposed development.
7. The presiding officer shall remind those present that all statements given must address the merits of the proposed development as measured by its compliance or lack of compliance with the plan and these regulations.
8. The presiding officer shall request a statement from the developer or a representative, or in appeals hearings, the appellant or a representative. Members may ask questions following this statement, with all questions and replies directed through the presiding officer.
9. Following the statement of the developer or appellant, the presiding officer shall ask for statements from the public. Anyone giving a statement shall begin by stating his or her name and mailing address. Members may ask questions following this statement, with all questions and replies being through the presiding officer.
10. When all statements have been given, the presiding officer shall ask if anyone who gave a statement wishes to speak in rebuttal to other statements or clarify his or her statement. Questions from members may follow each rebuttal or clarification.
11. The presiding officer shall close the public hearing and call for discussion, resulting in action, as provided by these regulations.
12. Written statements, plans, photographs, and other materials offered in support of statements at a hearing are part of the hearing record and shall be retained by the city.

The following additional hearing procedures may be used, without prior notice, to facilitate conduct of large or controversial hearings:

1. In order to allow everyone an opportunity to speak and ensure completion of the agenda, time limits may be imposed on the statements given.



2. Any person who wishes to make a statement may be required to register his/her intention to do so with the administrator before the hearing. The presiding officer shall then use the register to call upon persons to present their statements.

Because recent court decisions have held that public meetings that extend late into the night are not accessible to the general public, the Polson City / County Planning Board shall place time limits on public meetings and identify the procedures by which public meetings will be continued.



11.0 References

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Personal Interviews

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3. Interview with Randy Ashley, Tribal Air Quality Program Manager, May 9, 2005.
4. Interview with Larry Bain, CenturyTel District Representative, May 2, 2005.
5. Interview with Greg Bennet, Lake County Weed Control Program, May 6, 2005.
6. Interview with Sharon Bergman, Director, Polson Senior Center, June 2, 2005.
7. Interview with Lester Big Crain, Tribal Department of Natural Resources, May 16, 2005.
8. Interview with Blackfoot Communications Representative, April 28, 2005.
9. Interview with Kelly Blevins, Lake County Fair Board, May 10, 2005.
10. Interview with Bresnan Communications Representative, April 28, 2005.
11. Interview with Tim Brester, Polson Emergency Services, May 27, 2005.
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43. Interview with Lee Manicke, Polson Planning Board, January 26, 2005.
44. Interview with Sue McCormick, Superintendent of Public Schools, April 14, 2005.
45. Interview with Ron Melvin, Superintendent, Polson Building Department, January 27, 2005.
46. Interview with Jack Mitchell, President, Polson Senior Center, April 26, 2005.
47. Interview with Montana Highway Patrol, Kalispell District Office Representative, May 2, 2005.
48. Interview with Montana Rail Link Representative, April 27, 2005 and June 22, 2005.
49. Interview with Damon Murdo, Cultural Records Manager, Montana Historical Society, State Historic Preservation Office, May 9, 2005.
50. Interview with Mark Nelson, Program Manager for Lake County Solid Waste Management District, April 22, 2005, June 8, 2005.
51. Interview with Matt Olson, Golf Shop Manager /Special Event Coordinator, April 26, 2005.
52. Interview with Mike Pierre, Director, Tribal Elders Program, June 16, 2005.
53. Interview with Polson Airport Representative, April 26, 2005.
54. Interview with Polson City Clerk, April 28, 2005.
55. Interview with Tony Porrazzo, Superintendent, Polson Water and Sewer Department, January 27, 2005, April 25, 2005, June 8, 2005, June 14, 2005.
56. Interview with Rimrock Trailways Representative, April 26, 2005.
57. Interview with Karen Sargeant, Superintendent, Polson Parks Department, April 29, 2005.
58. Interview with Sue Shannon, Director, Lake County Planning Office, January 27, 2005.
59. Interview with SKC-Compuplus Representative, April 28, 2005.
60. Interview with Bob Smith, Lake County Road and Bridge Department, April 28, 2005.
61. Interview with South Lake Taxi Representative, April 26, 2005.
62. Interview with Marilyn Trospen, Director, Polson Library, April 15, 2005.
63. Interview with Dick Turner, Bureau Chief, MDT Multi-Modal Planning Department, April 25 and 27, 2005.
64. Interview with Joyce Weaver, Director, Polson Planning Department, January 26, 2005.
65. Interview with Dan Webster, Director, SKC Transportation Department, June 15, 2005.
66. Interview with Paula Webster, Tribal Water Quality Program, May 10, 2005.
67. Interview with Jay Weiner, Legal Counsel for Reserved Water Rights Compact Commission, May 13, 2005.
68. Interview with Shelly Wheeler, Polson Police Clerk, May 17, 2005.
69. Interview with Gordon Wind, Safety of Dams Office, May 11, 2005.
70. Interview with Don Wood, Lake County Department of Environment and Health, May 13, 2005.



Internet Resources

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2. City of Polson website, www.cityofpolson.com.
3. Confederated Salish-Kootenai Tribal website, www.cskt.org/, accessed May 2005.
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5. DPHHS website, www.dphhs.mt.gov/index.shtml, accessed June 2005.
6. EPA website, Groundwater Primer, www.epa.gov/seahome/groundwater/src/ground.htm, accessed May 2005.
7. EPA website, Safe Drinking Water Information System, <http://www.epa.gov/enviro/html/sdwis/index.html>, accessed May 2005.
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22. Montana Public Service Commission website, www.psc.state.mt.us/Consumers/telecom/, accessed April 2005.
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25. National Inventory of Dams website, <http://crunch.tec.army.mil/nid/webpages/nid.cfm>, accessed May 2005.
26. Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) website, <http://soildatamart.nrcs.usda.gov/County.aspx?State=MT>, accessed May 2005.
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30. NRIS website, DNRC Water Right Query System, <http://nris.state.mt.us/dnrc/waterrights/default.aspx>, accessed May 2005.



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34. Polson Golf Course website, www.cityofpolson.com/golf.asp, accessed April 2005.
35. PPL Montana Hydro website, www.pplweb.com/ppl+generation/hydro+plants/ppl+montana+hydro.htm, accessed June 14, 2005
36. Saint Joseph Medical Center website, www.saintjoes.org.
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Appendix

Public Comments

December 15, 2005 - January 31, 2006



Polson Growth Policy - 2006

From: Ellen Achenbaugh
Sent: Monday, January 30, 2006 11:22 PM
To: snicolai@hkminc.com
Subject: Comments on the Polson Growth Policy 2005 Draft
Attachments: Polson Growth Policy 2005 Draft.doc

I tried to put this in the body of the email but I could only put it in as an attachment. Please let me know if you can not open the attachment. I tested it here and I was able to open it.

After I finished this I thought I probably should be sending this to the City Council. What I wrote will probably not effect your policy. If you have an email for Polson City Council I would appreciate you sending it to them otherwise I will try and get it tomorrow and send them a copy. Please let me know.

I hope Council will consider what I have written.

Thank you,

Ellen Achenbaugh

1/31/2006



Polson Growth Policy 2005 Draft

I just found out about the web site hkminc.com/Polson/Default.asp. I have been reading it most of the day and night 27 January. The site is very difficult to get through as it is very slow and you sometimes have to close it and start over. I have run copies of some of the information in hopes to be able to digest it better be able to make some intelligent and constructive comments.

I don't have much time to get my comments in to you so I am going to just have to touch on what I can.

4.2 Overview: Paragraph 2 of the draft indicates; while tourism constitutes a significant part of the economic base in Polson, the area has become increasingly dependent on residential real estate development, particularly in the last five years.

If tourism is a significant part of the economic base why would you want to re-route highway 93 around Polson? I am sure you know the repercussions of other towns doing just that. How many travelers do you think will turn around and go back through town unless they have previously traveled through the area and want to stop for a specific reason? People stop because of what they see as they are traveling through a town.

I know this is on hold but I am hoping it is rejected.

I agree traffic is horrible during the tourist season but if it is that important to the economy of Polson then the town's people including myself will just have to put up with it for a few months so we can keep our town prosperous.

The draft Overview also talks about the area becoming increasingly dependent on residential real estate development. That is something people just can not depend on forever. I would like to know just how many contractors are local and how many have moved in because of the building boom. There has to be good planning and conformance to established policies to make it work. You just can not keep approving new subdivisions before crucial problems are resolved. It is just not in good judgement.

The draft talks excitedly about the residential golf development adding 100 new residential units and then talks about another recently approved subdivision that will add more than 300 additional residential units as well as 65 commercial developments over time. I ask, how much time? From previous personal experience, it won't be over a long period of time as the statement implies, it will happen over night. Trust me, I have been there and have seen it happen. It is not as the developers portray it.

From what I have read in other Chapters of this draft, which I will try to touch base on, Polson is not ready, physically or financially to support any new subdivision.

