

GRANITE COUNTY GROWTH POLICY PLAN

Granite County, Montana



**Approved by the Granite County Board of Commissioners December 17, 2012
Resolution #2012-33**

GRANITE COUNTY, MONTANA GROWTH POLICY PLAN

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This Comprehensive Growth Policy conforms to the
Requirements of 76-1-601, MCA

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The Granite County Commissioners directed the Granite County Planning Board to update the Granite County Growth Policy in the summer of 2009. The County directed the committee to approach the project similar to a neighborhood planning process. The Growth Policy was originally adopted in 2006 after an extensive public involvement process.

It was the intent of the commissioners to address critical issues unique to different areas of Granite County. It was with this goal in mind that the County hired a consultant to facilitate discussions in the various communities throughout the county.

It is understood that planning is a long-term, dynamic process. Planning is an activity in Montana that is guided by state law.

Over a two-year period, the County was engaged in planning activities at the local level, specifically in areas of the county, including Georgetown Lake, Lower Rock Creek, the Town of Drummond and the Town of Philipsburg.

Planning as an activity provides an opportunity for the public to communicate directly with both appointed officials (Planning Board) and elected officials (County Commissioners). This document is intended to provide policy guidance today and into the future.

Many planning documents are overly technical in nature and detail. It was the intent that this document not be overly technical, but rather easily understood by the general layperson. Particularly in Counties like Granite County where there are limited resources for implementing policies, a limited growth policy is more practical to achieve policy goals.

In addition to the growth policy, Granite County completed a Capital Improvements Plan under the assistance of a contract with a government finance expert. That document paired with this document should continue to provide guidance to future commissioners engaged in managing the County's resources.

Planning does not provide a crystal ball to any future. There are many scenarios which could change either moderately or drastically the future of Granite County. Some of the general characteristics which will change the face of the County in the near future will be the continued aging of the population, the need for the County to diversify its economy, and a continued support for the reliance on cultural tourism.

Granite County is geographically diverse and provides a variety of opportunities to residents and visitors alike.

Some of the truly unique characteristics of Granite County are the business owners in Philipsburg and Drummond with their diligent attempts to maintain a strong downtown in the face of rural decline, and the strong sense of community among the residents of Lower Rock Creek. The school pride found in Drummond and Philipsburg and the unique characters found in various parts of the County.

Some larger events on the local level that could have major impacts on the community would be the Basin Gulch Gold Mine, expansion activities at Discovery Basin, etc. Other events not anticipated could have additional impacts on the County.

SECTION 1 – BACKGROUND (Historical)

The population of Granite County (also referred to hereinafter as the “County”) has been fairly stable since 1970 – in the 2,700-2,800 range. However, the County has seen substantial subdivision development, while at the same time, the mining and timber industries are declining. Agriculture is the dominant basic industry and is the mainstay of the County’s economy. Granite County, seeing the need to ensure that new development is well planned, foster economic growth, and good quality services, and protect the critical agricultural land base, developed its first growth policy from 2004-2006.

A county growth policy plan can address any aspect of government that is part of county commissioners’ responsibility. This Granite County Growth Policy Plan (hereinafter referred to as the “Growth Policy”) focuses on certain responsibilities of county government: managing land use, providing county services, promoting economic development, and fostering safe, decent housing for county residents.

The existing Granite County Growth Policy was adopted in 2006 after several years of development. The Granite County Planning Board led the development of the original growth policy. The County conducted a county-wide citizens’ opinion survey, and held many public meetings throughout the County. Many citizens and organizations contributed to the drafting of the draft Growth Policy.

The 2010-2011 Growth Policy is considered an update to the original growth policy, and is not intended to replace the existing growth policy, but is rather updating and adding additional information where necessary to bring the Growth Policy into compliance with current law. Meetings throughout Granite County were scheduled in 2010 and 2011 to gather public comment on changes since adoption of the first County Growth Policy.

These meetings focused on issues specific to different areas within the county. In this way, the goals, objectives and policies which follow are specific to areas in the County where greater focus was needed in order to address specific issues.

In the original growth policy, a county-wide opinion survey indicated the residents’ strong support for the County adopting policies, even regulations to ensure that new growth is orderly and to protect productive agricultural land. However, many citizens in the public meetings expressed concern that private property rights be protected. Many, including farmers and ranchers, saw the need to do something to try to preserve irrigated and other productive agricultural lands. While farmers and ranchers expressed a natural resistance to zoning or other land use regulations, according to the survey, most would be willing to accept some reasonable level of regulation if they are able to help draft the particular requirements.