4.3 Economic conditions:



Here again the draft emphasizes the importance of tourism and how many people are employed in tourism-related industries in Polson. Again I say, why would you re-route highway 93? You will be killing your businesses and unemployment will be on the rise.

Employment Projections. The draft talks about all of the increases in jobs through the year 2025. Do you know where your infrastructure resources are going to come from? You don't have them now! I will explain as I go further.

4.4 Community Economic Development Activities.

Polson Chamber of Commerce: This is good.

Polson Community Development Agency. Can't comment on this without knowing more about it.

The Polson Redevelopment Agency – Downtown Polson: Findings have turned up several blighted conditions: They give you five reasons that have needed to be taken care of for a long time. We have been coming up to Polson for 33 years and watched the buildings in and around the main part of town deteriorate. One of the reasons, number 4 on the list states it is due to growth. Now, as a result, the PDC Agency concluded that adequate information exists to qualify the area for designation as a blighted area. Isn't that something to be proud of? I am sure that this has not come as a big surprise to anyone. The streets in town are pathetic and have been for a long time. Do you think the tourist like driving their vehicles or rigs through potholes? The owners of the buildings should be made to bring them up to code and get rid of dangerous mold or the City will have them condemned.

Council after council has let this happen. Where has the tax money gone that should have been used to clean up the streets? Why hasn't Transportation been given the money to completely redo the streets rather than fill in potholes that work out and are back within a few months? I am talking 33 years again, that I know of.

Reiterating on number 4) Growth within the areas is resulting in increased strains on infrastructure, parking, streets, sidewalks and other City services. This is a visually true statement. Why is the council approving more subdivision, which means more growth, compounding your existing problems, and these problems are the tip of the iceberg.

You can implement all of the agencies you want but unless you intend to follow their recommendations, what good are they? Just wasted time and money and a lot of frustration for those that put their heart into developing plans. For what?

On page 4-13 it states that "The Polson Redevelopment Agency was appointed by the PCDA to review the 1997 Polson Redevelopment Plan, Consider the Possibilities for Polson! It says the Agency is governed by a volunteer board of directors and manages the City Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District for downtown Polson. It so states," To date, the TIF fund has not realized any positive increment, primarily due to the loss of the



property taxes associated with the Security State Bank when its ownership was transferred to the CSKT Natural Resources Department which is not subject to property tax.” Well, it looks like the agency was started about 1997 and as of 2005 had not received many funds to do much of anything. Eight years? Where did the money go? Again what is the point of having them. It is like everything else. The money is promised but poof, there is none. I am wondering why there was not a stipulation in the agreement of transfer from the Security State Bank to the CSKT Natural Resources Department that the funds in titled to The Agency” would be provided to them prior to transfer.

5.0 Local Services

5.2 Law Enforcement: Polson Police Department. I am not going to reiterate this because would or should have already read it, but from what I have read the Police Department is understaffed and underpaid. With the developments the Council has approved and the new ones they are being asked to approve, PPD is sure going to need good help. If you don't pay the employees good enough wages to keep them here why should they stay? I think we can all agree without the Police Department Polson would have total chaos. The same thing happened when I worked for the Air Force. Procurement personnel were under paid for their responsibilities and therefore trained at the base and then after they had enough experience they went to work for the state, where they could make more money. Makes sense to me. You have to feed your family. Sounds like our Police force trains here and then transfers to Kalispel or Missoula.

It sounds like the Lake County Sheriff's Department and the Confederate Salish-Kootenai Tribal Law and Order Department are having the same problem.

5.3 Polson Fire Department. Same problem. Continued growth is going to impact and require more personnel and more equipment. It is too bad the PFD missed receiving a class four rating due to low number of paid staff. Must be the Growth again.

I think I am seeing a little bit of contradiction in statements by PFD. One it states that they didn't think a new subdivision would negatively impact quality of fire service, yet they would like to add new fire stations, one in the Mission Bay area on Highway 35 and one at the Intersection of Tower Road and Highway 93. It also states that some subdivisions are setting aside land for fire stations. Isn't this going to require more paid employees? May be wrong on this one. Hope there are enough new volunteers to man them.

5-4: Healthcare. St. Joseph Medical Center is a wonderful care facility. It does seem they could use more doctors though. Our doctors have to put in an exceptional amount of time to care for the amount of patients they have. Please review the third paragraph with the steady increases. A few doctors can't do it all. Too much stress.



Public Health: Paragraph 2: "Demand for exotic.....The LCPHD feels that due to stretched resources and current staffing levels, it is unable to fully meet the growing needs of the community..... Growth again!

Tribal Healthcare: Second paragraph. "The Center has seen an increase in service demands over the past five years. Currently, there is a one-year waiting list for routine dental services. Unbelievable! There has been an increase in demand for transport services. There has also been an increase in drug and alcohol abuse services and elder care needs. The Center feels that it does not have adequate staff or enough physical space to address the community's growing needs. Growth! Growth! Growth!

5-4 Social Services: They do not indicate a problem but from personal experience with my mother I do know there is a problem in finding an affordable place for seniors to live out the rest of their life. Affordable, Affordable, Affordable, Homey, Homey, Homey. We were fortunate that my mother could barely get into St Joseph Assisted Living. She had to go from a beautiful two bedroom apartment to a studio but when you can't take care of yourself you don't have much choice. To be honest there are not that many places here in Polson that are affordable or that I would have my mother live in. Sorry but true!

It is getting very late on 30 Jan 2006. I am sorry I was not able to finish looking at the draft but Chapter 7 Natural Resources was impossible to get through. I was only up to page 16 and it just would not come in so I had to give up. As I said it is getting very late.

I hope with what I have stressed, in what I was able to review, paints a picture of part of the problems Council will have to face when considering approval of new developments. I am not objecting to growth if it is done in good conscious and well thought out planning. Polson could be a beautiful little town, but too much growth before it is physically and financially ready will be disastrous. I don't think Polson is ready for the new development of a subdivision of 300 new homes and 65 commercial buildings. I just hope you will consider the people of Polson who have made their homes here and who would like to continue to live here. If you don't have permanent water conditions how can anyone in good conscious approve new city developments?

All I ask is the City Council look at the big picture and do what is right for the people of Polson not the developers.

Sincerely,

Ellen Achenbaugh
385 Lakeview Dr
Polson, Mt, 59860



Nicolai, Sarah

From: Ellen Achenbaugh [honeygirl@cyberport.net]
Sent: Wednesday, February 01, 2006 11:56 AM
To: snicolai@hkminc.com
Subject: Addition to Comments for the Polson Growth Policy -2005
Attachments: Polson Growth Policy 2005 Draft.doc

Sarah

I added info below my name and address.

Sorry this is late. I just got into this chapter and thought it was important. I am sending this info to City Council.

Thanks,

Ellen Achenbaugh

2/1/2006



Ellen Achenbaugh
385 Lakeview Dr
Polson, Mt, 59860

Added on after 31 Jan 06

Chapter 9 – Goals, Objectives and Implementation Strategies

Sewer and Water

12. Goal: Address Polson's sewer and water needs in the most fair, proportionate and equitable manner.

- b. Objective: Emphasize the City's responsibility to maintain and repair existing infrastructure before committing resources to new or expanded facilities or developments.

Have all the repairs to existing infrastructures been completed?

My other question is why would the previous city council approve all the developments that they have without having a current water plan? Were they not gambling on the current residents and businesses water supply? According to the Draft of Polson Growth Policy the water plan has not been finalized and I am not seeing a firm contract between the Confederated Salish-Kootenai Tribes to make a permanent water supply.

How can an honest contractor develop and sell property knowing very well there is a current water shortage and that the water problem may or may not be resolved in time to accommodate the new developments. Hopefully it will be but I am sure the current residents would rest a little more easily if they knew they were not headed for a survival problem.

I am sorry to add this late but I thought it important to get this to the City Council for consideration. I was just now able to get to this chapter today.

Thank you,

Ellen Achenbaugh



From: Carolyn Beecher
Sent: Friday, January 13, 2006 5:24 PM
To: snicolai@hkminc.com
Subject: Comment on Polson Growth Policy Draft Plan

HKM Engineering and Sarah Nicolai,

Thank you for taking the time to consider all the input coming to you at this late date in the process. People lead such busy lives these days, even in January, and there seems to be nothing better than a final deadline to motivate us. I hope you will be able to incorporate the suggestions into your final Growth Policy without too much trouble. You've done some great work to date.

I have worked in Polson at various times over the last 25 years and continue to be very interested in the way it develops, as it affects all of Lake County significantly.

I support many of the goals identified during the Growth Planning Process, such as minimizing sprawl and maximizing efficiency of existing infrastructure, and concentrating the density of residential and commercial developments.

A large part of what makes Polson and similar rural communities in Montana attractive and refreshing is the setting surrounded by natural beauty with open space between communities and a core downtown area, which allows for social and commercial activity to pull people together into a community center. The most distasteful development we could allow into our region would be sprawl running from Polson to Ronan, which businesses, if unchecked will gravitate toward.