Since adoption of the existing growth policy, subdivision regulations have been regularly enforced and updated to meet current state requirements. Under Montana law, landowners are permitted to petition the county commissioners to form a planning and zoning district and to develop local land use regulations and requirements for their neighborhood.

There has been one instance of zoning during the development of this growth policy, in an area around Georgetown Lake. This zoning has created a district and the County has proceeded with the responsibility of developing the necessary administrative infrastructure to support the zoning district.

Granite County believes that the most politically acceptable approach to protecting agricultural operations and productive agricultural land, and other county assets and values, is to encourage the formation of localized planning and zoning districts.

This Growth Policy does not advocate or authorize county-wide zoning.

A. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA

Granite County is located in western Montana. It is bordered on the north by Missoula County, on the northeast by Powell County, on the southeast by Deer Lodge County, and on the west by Ravalli County. The County includes 1,730 square miles. The County is largely mountainous and contains portions of Beaverhead-Deer Lodge and Lolo National Forests. The Continental Divide crosses the southeastern boundary and the Sapphire Mountains define the western border. A section of the Anaconda-Pintler Wilderness area lies along the southeastern boundary. The Clark Fork River crosses the northern portion of the County, while Rock Creek traverses the entire length of the western edge of the County. The Flint Creek Valley crosses the middle of Granite County from Georgetown Lake north to Drummond. Elevations in the County range from over 10,000 to less than 4,000. Georgetown Lake is the dominant surface water in the County, with a water storage capacity of approximately 32,000 acre feet. The major agricultural land consists of gently sloping and rolling benches and terraces along the Flint Creek drainage, with significant irrigated acres on Upper Rock Creek and along the Clark Fork River.

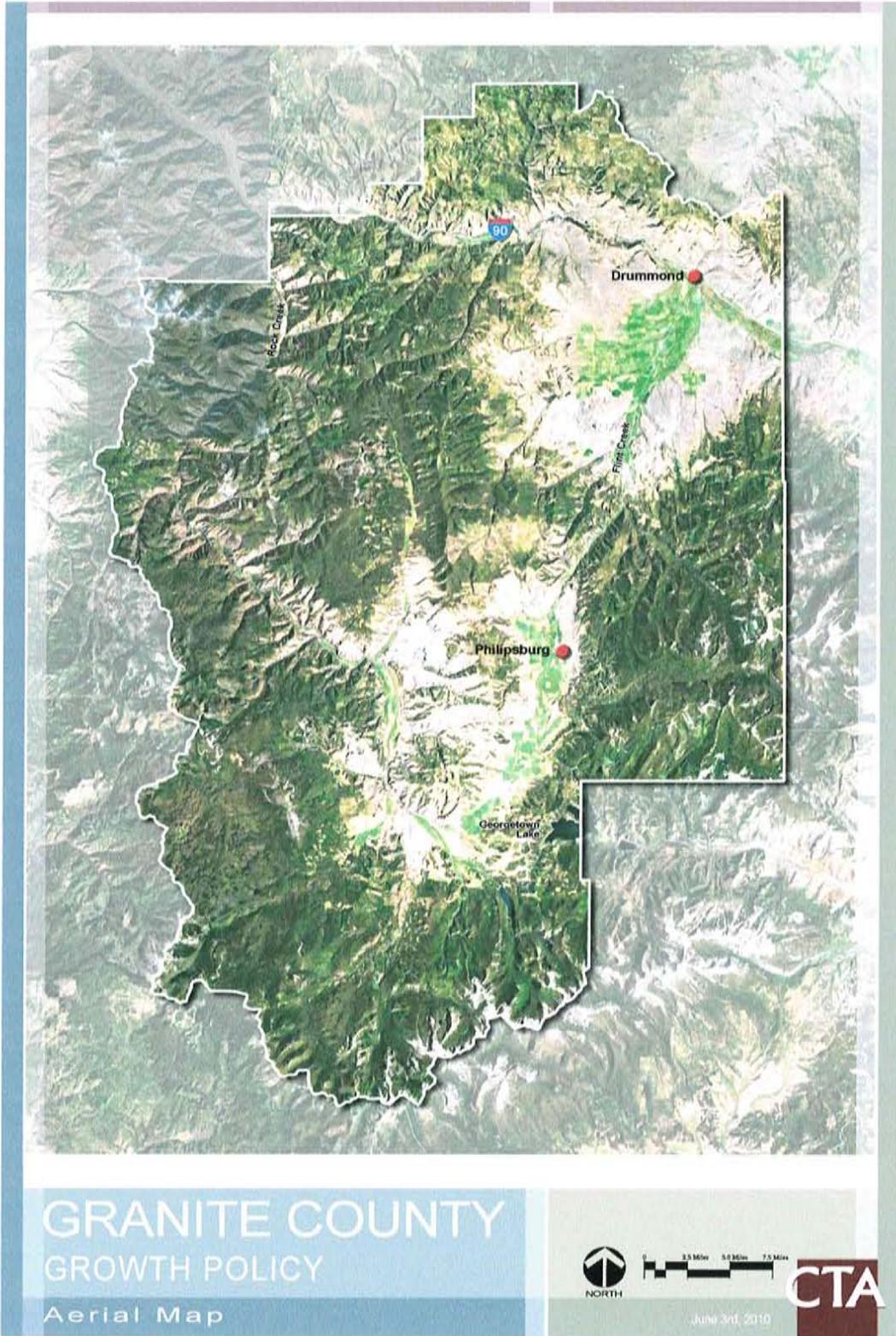
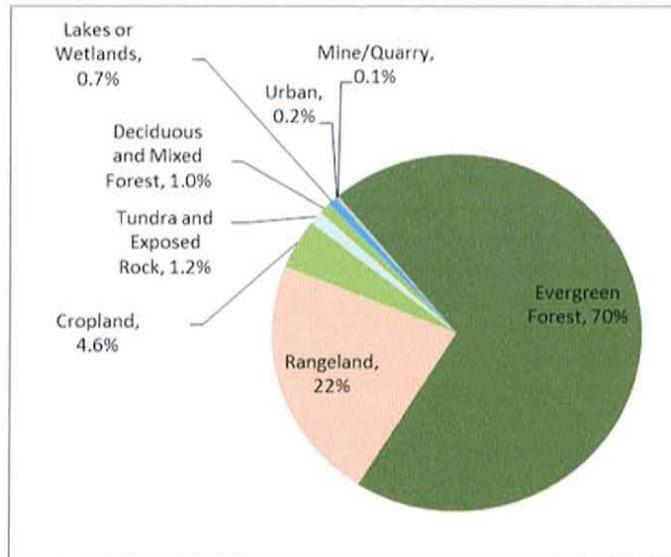


Table 1 – Land Use in Granite County

<u>Land Use/Land Cover</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Evergreen Forest	70%
Rangeland	22%
Cropland	4.6%
Tundra and Exposed Rock	1.2%
Deciduous and Mixed Forest	1.0%
Lakes or Wetlands	0.7%
Urban	0.2%
Mine/Quarry	0.1%
TOTAL	100%

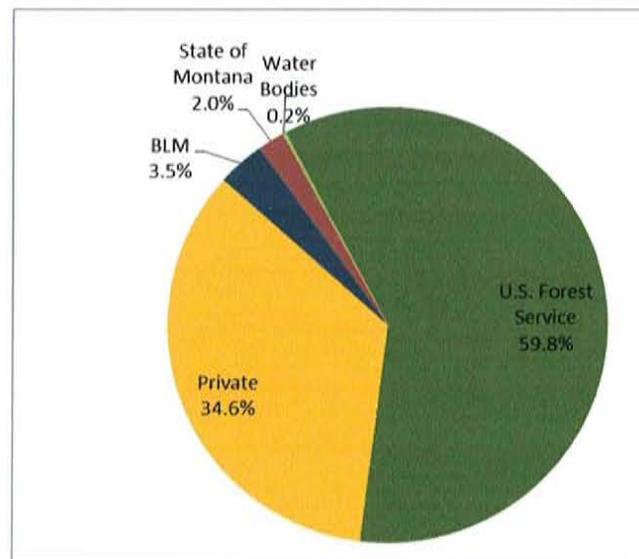


Source: USGS NLCS

Seventy percent of Granite County land is occupied by montane evergreen forest, with productive rangeland covering about 22 percent. Agricultural cropland occupies just under five percent, while the remaining three percent is occupied by deciduous forest, water features, urban areas or mining activities.