I call your attention to an extensive report on research at the University of Montana called, '*The Emerging Economy of Flathead County - Gateway to Glacier*' in which they determine that the region's spectacular natural environment is its chief economic asset, and these most valued qualities and primary economic assets are at risk. I assert that the same applies to our spectacular territory in Lake County. 'No place will retain its appeal by accident' writes Ed McMahon, co-author of *Balancing Nature and Commerce in Gateway Communities* (1997). He notes that gateway communities are "ground zero" in the struggle between haphazard development and planned growth. Haphazard development undermines the qualities that long-time community members, new residents and visitors all find most attractive.

Economy, Two objectives in your information gathering session were to "develop community enhancement projects to make Polson a more attractive place to live.", as well as 'Provide an attractive environment for jobs that offer living wages.' I urge you to define, in this section, with more spine and specifics, an objective to work with Lake County officials to research and develop a policy to protect Polson's gateways of approach, so that the natural assets which appeal to all will not be obstructed and eroded away by massive box stores, extensive commercial sprawl, and more stoplights along the

1/16/2006



highway. Current Codes merely recommend 'minimizing' these impacts. I recommend limiting the growth of industry into the current Highway Commercial Zone, which is already expansive enough. The approach from the South, already marred by the ugly yellow car lot, should not become a strip. Keeping the main corridor our citizens travel free of industry, box stores and billboards will allow people to enjoy their commutes or other travel, seeing the mountains and the lake. We have such amazing natural assets, we ought to make the most of them.

Please include in the economic development plan a requirement that research be reviewed or commissioned on the Economic Impacts of certain types of growth, such as large scale developments, especially chain stores, malls or chain restaurants on the local economy and downtown business center. Part of the attraction of a small town is the unique locally-grown diversity of its business community. Small-town character includes, besides the natural geographic assets, small, original businesses run by people living in the community, serving the local community's needs and generating the re-circulating economic impact which local business does, unlike national and global chain stores, which send dollars out of state immediately.

Some description of what the actual character of 'small town living' is should be included in your Draft Plan.

When you discuss commercial developments, please include the requirement for both context-sensitive design **and scale**.

History of Land Use: The scale of current commercial development should be defined precisely in your document, updated from 1986, to set a baseline for Goal 4b of "encouraging context-sensitive design". What is this design in terms of scale? **In order for a new commercial and industrial development to be consistent with the scale of development currently in existence, we need to know square footages and acreage of commercial buildings and industrial developments that exist at present.**

p. 1-7 on Developments in HCZD: Developments must be designed to minimize strip, but also to be context sensitive to the scale of existing Polson Commercial Development. Can we be so bold as to say that a building 50% larger than anything existing is not context appropriate, rather than just 'minimize the impact'?

Public Facilities: Require an honest and serious evaluation of the capacity of the City's water resources before any new development is allowed in the city, so that people don't spend their money developing, and new citizens move into the city who have no real water source, short of that which is taken from those who already live here. The City, though quiet about it, is aware that the current wells are barely sufficient for existing uses and inadequate for new development, which is why they are 'negotiating with the tribes' about water. This is an alarming concern.

1/16/2006



Local Services: Consider evaluating the Planning Office for additional staff requirements and salary increases in the face of increased growth as well as community desire for planned, rather than haphazard, growth. Recommend a trained City Planner for our growing community.

Natural Resources: **Key Finding: The Interim Agreement Negotiations between the State and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes were terminated in spring of 2005** as per Natural Resource Director of CSKT. There exists only the Moratorium on new water rights on the entire reservation, including Polson. In consideration of this, it seems that there must be a limit on any new developments within the city requiring water rights until it is clear that the water rights of existing homes and developments are not going to be compromised by over-allocation of limited water resources.

Number One of the Polson City wells is no longer functional. More accurately speaking, there are currently only six wells.

Sarah,

I ran out of time and ran into downloading problems for going through the entire document, so have not referenced all the comments precisely to your findings and final objectives. If I have time to finish this weekend, I will forward the referenced version to you to aid in your inclusion of my input. Thank you,

Carolyn Beecher

1/16/2006



From: Carolyn Beecher
Sent: Monday, February 06, 2006 2:45 PM
To: snicolai@hkminc.com
Subject: Impacts on cities
Attachments: bigboxstudies.pdf; Untitled Attachment; policefactsheet.pdf

Hi Sarah,

I'm sure you have many sources for research on the impacts of box stores on communities like ours in Polson, but I thought this might be helpful as well. This specifically summarizes studies on impacts to city services.

Thanks for taking a moment to look at it. I send first two quotes from the research summary of the findings, and then the full summary report in pdf format. The web site from which I received this information is called www.newrules.org

I hope you're well and your work is not too overwhelming. You have a couple of big projects on your desk just from Polson alone.

~ Carolyn

City Costs

"In seven of the eight communities, retail development created a drain on municipal budgets (i.e., it required more in public services, such as road maintenance and police, than it generated in tax revenue). On average, retail buildings produced a net annual loss of \$0.44 per square foot. "

"The concept that growth is always good for a community does not seem to correlate with the findings from various fiscal analyses conducted throughout central Ohio."

There are four studies here specifically focussing on costs to cities of services, as compared with revenues from chain stores and big box retailers.

2/6/2006



Polson Growth Policy - 2006

From: katie carter
Sent: Tuesday, January 31, 2006 8:06 PM
To: snicolai@hkminc.com
Subject: re: Polson Growth Policy

I am a Naturopathic Physician in Polson. Often, I've contemplated why I remain here, even when my colleagues make a significantly bigger salary in more developed and populated areas. "The Lifestyle" is my reason. This is an area unspoilt, with open land, a town that's small and personable, where everyone knows everybody. This is a town that thrives on the fact that our neighbor supports us. This town has several businesses that barely squeak by. For example, we buy our tires here because we want to support a local business. We try to buy very little outside our own delicately balanced system of commerce.

It is imperative to me that the Draft Plan takes into consideration the needs of the small business owner and the land owners who moved here for this certain lifestyle. New development should fit with this small town atmosphere, should not be determined by citizens that have the potential to make a profit to the expense of small businesses and land owners that are concerned about their water.

City Counsel members should not be developers that have evidently pursued positions of power in order to make financial gain.

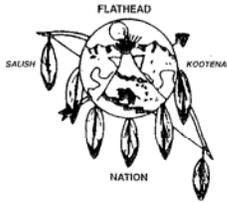
I remain in Polson because it isn't a town that has strip malls and boxed stores. I request that night light pollution, unsightly billboards, signs, and excessive use of pavement be avoided. I do not want to loose the very thing I am here to enjoy: the open land, the night sky with the stars visible, fresh water and a community of individuals enjoying the balance of life in rural America.

Do You Yahoo!?

Tired of spam? Yahoo! Mail has the best spam protection around
<http://mail.yahoo.com>



Polson Growth Policy - 2006



Joseph E. Dupuis - Executive Secretary
Vern L. Clairmont - Executive Treasurer
Leon Bourdon - Sergeant-at-arms

THE CONFEDERATED SALISH AND KOOTENAI TRIBES OF THE FLATHEAD NATION

P.O. BOX 278
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(406) 275-2700
FAX (406) 275-2806
www.cskt.org



TRIBAL COUNCIL MEMBERS:

James Steele, Jr. - Chairman
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Joe Durglo
Mike Kenmille
Steve Lozar
Jim Malatara
Reuben A. Mathias
Sonny Morigeau

April 5, 2006

Mayor Randy Ingram
City Council Members
Polson City Hall
Polson, MT 59860

Dear Mayor and Councilmen:

The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes welcome the opportunity to comment on the Draft Polson Growth Policy. Our perspective comes from our duty to continually ensure a future for seven generations of our Tribal peoples.

In the past 90 years, the number of Tribal members living on the Reservation rose by about 2,000 while the non-Tribal population grew by more than 21,000. Tribal subsistence and other cultural practices rely on an abundance of clean air, water, wildlife and plant life, as identified in our Flathead Reservation Comprehensive Resources Plan. Yet continued pavement and manipulation of lands is creating water quality problems, causing weed infestation and threatening species diversity and ecological balance. Non-member growth has placed more than 10 times the pressure on the resource base as Tribal growth.

It is with these concerns in mind that we provide the following comments:

Community Overview Section Sanitary Storm Sewer

The document states on page 6-8 that Polson's storm sewer discharges into Flathead Lake and receives no treatment before entering the Lake—a major water quality concern. That page also states that the system is “fairly weak” and an upgrade has been budgeted. However, your overview states the “Primary system is in good repair.” This statement is contradictory and should be corrected. Please work with the Tribal Environmental Protection Division to address the water quality issue.



Land Use Section

Land Use Regulations, Page 1-5: Please note in this section that the City of Polson cannot assert planning or zoning authority on lands owned or otherwise controlled by the Tribes, their members, or the United States in trust for the Tribes.