Table 2 – Land Ownership

<u>Ownership</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Private	35%
Lumber	2%
Other Private	33%
Water Bodies	0.2%
Public	65%
U.S. Bureau of Land Management	3%
U.S. Forest Service	60%
State of Montana	2%
TOTAL	100%

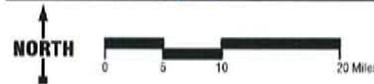
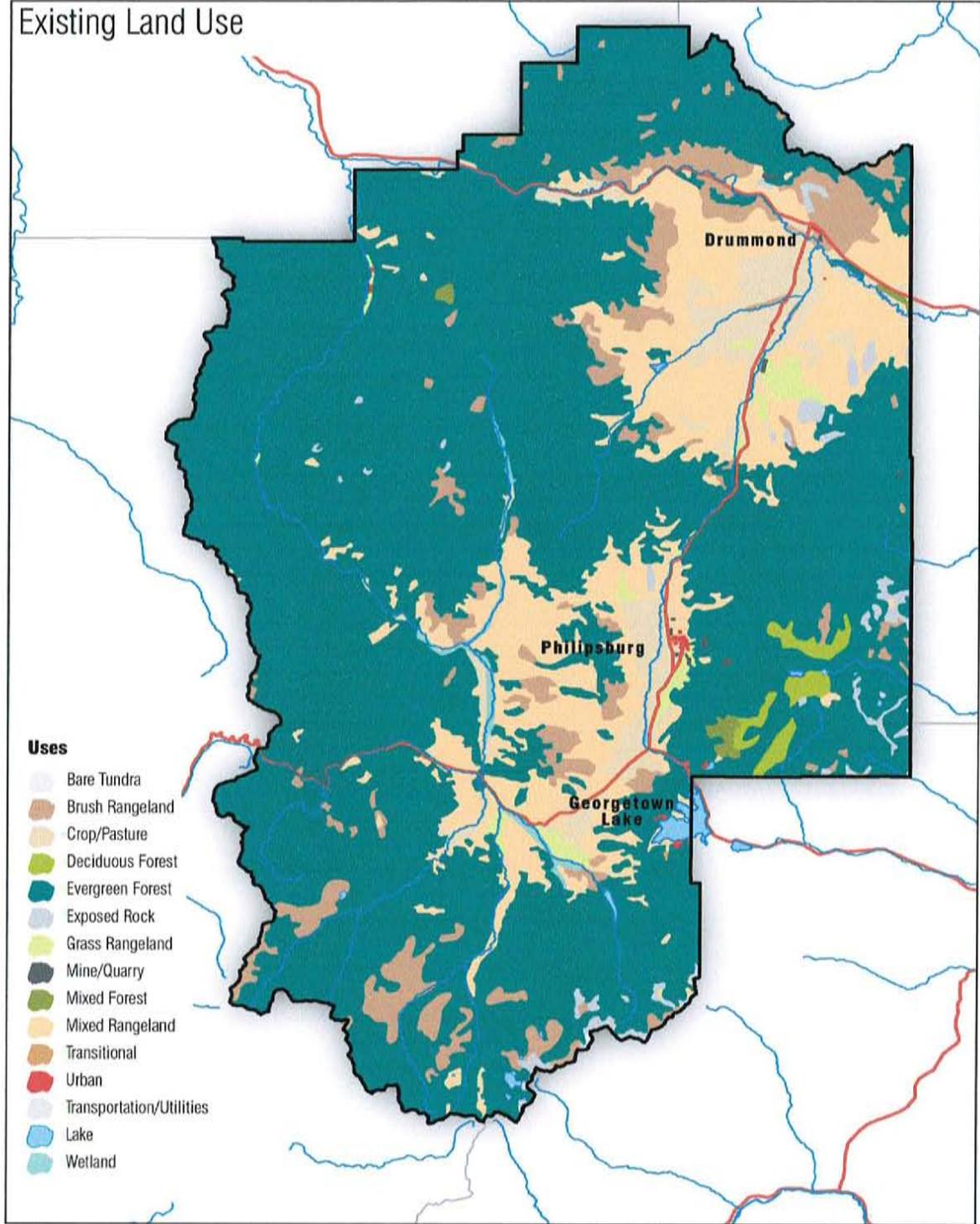


Source: Montana Cadastral.

The majority of lands in Granite County are publicly-owned, occupying 65 percent of the total area. Of this, about 60 percent is maintained by the U.S. Forest Service, three-and-a-half percent by the Bureau of Land Management, and two percent is under state ownership. Private land in Granite County accounts for 35% of the total area, with about two percent belonging to private lumber operations in northern Granite County.

Granite County

Existing Land Use



Data: USGS, Montana NRS

The climate of the County is consistent with that of the Rocky Mountain region. The winters are cold with temperatures dropping to less than 30 degrees below zero for a week at a time. The summers are warm with a number of days in excess of 90 degrees. Extreme fluctuations in temperatures, wind, and precipitation intensity are common. The annual precipitation is 15” at Philipsburg to 12” at Drummond. The growing season averages 55 frost-free days.

Philipsburg is the county seat of Granite County. Drummond is the other incorporated town. Unincorporated communities include Hall, Maxville, and Georgetown Lake.

A. POPULATION

The 2010 Census shows that Granite County’s population had 3,079, a seven percent increase since 2000 when the population was 2,830. Of those persons, 820 live in the Town of Philipsburg (27%) and 309 lived in the town of Drummond (10%). US Census updates are provided in the table below. Granite County’s population has remained stable in the 2,500-2,800 range since 1970, but Philipsburg has decreased 27 percent from 1970 to 2010, and Drummond has decreased 37 percent in the same period, although it gained population between 1990 and 2000.

Table 3 – Population of Granite County, Phillipsburg and Drummond

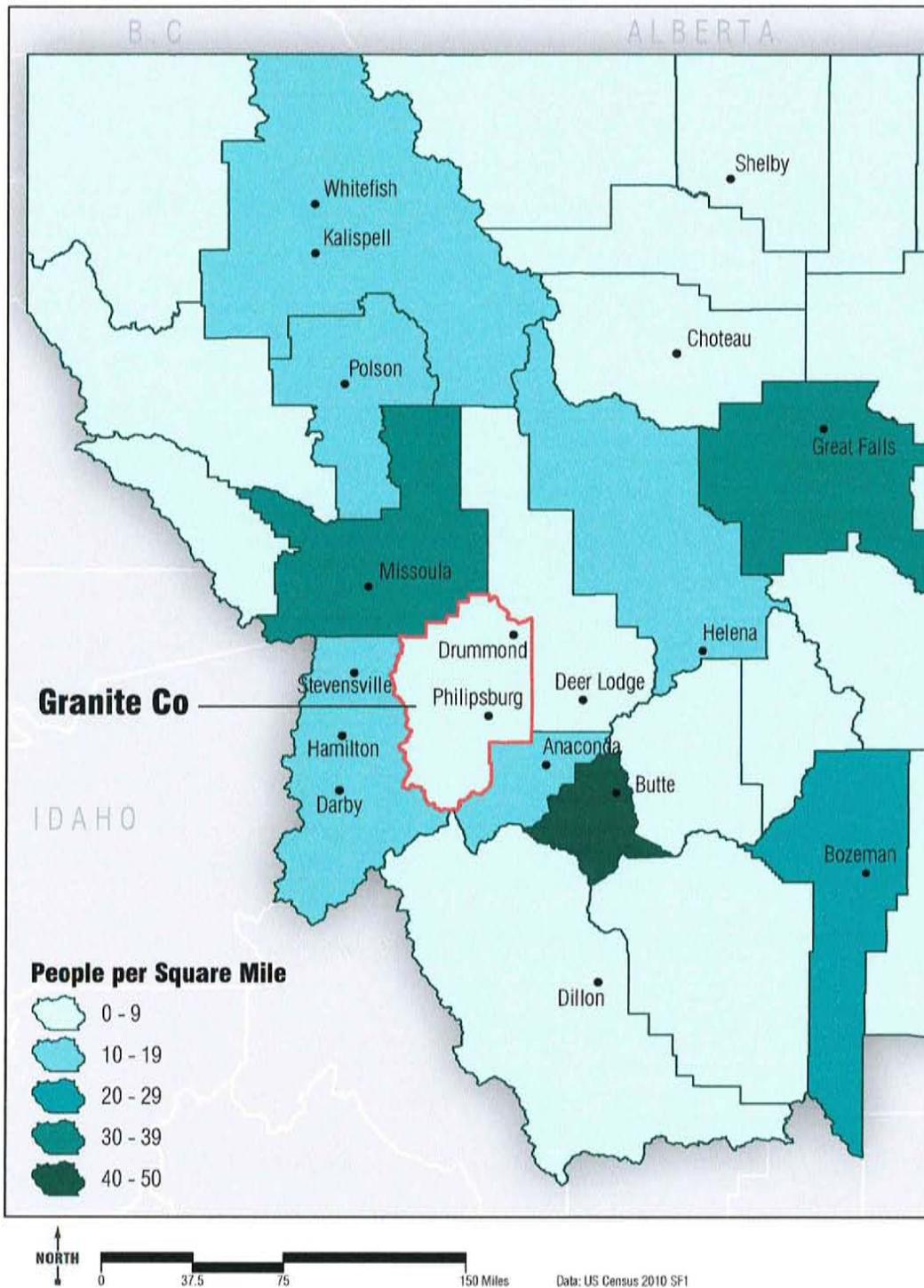
	<u>Granite County</u>	<u>Town of Philipsburg</u>	<u>Town of Drummond</u>
1970	2,737	1,128	494
1980	2,700	1,138	414
1990	2,548	925	264
2000	2,830	914	318
2010	3,079	820	309