Existing Land Uses: Is Figure 1.3 available at a larger scale? Please note that Figure 1.4 does not include Tribal agricultural lands. Figure 1.5 does not show all of the Tribal property, such as at the Polson Airport, as well as other parcels. You should place a disclaimer on this map as well as on Page 1-14, indicating that these maps are for general planning purposes only, and that more accurate and detailed records of land ownership are maintained by the respective jurisdictions.

Housing and Facilities Sections: The Turtle Lake Housing Addition, located in the eastern portion of the Polson Planning Area, consists of approximately 80 homes, many of which are connected to a centralized water system and a sewage treatment system, operated by the Salish Kootenai Housing Authority. The Tribes' Roads Program also paved the streets in this area, providing a paved vehicle and pedestrian travel-way that connects this subdivision with newly-constructed Highway 35 improvements.

Natural Resources

Please delete all reference to the Interim Water Use Agreement between the State and the Tribes as this information is no longer applicable.

Page 7-12, par. 1: Please correct the acreage figure for the Flathead Reservation to be 1.3 million acres, as the Reservation is actually 1,316,871 acres in size. Please add that Reservation wetlands are regulated under the Tribal Aquatic Lands Conservation Ordinance. Permits can be obtained from the Tribal Natural Resources Department in Polson.

Par. 2: Please note that the Tribes own much of the land upon which these structures are located.

Par. 3, 2nd Sentence: Please correct this sentence as follows: "The remaining land irrigated by the Project is owned by fee land owners (both Indian and non-Indian). Non-trust land irrigation interests...."

Fish and Wildlife Resources

The Tribal Fisheries Program co-manages Flathead Lake fisheries along with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks. Please refer to the Tribes'



Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes
Polson Growth Policy Comments

Page 3

Comprehensive Resources Plan and work with Les Evarts, Tribal Fisheries Program Manager to correct this section.

Cultural Resources

Page 8-2, 2nd Par., 2nd Sentence: Please delete “and had a rich cultural heritage.” All of the Tribes on the Reservation have a rich cultural heritage and continue to practice cultural traditions. Please refer your readers to Chapters 3 and 17 of Volume I of the Flathead Reservation Comprehensive Resources Plan for a better understanding of Tribal cultural resources.

Page 8-2, last Par.: Please correct the name of the Tribal Historic Preservation Office, and be sure to refer to the Tribes in a plural form as there is more than one tribe on this Reservation.

Goals, Objectives and Implementation Strategies

Page 9-2, Objective c. ii.: Please include the Tribal Shoreline Protection and Aquatic Lands Protection Ordinances here.

Page 9-6, Goal 8, Objective b.: Please refer to the Tribes in the plural form.

Page 9-14, Goal 23, Objective a.i.: Please include the Tribal Shoreline Protection and Aquatic Lands Protection Ordinances here.

Interjurisdictional Coordination and Cooperation

The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes appreciate your goal of continued coordination with us regarding growth and development issues. We look forward to exploring the development of additional inter-governmental agreements with you.

Regulatory Appendix

At one point, your consultants, HKM Engineering, had drafted a “Regulatory Appendix.” Has this Appendix been officially dropped from the Growth Policy document?

Thank you for taking the time to review our comments. As the original inhabitants of these lands, our people have a long history of resource use and management. For many thousands of years our ancestors lived harmoniously with the land and taught us to do the same. We need open spaces to practice our traditions and spirituality, schools in which we can speak our native languages, and freedom without judgment to teach our children the proud values of our ancestors.



Polson Growth Policy - 2006



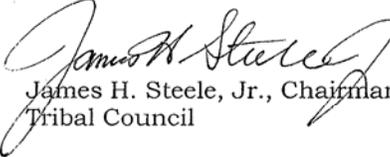
Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes
Polson Growth Policy Comments

Page 4

The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes hope that as you work to implement your Growth Policy, you include the Tribes as a full partner in regulatory review of future growth. Our concern is for survival of our people, our cultures, the air, water, land, plants and animals. Our Tribal Historic Preservation, Tribal Lands, Legal and Environmental Protection staff look forward to a continued positive working relationship with the City of Polson. Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes



James H. Steele, Jr., Chairman
Tribal Council

Xc: Chair Chrono
TLD Chrono
Subject File

Ref: Polson Growth Policy.4.06.comments



Polson Growth Policy - 2006

JAN-13-2006 15:36 FROM: CITY OF POLSON 1 406 883 8238

TO: 91406442037767

P: 1

Sarah Nicolai
Fax 406-442-0377
1 page

RECEIVED
1/13/06

January 12, 2006

To: Mayor Ingram, Polson City Council, and the Public

SUBJECT: POLSON GROWTH POLICY DRAFT by HKM (\$40,000.00 Study) December 2005
Public comment deadline: January 13, 2006.

This Growth Policy is unacceptable. It needs to be REJECTED. A few of the reasons:

* LACK OF ACCESS: It is more than doubtful that the working public has an opportunity to review the Growth Policy at City Hall or the Library due to the hours both are open. It is the same time most people with jobs are at work.

- It is not for the general public's information (user friendly). It contains MCA numbers without the text, requiring legal knowledge to know what the code numbers states in words.
- It EXPANDS the size of government: expands city staff, adds paid staff, raises salaries to compete with surrounding jurisdictions (WHAT JURISDICTIONS?), raises tap fees, CREATES sinking fund for extensions, repairs/upgrades, CREATES grant administrator and street board, EMPOWERS water board, ADD a 500,000 gallon tank on Skyline, REPLACE Hillcrest reservoir, upgrade/loop sewer/water distribution system.

POSITIVE: ** Maintain/repair existing system BEFORE new/expanding development.

WATER (RIGHTS) ISSUES: Is there ANY new water source for ANY developments from ANYWHERE?

STREET BOARD: A board is not needed. Any one driving a vehicle knows the street conditions.

SIDEWALKS: New sidewalks that start nowhere and go nowhere.

RUN-OFF: Runs into aquifers, Flathead Lake/River, canals, yards, etc. How to TREAT and the COST?

EXPLAIN: PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY IS DEFINED: As a condition of optimal well being, free from dangers, risk or injury for a community at large, not merely for a specific individual or a small group of persons. MCA 76-1-601??

SUBDIVISION CRITERIA: As defined in this growth policy MCA 76-3-608 (3) (a)?

HEARING PROCEDURES: Roberts Rules or Order – large crowd procedures – Recent Court decisions?

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Where in this growth policy is the public's comments that HKM wrote down at the 1-27-05 and the 7-7-05 public hearings (chapters/pages)? HKM took large sheets of comments (likes, dislikes) in January and July, to Helena, to be compiled and presented to the public. It seems the people's comments were not considered valid, and only certain officials or others were important. Their 'goals and objectives' arrived before the November hearing. HKM recited that same information, plus a Power Point show in November, but again produced none of the previous public comments. The partial comments of 1-27-05 were given to HKM then. The Study Commission/Mayor was given this in February 2005.

CONCLUSION: I believe HKM's DRAFT GROWTH POLICY OF 2005 is useless for public information. It appears to benefit developers, and \$40,000.00 of the public's money was spent. Have the council members read the policy, MCA codes, and fully understand this growth policy? Extend the review time? It may help lawyers research codes, engineers study charts/maps, but likely won't help to further inform the public. Public money paid for this study, yet the public and their concerns appear to be ignored.

MONEY: How to pay for these GOALS AND OBJECTIVES? HIGHER TAXES AND HIGHER FEES?? The people spent time/costs to attend the City and HKM's NON-INFORMATIVE public hearings. They want reliable facts/figures, not statistics, charts, percentages and questionable future visions. Reply needed.

Sincerely,

Elsa Duford
Elsa Duford
905 15th Ave. E.
Polson, MT.

CC: public



Polson Growth Policy - 2006

Susan Erickson
636 Shoreline Drive
Polson, MT 59860

January 18, 2006

To the Members of Polson City Council, Mayor Randy Ingraham and HKM Engineering,

I am writing to submit my comments regarding the Polson Draft Growth Policy. This document will lay the groundwork for responsible planning and growth in our community. I hope that the final policy will include strong measures to ensure that the quality of life in our small community is protected.

During preliminary meetings with HKM Engineering, a majority of people attending expressed a strong desire to preserve the “small town living” that we have in Polson. Good schools, a vital downtown with a variety of shops and services, public parks, clean air and water were mentioned by many attending. These items are at the top of my list of Polson’s positive attributes also.

People at the meetings were especially concerned about sprawl and many wanted to limit any new development of “box stores”. Sprawl was identified as residential and commercial development that spreads out from the city, creating unwanted traffic patterns, conflict with existing residential areas and aesthetic problems along the highway. One of the worst outcomes of sprawl, which often includes “box stores”, is the negative effect on the downtown area.