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census

Census information should be considered in relation to the participation rate in Granite County and the general characteristics of housing in Granite County. Granite County participated at a rate of 40% in the 2000 Census, well below the state and national average. This may be due in part to the fact that many of the residential units in Granite County are occupied as secondary residences, not primary residences. In any case, there is a relatively low participation rate in the US Census.

Granite County has a lower population compared to surrounding counties. Adjacent counties have larger population centers, such as Anaconda, Butte and Missoula. The map below shows population densities of nearby counties in geographic relationship to Granite County communities.

Western Montana Population Density



Source: Montana NRIS, US Census 2010

The following table shows the breakdown of the Granite County population by age groups from the 2010 census, and shows the percentages for Montana as a comparison.

Table 4 – Granite County Population, Percentage by Age, Montana Percentage, 2010

	-----Granite County-----		Montana Percent
	<u>No.</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Under 5 years	116	3.8%	6.3%
5 through 14 years	309	10%	12.3%
15 through 24 years	222	7.2%	13.5%
25 through 44 years	523	17%	23.8%
45 through 54 years	529	17.2%	15.1%
55 through 59 years	338	11%	7.7%
60 through 64 years	289	9.4%	6.4%
65 and older	753	24.5%	14.8%
Median Age	52.1 years		39.8 years

Source: U.S. Census 2010, American Community Survey, 2005-2009

Compared to past projections, the general trend in Granite County is similar to national and state level demographic trends, predominantly the aging of the population, particularly with respect to the baby boomer generation. In comparison to the state of Montana, the median age in Granite County is older with a larger percentage of the population age 45 and older.

Table 5 – Granite County Population and Employment

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2010</u>
Total Population	2,830	3,079
Total Employment	1,765	1,843

Population and Employment Projections

The existing growth policy describes progressive trends for population and employment which have not held true over the past planning period. As was stated previously, Granite County’s population has remained stable over a forty year period from 1970 until today, and should be projected to be stable going into the future.

Completing trends analysis given the stable population growth is not necessary. It can generally be assumed that the population will trend towards stability in the future.

B. THE ECONOMY

Granite County's economy, like any local economy, is a result of three factors:

1. Money coming into the County from the out-of-county sale of goods and services;
2. The extent to which those in-coming dollars are spent in Granite County for local goods and services; and,
3. Money leaving Granite County spent on goods and services outside the County.

Basic (or primary) industries are those economic sectors that bring income from outside into the County, primarily through the sales of goods or services to out-of-county purchasers. Secondary (or derivative) sectors are those that sell local goods and services purchased as a result of subsequent spending of basic income within the County. Secondary industries principally serve the local population.

Income from sale of agriculture, forestry, mining, and manufacturing products is basic income because these products are sold out-of-county (even if a basic product is sold within the county, the income is still considered basic income because the sale replaces a purchase the buyer would otherwise have made out-of-county). The heavy construction and public utilities industries and federal and state government are considered basic sectors because the wages to pay the employees are generated out-of-county. Travel/tourism is considered a basic industry because it brings in income from out-of-county travelers. The secondary sectors include retail and wholesale trade, services, building contractors, finance, insurance, real estate and local government. These are secondary sectors because they serve the local population and are supported by the spending of basic sector income.

Out-of-county travelers, recreationists, and tourists purchase goods and services provided by the retail and service sectors. Therefore, that portion of the income and jobs in the retail and service sectors must be considered basic because the sales come from out-of-county. No clear method exists to estimate the amount of sales or number of jobs in retail and service jobs that are generated by travel/tourism. Motels, hotels, guides and outfitters, and guest ranches serve almost exclusively out-of-county persons, and thus clearly are basic industries. Retail stores and eating and drinking establishments receive some portion of their income from out-of-county patrons.