Polson has one of the most wonderful locations in the western United States. The view of the lake and the mountains as you enter Polson from the south is unique and beautiful. It is one of the many reasons people come to visit our community. The scenery and small town living are reasons many people want to stay. We need to preserve these scenic qualities by limiting commercial development, especially along the highway corridors.

The Polson Growth Policy also needs to address the scale of new development. Any new development needs to fit into our existing community. As I mentioned above, many Polson residents do not want our community to be dominated by large, generic, “box stores”. To support and strengthen our downtown, the Growth Policy should require an evaluation of the effects of outlying land use and zoning districts on the downtown core. Decisions on re-zoning, annexation, etc. must take into account the results of this type of evaluation. In the future, the use of variances to bypass zoning restrictions must be prohibited.

Thank you for your consideration. A sound and effective Growth Policy will preserve the best aspects of our community and allow us to manage growth and change in the future.

Sincerely,

Susan Erickson



Sandra J Farrell

9389 Haack Rd. Polson, MT 59860 • 406-883-8024

Sarah Nicolai
HKM Engineering
P.O. Box 1009
Helena, MT 59624

January 12, 2006

Dear Ms Nicolai,

Thank you for this opportunity to respond to the Polson Growth Plan. In a world changing at the rate that we are in the 21st century, I am compelled to direct change by planning ahead rather than being alarmed by unexpected, undesirable development.

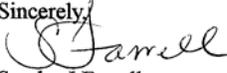
I feel that this plan needs to address the scale of new developments. Projects that are over sized can create some grave consequences to our community. For one, large commercial constructs can create a drain on municipal budgets. Even if we were to receive tax revenues from large-scale developments, will the benefits be off set by the higher costs of public services such as road maintenance and public safety? What will the increase in these demands do to personal property taxes?

The Development Plan must assure protection of our existing economic assets while embracing controlled commercial growth. We need to be mindful of preserving property values by keeping our present commercial communities healthy and controlling the noise and traffic in our residential areas. Irresponsible commercial developments can compromised communities in many ways including forced downsizing and closures of existing businesses, lower wages, declining tax revenues and forcing new costs on taxpayers. If you look at the voting record on public safety: Lake County Sheriff and Big Arm Fire District, Polson property owners appear to feel that their taxes are high enough. How will we provide *more* fire protection, police and emergency services? There is also the looming question of water supply. Polson has a serious problem providing water to its constituents now. All future developments must conform to the moratorium now in effect and must address any impact on our water supply as long as the current conditions exist.

Local businesses have a long-standing record of having a more positive impact on local economy than large corporations. More of the money generated from these companies, stays home. Not only are wages and benefits paid to local employees, but more goods and services are purchased from each other, and local owners keep the profits here. Corporate money tends to flow to outside suppliers and back to corporate headquarters.

A further concern is, will large-scale development force closures of existing anchor stores causing further harm to other retailers and ultimately lead to vacancies in our downtown area? Only now are we recovering from the pull out of institutions like First Interstate Bank, Harbor Pharmacy and the evolving main street department stores. Now is a prime time to promote, support and build a downtown area that lends itself to the small town living so desirable to the people whom have invested in this community. I feel it is absolutely necessary that the Development Plan preserve the small town character of Polson.

Thank you again, for this opportunity to submit my comments. I am looking forward to the new draft of the Polson Growth Plan and anticipate that these issues will be addressed.

Sincerely,

Sandra J Farrell

cc Polson City council and Mayor Randy Ingram



Growth Policy comments for Jan 06 draft
(from Lita F., generally from the perspective of I may be working with this a lot.)

1-1: Residential: high density is referring to where? I'm not sure which areas are intended.
Commercial: what is between 8th Ave W and 11th Ave W in MRZD?

(1-4: A question for my information: is the 2 mile boundary a requirement or a selected boundary?)

1-5: reference to figure 1.2 (in the sentence following the heading 'Zoning') seems to actually refer to figure 1.1

1-7: "Low density areas are generally buffered from commercial or industrial uses, or arterial roads..." Does this truly generally happen? It seems like there are a number of areas otherwise on the map.

1-9: As also with 1-1, what is high density referring to? And as also with 1-1, what commercial/industrial in MRZD? (I'm assuming you mean commercial or industrial, as opposed to CIZD.) It says that other small commercial/industrial developments are scattered within MRZD and LRZD. I need to understand the reference, in case people ask about it. Does this refer to grandfathered commercial or industrial, or home occupations, or what?

1-11: There seems to be confusion on the references to the Figures. Figure 1.3 shows parcel agricultural use, not Figure 1.4. Figure 1.4 is on pg 1-15, and shows Polson City Limits, but on pg. 1-14, the Polson City Limits is referred to as Figure 1.6. It would match best to change the references to 1.4 to 1.3, and to change the figure labeled 1.4 to 1.6. (That does leave out a Figure 1.4 entirely.)

1-16: "Additionally the two Commercial/Industrial districts located in the City Center and along the east bank of the Flathead River are logical areas for economic growth." Are you referring to CIZD exclusively, or both commercial districts and industrial districts? And where on the east river bank is the logical area of economic growth?

2-6 and 2-7: If it's easy, it would be nice to have the year over the key, as well as in the figure title. (If it's complicated, then don't worry about it.)

2-12: The average educational attainment is said to fall in the range of 'some college' for 1990. How did this work out, rather than 'high school graduate'? I don't see the 'fit' with the numbers given.

3-4: On Figure 3.3, last set of year reads 1990-3-2000. Is this intentional?

3-10: "There are approximately 230 government subsized units in Polson." 'Subsized' or 'subsidized'?

4-4: Figure 4.2—what are the unlabeled bars for?

6-10: The recycling is now mostly underway. (No plastics yet.)



Polson Growth Policy - 2006

7-33: Is Polson 'bound' or 'bounded' on the north?

8-1 and 8-2: Some of the addresses given are incomplete. Addresses with avenues or streets generally need an E or W designator.

8-2: It would be more accurate to say 'City and County Planning Departments' than 'City-County Planning Department'

(I've only gotten as far as page 9-1.)

In general, there are a lot of extra capitalized words: the Lake, Carbon Monoxide, Lead, etc. It's a bit distracting.



Polson Growth Policy - 2006

JAN-18-2006 13:48 FROM: CITY OF POLSON 1 406 883 8238

TO: 91406442037767

P: 3

RECEIVED
R 19/06

Comments and Notes on the Polson Growth Policy 2005 (HKM)

First things first: Before you start a new 10 year growth plan you need to address the 1993 Polson Master Plan and do a Profoma Audit...checking off the projects that were completed, dates, \$\$, etc. Reintroduce the items or areas that need attention, i.e. parks/recreation. This audit should be accomplished with a small committee comprised of city, HKM, and a few citizens at large.

Check over the draft plan carefully...too many errors. Some info doesn't dovetail. Some areas are not consistent. Also, some areas have already been completed, i.e. the new PCDA director started January 2nd.

Discussion regarding Parks/Rec: Old 1993 Master Plan stated that the city needed to acquire more park lands to meet NRPA standards. You mention parks have a total of 170 acres (pps. 1-3), but there is no map showing size or locations.

Info: pps 6-1 Parks This section needs to be rewritten and expanded.

pps. 6-16 Parks Acres, sites under Public Facilities is too short and is poorly written; as it says little or nothing at all. You can and should do better than this. Pool Project states the land has been donated...is this true?

Notes: X I PDC/PCDA? Not clear...

XXIII PRA date legally adopted?

XX Check out info on the Mill Site's ownership. Also, leave out Plum Creek info in Pablo. In addition, review info and maps on Villa Sites around the Lake.

pps. 5-13 Bike Pathways ...current status...done? Poor definition of "boulevard". "Around the Lake", I wish... but don't think it was ever brought up for discussion. This section needs more accurate details...also, maps.

pps. 9-3/7 Ai; Strategy



Polson Growth Policy - 2006

JAN-18-2006 13:48 FROM: CITY OF POLSON 1 406 883 8238

TU:9140644203161

P. 6

Expand on "Signs"... not specific enough. Could be blended with landscaping features.

iii; Eliminate word "consider", change it to "get it done" with time-line.

Adopt uniform sign regulations between the city, county and tribes. **No more large billboards!**

pps. 9-9 13. Goal -Good objective, but not a very good strategy. Expand on this. Or "by other means"...what does this say? Be more specific.

9-12 18. b. Objective: Add schools and water ditches and connect to Pablo Feeder System.

pps. 9-13 20. Goal i; add the word "indoor" to pool.

21. Goal Drop the word "consider". Create a Park and Recreation District. NOTE: There is some confusion in your understanding of districts, their meaning, and structure.

pps. 9-14 24. Goal This is a good opportunity to strongly state the need to develop the County property at the Fairgrounds for river access. Get the word "consider" out of this and **just do it!!...be more direct.**

Submitted by: Tom and Linda Greenwood
789 Narrows Rd.
Polson, MT 59860 Tel # 883-5908



Polson Growth Policy - 2006

From: Virginia Hertz
Sent: Friday, January 13, 2006 1:18 PM
To: snicolai@hkminc.com
Cc:
Subject: Polson Draft Growth Policy

Dear Ms. Nicolai

I have lived in the Polson area since 1959. We have seen many changes in our small town over the last 45 years and yet it has retained it's small town image and lifestyle. Growth has certainly come to the valley in the last few years and a large part of it has been homes built by summer residents. I see our biggest problem is how we can develop a moderate growth policy that fits in with our small town. I would like to see the Draft Plan recommend or require an evaluation of the effect of growth of outlying land use and the encouragement of commercial development in land available in our downtown area. This would enhance our downtown area and keep our small town look which is what I would hate to lose.

Sincerely,
Virginia Hertz

cc: Polson Mayor and City Council Members

1/13/2006



From: Murat Kalinyaprak
Sent: Tuesday, January 31, 2006 9:04 PM
To: snicolai@hkminc.com
Cc: Randy Ingram
Subject: Polson Growth Policy

Looking at various statistics provided in chapters 2, 3, and 4 one can see that the size and population of Polson grew by quite a bit and at a faster rate than the rest of Montana. Yet, the people appear to be worse off in 2000 than they were in 1990.

While the average income rose by only 53%, median house prices have doubled and both rent and mortgage payments rose by 71%.

If we look at the home ownership go down from 54% to 52% and income from rent go up by 227% together, we can see that more home owners have turned into renters.

If we look at income from self employment drop by 49% and income from wages or salaries go up by 126%, we can see that more business owners have turned into employees.

While population rose by 23%, poverty rate decreased by an insignificant 3% during those 10 years.

If Polson grew as big as Kalispell, Missoula, Seattle or New York, the size of the individual slice each person gets from the ever bigger pie would still be about the same.

Growth is nothing but a dog chasing its tail and the figures provided in this document clearly prove that growth in the past hasn't been all that good for Polson.

So why does this growth policy still promote growth rather than to slow it down as much as possible or to stop it...?

Murat Kalinyaprak
605 5th Ave E, Polson

2/1/2006



January 9, 2005

Sarah Nicolai
HKM Engineering
P.O. Box 1009
Helena, MT 59624

Darryl James, Sarah Nicolai and HKM Engineering:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Polson Growth Policy. We believe that this is a very important document which will guide our City over the next ten years. Our goal is to give you comments to make sure that the Growth Policy addresses all of our town's strengths as described in the early meetings on the Growth Policy. We would like to provide some specific comments in response to the draft document. We have referenced our comments to sections in the Draft Growth Policy as outlined below.

Key Findings (pages 1 and 9)

The purpose of this section, as we understand it, is to characterize our community as it is today. Therefore, we believe it is important to talk about the quality of the existing commercial development in Polson in the same manner that the residential development is discussed. Under the Key Findings for Residential Development, the existing residential areas are characterized as "low density". We think some further type of qualifying statement about the "density" or "scale" of existing commercial development is important to help characterize the commercial component of our community as it is today.

Section 1.2 Historic Land Uses

Does the consultant plan on updating the data in this section? The statistics on commercial and residential land use acreage are important, and the City has changed significantly since 1986, the year the data was collected. In addition to updating the acreage amounts, it would be good to know how many total square feet of commercial and industrial development exists in Polson in addition to updated residential unit counts.

Section 1.5, Existing Land Uses

Similarly, we believe that Section 1.5 should be further expanded to talk about the quality of our existing commercial development in terms of scale and location: building sizes and locations. We need some benchmarks as to what Polson is like today in order to adequately be able to evaluate new growth and change in the future.

Section 9.0, Land Use

We support **Goal #1**, which seeks to "encourage development mixes and land use policies that minimize sprawl and maximize efficiency of existing infrastructure." However, the two objectives tied to this goal do not reference scale as an important element of our existing community fabric. The concept of ensuring that the scale of new development is compatible with our townscape should be incorporated in to these two objectives.



Goal 6, Economic Revitalization in order to provide additional employment and economic development opportunities

We strongly support this goal, and efforts to further stimulate redevelopment in the downtown core. We would request an additional implementation strategy under this goal that examines outlying land use and zoning districts to assess their impact on the downtown core.

Goal 9, "Maintain and Enhance Polson's natural beauty in order to create a more attractive place to live, work and conduct business."

We strongly support this goal. However, it is not only our natural beauty, but the charm of our town that makes Polson attractive. Objective 'b' listed under this goal needs to include scale as an element that will be considered in ensuring context-sensitive design in commercial developments, particularly along our highway corridors.

New Section on Community Character

When the community was asked what they most valued about Polson at the January 27th, 2005 kickoff meeting, one of the most frequently recorded comments was "small town living" (12 respondents). Only one other topic area scored as many comments as this one - economic opportunity/business climate- which is covered fully in the Draft Plan. The Draft Growth Policy Plan needs to be expanded to include a new section to examine community character, a key component of "small town living". We would like to see this issue examined more fully in the Draft Plan, including some analysis of how our buildings and townscape reflect "small town living".

Thanks for your consideration of our comments on the Draft Growth Policy Plan. Should you have any questions, you may contact any of us at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Carolyn E. Beecher *Doug Rubman*
Jay Wilson *Dorothy Harty*
Marie C. Munro
Lake County First Steering Committee

Cc:
Polson City Council
Polson Planning Department
HKM Engineering



Polson Growth Policy - 2006

From: ralphlasche
Sent: Tuesday, January 31, 2006 8:21 PM
To: snicolai@hkminc.com
Subject: polson growth policy

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in reference to the Polson growth policy. I would like to take this opportunity to address several issues that are imperative for the healthy and successful development of Polson. Population and Economic goals; Community enhancement can only be successful with continued support and encouraged growth of the small business industry. Polson should encourage and promote more small business development. These businesses provide living wages to employees, a strong tax base and constant support to the community, schools and future quality growth. Young families can not afford property in Polson due to the high cost of real estate. The county currently carries a two year waiting list for low income family housing. Large box stores will not support young families or the Polson community. On the contrary, most if not all of Polson's current small business community will be destroyed by this Coporate monster! Eliminating hundreds of quality jobs that pay living wages and give young families an opportunity for growth.

LAND USE Minimizing sprawl and maximizing efficiancyo of existing infrastructure are so critical to maintain the asthetic beauty of this area. New comers are attracted to Polson because of its unique splendor and beauty. It's refreshing not to be in anywhere USA. Successful gowth and development can only occur optimally if we maintain our quaint atmosphere. Thank you in advance for your sincere support in this successful growth policy.

Lori Lasche
2512 S. Finley Pt. Rd.
Polson, Mt. 59860



Polson Growth Policy - 2006

From: ralph lasche [isabels@polson.net]
Sent: Tuesday, January 31, 2006 9:03 PM
To: snicolai@hkminc.com
Subject: growth policy

Dear Ms. Nicolai,

I was impressed with the growth policy draft your firm has developed. It was refreshing to note that aesthetics are included in the plan as there is not a more beautiful introduction to a town as the exquisite corridor into Polson via Hwy 93 south. With this in mind it is painful to think this remarkable view could be destroyed by the worst and richest cooperation in America! This growth policy is our saving grace to maintain the integrity of this area as it states minimizing sprawl and maximizing efficiency of the current infrastructure. I certainly hope the Polson government will realize the insult they will create to this community if they allow such a giant to be created in the gateway to polson!

Water and Sewer the severe water and sewer issues Polson contends with daily, including some residents just 7 blocks from city hall that pump their septic tanks monthly and even weekly due to the servrity of the issue. A set plan with timelines needs to be created for the current residents of Polson to safely utilize existing resources prior to creating new developments. A moritorium on water and sewer are critical until these needs are addressed .

Thank you for your concideration .

Ralph D. Lasche
2512 S. Finley Pt.
Polson Mt
59860



From: Janene Lichtenberg
Sent: Tuesday, January 31, 2006 9:00 AM
To: snicolai@hkminc.com
Subject: Polson Draft Growth Plan

Dear Ms. Nicolai:

I am writing this letter in regards to the Polson Draft Growth Policy. I have a few concerns that I hope will be addressed in the final document. Although I do not live within city limits, my job is based in Polson and I am concerned with how development in Polson will affect the surrounding communities and all of Lake County.

My main concern is that there is no language concerning the size of residential and commercial developments. Larger houses and businesses have greater impacts on the infrastructure, land, and natural resources with benefits to fewer individuals than smaller homes and businesses. They will place a greater strain on the already limited infrastructure.

I agree that there is a need to produce codes and standards on signs. I am also encouraged by the mention of context sensitive developments. I would like to see some evaluation and enforcement of codes and standards for the placement and size of commercial developments and some information concerning the impact of larger developments on the overall community.