A county's economy is strengthened when (1) income from basic industries increases; (2) sales of local goods and services increase; and, (3) less money is spent for out-of-county goods and services.

i. Earnings; Personal Income

Earnings within a county comprise:

1. Wages, salaries, and other spending on labor; and,
2. Net income of proprietors.

Personal income is a measure of all revenues received in a county. Personal income is the total income derived from:

1. Earnings (wages, salaries, other labor, and net income of proprietors);
2. Income from rents, dividends, interest; and,
3. Governmental transfer payments.

Wages, salaries, and net income of proprietors totaled \$23,553,000 in earnings in 2010 (See Table 6. [*on the following page*]). Governmental transfer payments in Granite County totaled \$23,994,000. Rents, dividends and interest totaled \$25,532,000.

Table 6 [below] shows that total earnings were up 24% from 2001 to 2010 although farm income was reported to be negative, down 170% from 2001. Among the basic industries (in green) in Granite County, construction generated about \$5 million in earnings, or 12%, among all economic sectors. Forestry, fishing and related industries (primarily wood products) generated \$3.8 million (9%). The federal government, treated here as a basic industry, is the third largest basic industry, generating \$3 million, or 7.4%, of all economic sectors. Fourth in earnings is the military with \$720,000 generated, or 1.8%; mining is fifth generating 1.6% of the economy.

Table 6 – Earnings for Granite County

<u>Earnings by Industry (in \$1,000s)</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
Basic Industries			
Farm Earnings	-910	1,306	-170%
Forestry, Fishing and Related	3,816	(D)	-
Mining	664	(D)	-
Construction	5,082	2,030	150%
Manufacturing	629	2,254	-72%
Transport, Warehousing and Utilities	2,370	1,383	71%
Federal Government	3,059	2,262	35%
Military	723	239	203%
Secondary Industry			
Wholesale	(D)	(D)	-
Retail	2,893	1,822	59%
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	(D)	(D)	-
Professional, Scientific, and Information	(D)	(D)	-
Management	-	-	0%
Administrative and Waste Mgmt.	(D)	634	-
Education, Health Care and Social Assistance	327	(D)	-
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	(D)	676	-
Accommodation and Food Services	(D)	905	-
Other Services	2,796	2,370	18%
State and Local Government	8,968	6,314	42%
Total Earnings	41,083	33,192	24%

(D) Withheld due to disclosure agreements, data included in higher level totals

Source: US Bureau of Economic Analysis

Local government (including schools) is the dominant economic sector among the secondary industries (in red), generating nearly \$9 million in earnings, or 22%, of all sectors. Among reported secondary sector earnings, retail trade and other services each generate just under \$3 million in earnings, or 0.7%.

Table 7 – Estimated Full and Part-Time Employment by Sector, Granite County 2010

<u>Employment by Industry</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
Basic Industries		
Farm Employment	166	8%
Forestry, Fishing and Related	126	6%
Mining	76	4%
Construction	156	8%
Manufacturing	69	4%
Transport, Warehousing and Utilities	77	4%
Federal Government	41	2%
Military	15	1%
Secondary Industries		
Wholesale	(D)	
Retail	195	10%
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	(D)	-
Professional, Scientific, and Information	(D)	-
Management	0	0
Administrative and Waste Mgmt.	(D)	-
Education, Health Care and Social Assistance	48	2%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	(D)	-
Accommodation and Food Services	(D)	-
Other Services	128	7%
State and Local Government	218	11%
Total Employment	1,967	100%

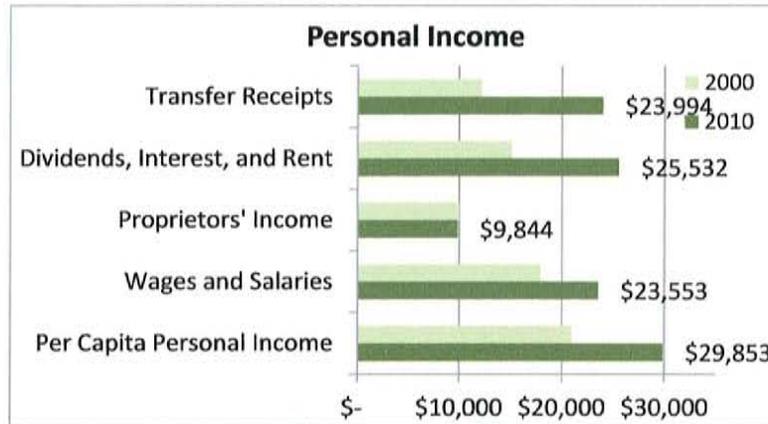
(D) Withheld due to disclosure agreements, data included in higher level totals

Source: US Bureau of Economic Analysis

The above table describes the number of jobs by employment sector in Granite County. The largest single-point employers (among those reporting employment figures) are in secondary industries. Of the 1,967 jobs, the most workers (274) belong to the public sector, most of whom

are state and local government employees. With almost 200 jobs, the retail sector is the second largest, and farm employment accounts for eight percent, or 166 jobs.