I am encouraged by the recognition that there is a need to support and strengthen the downtown business district. I strongly feel that the best way to do this is to encourage and support local businesses that retain the unique character of Polson and Lake County and keep more money within our community. I am glad to see that the plan prioritizes repairs of projects in older sections of town before committing resources to newer areas. I think that the proposed bike trails, public transportation, parks, and recreational areas will also enhance the character and economy of downtown Polson, as will the protection of natural resources and recognition of the unique history and cultures of the community. Providing information to developers to help them protect natural resources is important. I believe there is also a need for regulations and standards to ensure that important natural resources are protected.

I am glad to see that one of the goals is to work with Lake County officials to encourage recycling. I was discouraged to find that our new waste transfer station did not have options for recycling. However, this facility could be easily improved upon to include recycling option. This will become more important as Polson and Lake County grow.

I strongly believe there should be some goals concerning zoning and land use in the surrounding areas outside of the city limits. The size and types of development that occurs outside of city limits could have big impact on the character of Polson and vice versa. I appreciate your time and consideration of my comments.

Sincerely,

Janene Lichtenberg



Polson Growth Policy - 2006

From: hikmat maaliki
Sent: Tuesday, January 17, 2006 4:31 PM
To: snicolai@hkminc.com
Subject: Polson redevelopment plan

I was pleased to read the Polson redevelopment draft online. I think it is an excellent document that truly addresses some of our concerns as new residents of the community. I think it is crucial to address issues of central redevelopment (re: the business district) which is almost a detractant to the community (when compared with other neighboring communities.) I think it is important as well to address the above-average local poverty rate and the community's interaction with the tribe. The developments that take place in Polson over the next 3-5 years will be important in the decision of whether we decide to keep our family in the Polson area or relocate to another community that is more desirable.

Hikmat and Courtney Maaliki

1/17/2006



Polson Growth Policy - 2006

From: hikmat maaliki
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2006 10:51 PM
To: snicolai@hkminc.com
Subject: another comment on Polson Growth Policy draft

I would also like to mention that I feel the growth policy does not deal with the impact of light pollution in the community. Polson appears to produce way too much light for such a small town. In conjunction with the Ronan (very bright) and Plum Creek in Pablo (way way too much light) the night sky is threatened. I think the issue merits discussion while the town is still small and it would be much less costly to change the current system. Also, new construction can be light-smart. For instance, the new lamps on 93 heading south out of Polson release an awful lot of light and could likely have been shielded to scatter less light. Then perhaps less electricity would need to be used for lighting purposes.

Hikmat Maaliki



Polson Growth Policy - 2006

JAN-13-2006 15:10 FROM: CITY OF POLSON 1 406 883 8238

TO: 91406442037767

P: 4

Wta FYI

Caryn Miske, Attorney at Law

19420 Houle Creek Road
Frenchtown, MT 59834

Phone: (406)626-5789
Fax: (406)626-5586

Polson City Council
106 First Street East
Polson, MT 59860-2137

January 12, 2006

RECEIVED
JAN 13 2006
BY: _____

Re: HKM Draft of Polson Growth Policy

Dear City Council members:

These comments submitted on behalf of Polson Citizens for Better Government (PCBG) pertain to the draft Growth Policy. The comments are as follows:

1. Given that the document has not been made readily available to the citizens, the public comment period should be extended in order to allow all members of the public to access the document. Copies should be made available, either at no cost or for a nominal fee, so that citizens can adequately review the document and provide meaningful comments.
2. Chapter 9 discusses expanding City staff and raising City salaries. A more detailed discussion of how these objectives would be funded is essential as City residents cannot assume a significantly higher tax burden.
3. Chapter 9 discusses empowering the water board. PCBG contend that such a goal violates the public's constitutionally guaranteed rights to public participation and right to know, and would potentially violate statutory law, including Montana's open meeting laws. Therefore, this goal should be struck from the Growth Policy.
4. Chapter 9 discusses raising tap fees to create a sinking fund for extensions, repairs and upgrades. Developers, via impact fees, should bear the burden of such extensions and upgrades. The general public should not be forced to assume a greater tax burden to cover costs incurred due to new subdivisions and commercial developments. Therefore, this goal should be struck from the draft Growth Policy, and text related to impact fees should be inserted into the Growth Policy to cover such costs.

Counsel has not obtained a full copy of the draft Growth Policy, and upon receipt of said document, more comments will be forthcoming.

Sincerely,

Caryn Miske



Carmine Mowbray
P. O. Box 1202 • Polson, Montana 59860
406-883-4677

To: Sarah Nicolai, HKM Engineering
P.O. Box 1009
Helena, MT 59624

cc: Polson Mayor Randy Ingraham

Re: Potential Wal Mart expansion in Polson

January 12, 2006

I have been a Polson resident since 1981 and with my husband owned the Lake County Leader/Advertiser and News Press web printing plant for nearly two decades. Our livelihood, and that of our dozens of employees was sustained by the economic health of this valley. Part of the responsibility of a newspaper and shopper is to work with local businesses to understand their potential market.

Understandably, you have received many comments both for and against the proposal to enable Wal Mart to expand near the Highway 93/35 junction in Polson. I represent my entire family in saying that we strongly oppose development statues that would allow this kind of development there, or anywhere in Lake County.

Our current local Wal Mart (having replaced "Pamida", another box-discounter) has had several years of successful operation in our community, and many folks feel that it represented a large compromise to the desired commercial atmosphere, having replaced many small businesses. After these several years, most have accepted Wal Mart at this level and appreciate the folks who work there. However, a large, aggressive expansion that would likely replace several more major valley businesses, is significantly beyond the spirit of the Development plan.

I am a firm supporter of the free enterprise system, but standing by silently while a Super Center chomps yet more market share from our hopeful and hard working local merchants seems like it hurts free enterprise, and nourishes a distant and avaricious business that has a known history of sub-par wages and minimal benefits.

It is common knowledge that nationally Wal Mart's sales growth rate has slowed, and one way for them to continue their desired accelerated rate of sales is to create new floor space. Wal Mart is willing to take a gamble in marginal markets, to the serious detriment of existing businesses. In the spirit of free enterprise, should we facilitate this?

Thank you for your consideration.

Carmine Mowbray
and Family



From: MC Mumma
Sent: Wednesday, January 11, 2006 9:36 PM
To: snicolai@hkminc.com
Subject: Polson Growth Policy

Ms. Nicolai--

I've recently learned that HKM Engineering is drafting the proposed Polson Growth Policy and is accepting suggestions regarding its final content. While I am sure you will receive more detailed and fact-specific letters from others, I'd simply like to ask that weight be given in the policy to balancing quality of life with future economic development.

For those of us who value the uniqueness of Polson and its surrounding communities, it is critical that any commercial development be in keeping with the existing character of the valley. Far too many small and unique communities across this country have foolishly neglected to establish basic criteria for growth. This lack of foresight has left them with big box stores on the outskirts of town instead of a thriving Main Street. It has left many small communities looking like so many other small communities, having permanently lost the charm and natural beauty that had drawn people to it in the first place.

Some of the most successful and thriving small towns left in the U.S. are those that have maintained their local flavor, promoted locally-owned small business, set standards and limits on the size of new commercial buildings and prevented national chains from dominating the local economy. Polson must be pro-active in its growth policy to insure its viability.

It is my understanding that the Polson growth plan, as it exists now, does not address these issues. I respectfully request that you do so.

Sincerely,

Marie Mumma

1/13/2006



Polson Growth Policy - 2006

From: Shannon Nunlist
Sent: Wednesday, January 11, 2006 10:22 AM
To: snicolai@hkminc.com
Subject: Growth plan

I have briefly reviewed your Polson Growth Policy Overview. I don't feel that I have enough experience to be very technical about most issues BUT I would like to lend support to the concept that the current downtown area remain strong and attractive to businesses and to shopping. I would really hate to see for rent/for sale signs throughout the downtown area or businesses without the capital to stay viable or to keep their businesses looking attractive, etc. A healthy attractive downtown brings the tourists in to places like Whitefish and Bigfork to name a few.

I also feel strongly about maintaining Polson's natural beauty through parks, wise commercial and subdivision planning, attractive traffic thoroughfares, bike paths, etc. This is all addressed but I want to emphasize how important it is to me to live in a place that supports these concepts.

Thanks. Shannon Nunlist

1/13/2006



PARC

PATHWAYS TO
ACTIVITIES,
RECREATION
AND CULTURE



JANUARY 12, 2006

SARAH NICOLAI
HKM ENGINEERING
7 WEST 6TH AVENUE
POBOX 1009
HELENA, MT 59624

DEAR MS NICOLAI

ON BEHALF OF THE PARC CORPORATION, A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION FOUNDED IN APRIL 2005, WE WOULD LIKE TO ADD OUR COMMENTS TO *THE POLSON GROWTH POLICY DRAFT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES*.

THE *POLSON GROWTH POLICY* IS RIGHT ON TARGET WITH OUR MISSION STATEMENT TO DEVELOP COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS TO CREATE A MORE ATTRACTIVE LOCATION TO LIVE (SEE ATTACHMENT).

FOR THE PAST YEAR, PARC HAS BEEN WORKING HARD TO COMPLETE OUR STATED 3-YEAR GOAL PLAN. ONE OF OUR IMMEDIATE GOALS IS TO GENERATE PLANNING INTEREST INTO DEVELOPING BIKING AND HIKING TRAILS THROUGHOUT THE POLSON COMMUNITY. AS A FIRST STEP IN ACHIEVING THAT GOAL, PARC HAS MADE A COMMITMENT TO THE CITY TO MAINTAIN THE TRAIL FROM THE HWY 93 /35 INTERSECTION TO THE MRL SITE.

THE *POLSON GROWTH POLICY* HAS CORRECTLY IDENTIFIED THE MRL SITE AS APPROPRIATE LAND FOR FUTURE USE AS A PARK AND RECREATION AREA BECAUSE IT IS A CENTRALLY LOCATED LINK TO THE COMMUNITY. PARC HAS BEEN DEVELOPING CONTACTS WITH THE OWNERS TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE THE TRAIL SYSTEM THROUGH THE SITE TO LINK UP WITH EXISTING TRIALS AND SIDEWALKS THROUGHOUT TOWN.

WE ALSO APPLAUD THE GOAL TO DEVELOP A COMMUNITY CENTER, AND HOPE THAT THESE ISSUES WILL BE GIVEN PRIORITY STATUS IN THE PLANNING AND GROWTH OF OUR CITY

SINCERELY,
PARC BOARD OFFICERS -
NATHAN PIERCE, PRESIDENT
MIKE ROBERTS, VICE PRESIDENT
CHRIS WEISS, SECRETARY
MARY GERTSON, TRESURER

C.C. POLSON CITY COUNCIL
MAYOR RANDY INGRAM

I ATTACHMENT

208 6TH AVE. E. POLSON, MT 59860



**PATHWAYS TO ACTIVITIES, RECREATION AND CULTURE
(PARC)**

Mission: PARC is a community based, non-profit organization, established to provide a network of centrally located facilities for community services involving health, education, recreation, arts and culture.

Inspiration: The formation of PARC was inspired by possibilities surrounding a 20-acre parcel situated in Polson, MT and has led to an effort to obtain and develop sites for combined parks, trail systems and community facilities.

Problem: Consistent challenges for small communities include needs for public facilities to promote community cohesion, community healthiness and well-being, recreation and culture. Positive community models and constructive activities are needed, particularly for youth. Facilities for cultural outlets, educational and community events to attract artists, writers and performers are lacking. Trail systems are also lacking, to promote neighborhood cohesiveness, exercise and a means of enjoying the outdoors throughout the seasons.

Solution: PARC will provide low-cost facilities for users for both indoor and outdoor community gatherings, ranging in scope from clubs, talks, hobbyist groups and meetings, to social, family and community celebrations, to cultural events and community festivals. Facilities will be available for child development activities and education.

Paths based at PARC will accommodate a wide range of trail activities, including bike, walking and/or equestrian trails, and will network to other trails and facilities.

Development of other outdoor options, such as a climbing wall, Frisbee golf course, team-building course and outdoor festival or market space will be developed in planned phases, as will expanded parking sufficient to accommodate large events.

The project and display areas, both indoor and outdoor, will promote arts, culture, education, environment, team-building and local history, while the community spaces will provide room for presentations, meetings or activities related to the displays.

208 6TH AVE. E.
POLSON, MT 59860

PARC



Goals and objectives:

Over the next 3 years, PARC shall:

- *Establish itself as a viable non-profit organization devoted to providing community facilities that promote health, education, recreation, arts and culture:*
File for 501C3 status; develop a community identity; develop a Board; search for funding.
- *Establish a facility plan:*
Identify potential sites and take steps to secure an initial location; develop a working design and a phased plan for various facility components at that location (ie—multi-purpose building, park and trail systems).
- *Foster partnerships with:*
Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, schools and community groups and others for involvement with both the development of and usage of the facilities; meet with Chambers of Commerce and local media to forge community connections and increased visibility.

Long term Goals:

- Capital campaign and grants
- Expand PARC program to network parks and community facilities with a trail system
- Expand facilities per phased plan at the initial location
- Network with and/or add sites



Mike Roberts
810 5th Ave. E.
Polson, MT 59860

Sarah Nicolai
HKM Engr.
P.O. Box 1009
Helena, MT 59624

Dear Sarah,

I attended 2 of your meetings & thought you guys did a great job!

In your final draft, I thoroughly enjoyed the detail to trail systems, parks & recreation possibilities.

One thing I think we need to add is an architectural board, offering people ideas of simple details to help make homes & buildings a bit more attractive & possibly less generic looking.

Also I think we need to install an ordinance limiting the size of commercial buildings.

As a lifelong (4th generation) citizen of this county, I still retain hope that the sky possibly, is not the limit!

Thank you kindly,

Sincerely,




From: Richard Rosa
Sent: Thursday, January 12, 2006 9:04 PM
To: snicolai@hkminc.com
Subject: Proposed Polson Growth Policy

Comments on the Proposed Polson Growth Policy

We very much approve of essentially all of the "The Proposed Polson Growth Policy". Items we feel are especially significant are the following.

Encourage;

Growth of year round residents and housing for the elderly.

A Salish Point arts center.

The down town business district.

Jobs that pay a living wage. For example existing businesses that a Supercenter would destroy.

Strict codes and standards for signs. Eliminate billboards along the highways.

Fair salaries for city employees.

Repair projects in older sections of town.

Local recycling of containers of all sorts.

A US 93 bypass, when and if it becomes necessary, with restricted commercial development.

Conversion of the old railroad property into a park. Construction of a swim center.

In addition we strongly feel that zoning regulations should not be changed just because a developer would like to change them. Zoning regulations are meant to protect citizens from developers whose ONLY goal is profit.

For example, a variance from housing to accommodate a box store plus 779 parking spaces, clearly is not in the best interests of anyone except, of course, the developer.

Richard and Marion Rosa, Polson

1/13/2006



Polson Growth Policy - 2006

JAN-13-2006 15:10 FROM: CITY OF POLSON 1 406 883 8238

TO: 91406442037767

P: 2

Jan 13 26 11:38a TRISON II

406 777 4668

P. 1

Wita / FYI

RECEIVED
JAN 13 2006
BY:

Jan. 12, 2006

City of Polson
106 1st Ave East
Polson, Mt.
883-8238

Robert Williams
1005 Hillside Court
Polson, Mt
883-0366

RE; Polson, Mt Growth Policy by HKM

Dear City of Polson,

Please be advised that upon review of the proposed Growth Policy for the City of Polson I offer the following :

- 1) This policy should be rejected as it is a product of self serving City officials who seek to enrich themselves at the expense of the Citizens of Polson by using this important document to secretly insert language to raise their personal salaries .
- 2) Additionally , this document will be used to SECRETLY increase the size of our local government which will result in a increase of our taxes and fees .
- 3) I also reject the methods of this administration to educate and make available this document before any action is taken .It has also come to my attention that council members themselves have not read or studied this document to date thereby demonstrating the lack of availability to the general public and attempt to keep this secret from the public.
- 4) I also believe that a TOTAL DISCLOSURE to the PUBLIC of this administrations attempts to use this document to increase the size and scope of our government as well as your attempts to raise your personal salaries is in order PRIOR to any of your attempts to move this forward . Citizens have the RIGHT to know that it is your intent to use this document for these purposes BEFORE any action is taken. Additionally we also have the right to know who the persons are that are personally responsible for inserting this language into this document and advertisements to this effect should be made to the public by this administration which will serve to educate and inform your purposes .
- 5) Passage of this document is not in the best interests of the City of Polson and will most likely result in more litigation against this administration . When will this administration realize and take serious your oath to represent ONLY the best interests of this community and remove those responsible for conduct contrary to this oath. I also believe that HKM

Ag 1052

JAN-13-2006 FRI 11:25 TEL:1 406 883 8238

NAME: CITY OF POLSON

P 1



Polson Growth Policy - 2006

JAN-13-2006 15:10 FROM: CITY OF POLSON 1 406 883 8238

TO: 91406442037767

P: 3

Jan 13 26 11:38a

TRISON II

406 777 4668

P. 2

bears responsibility and should be immediately terminated and a demand for a total refund of the funds forwarded to them be made by this council.

6) I demand that an ethics and conflict of interests violation be issued against the individuals who inserted this language into this document and that this entire matter be made public and that this entire document be rejected.

7) In closing I demand that this letter be read into the minutes of the next council meeting in order to make a written record of these facts and my concerns. I would read this myself if select members of the current administration had not conspired with certain members of the community to keep me from council meetings. I will talk to this subject in the near future.

Sincerely,

Bob Williams

pg 2 of 2

JAN-13-2006 15:10

FROM: CITY OF POLSON

1 406 883 8238

TO: 91406442037767

P: 3