Table 8 – Personal Income 2000-2010



Per capita personal income increased \$8,900 or about 43% in the ten-year period between 2000 and 2010. Increases in dividends, interest, and rent, transfer receipts, and wages or salaries contributed to this growth, while income from proprietorships was unchanged.

C. LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE

A Capital Improvements Plan was completed in 2010 to assess government spending and budget trends, and to assess needs for public services and facilities. It is included as Appendix C for reference.

Each real and personal property in Montana is classified into one of a number of different property tax classifications. Each property is given an assessed value, which in most cases approximates the market value. The Montana legislature sets a tax rate for each tax classification, and that tax rate is multiplied by the assessed value of the property to obtain the property’s taxable value. Units of local government (e.g., cities, counties, school districts) set mill levies against the taxable value of the properties within their jurisdiction to generate property tax revenues.

Granite County had a total property taxable valuation of \$10,254,000 in 2000. As can be seen from Table 9 [on the next page], utilities/railroads are the largest contributor to the County’s property tax base with \$3.7 million in taxable valuation. This is largely because of a privately-owned electric power transmission line that crosses Granite County from east to west, and the mainline of the Montana Rail Link railroad located in the County. Residential property is the second largest contributor to the County property tax base; agriculture the third largest. One effect of Montana’s property tax structure appears in Table 8. The total assessed value of

residential property in Granite County is \$75 million, but its taxable value is \$2.7 million. In contrast, the assessed value of utilities is \$28 million, but their taxable value is \$3.1 million. Under Montana law, utilities have a tax rate of 12%, while residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural properties have a tax rate of 3.4% or less.

**Table 9 – Major Classes of Taxable Valuation
Granite County, 2000**
(Updated values for 2010 not available at time of adoption)

<u>Type of Property (Tax Rate)</u>	<u>Taxable Value</u>	<u>Percent of Taxable Value</u>	<u>Assessed Value</u>
Utilities (12%)	\$2,753,000	32%	\$ 23,558,000
Residential (3.6%)	2,680,000	31%	74,606,000
Agriculture (3-3.6%)	950,000	11%	25,950,000
Commercial/Industrial (3.6%)	708,000	8%	21,400,000
Railroad (4.27%)	746,000	9%	17,480,000
Telecommunications (6%)	436,000	5%	7,263,000
<u>Timberland (.57%)</u>	<u>320,000</u>	<u>4%</u>	<u>56,158,000</u>
Total	\$8,594,000	100%	\$226,432,000

Source: Montana Department of Revenue

The Town of Philipsburg, the county seat, has a taxable valuation in the range of \$800,000. The Town of Drummond has a taxable valuation in the range of \$400,000.

The Granite County budget for annual expenditures and revenues varies every year. First, the needs and costs of county offices, boards, and districts change from year-to-year for reasons such as population changes, new state or federal requirements, and changing desires of county residents. Second, the Montana legislature changes tax rates and available state grants to local government, and federal programs for local government are frequently changed. Therefore, the budget and mill levies change from year-to-year. Table 10 below on the next page shows the (rounded) budgeted expenditures and mill levies for fiscal year 2011-2012, which is representative of Granite County, Philipsburg, and Drummond’s annual budgets. The budgets for each fund shown in Table 1X.1 (*on the next pages*) do not include cash reserves for the various departments, boards, and districts. Tax and other revenues often are received by the County only several times throughout the year. Cash reserves are carried by local governments to ensure that cash is available for paying bills during periods between receipt of tax and other revenues.

Table 10 – County-wide Budget and Mill Levies

<u>County-wide Funds</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Mill Levies</u>
General Fund	1,698,489	75.50
Road	1,420,441	30.53
Bridge	494,648	10.45
Weed	139,270	3.63
Tri County Fair	4,000	0.35
District Court	105,220	5.65
Co. Health/Sanitarian	107,200	3.59
County Planning	117,475	1.00
Senior Citizens	20,000	1.80
Airport	32,100	0.70
Comp/Health Insurance	110,972	6.50
Co. Agent/Extension	65,025	4.97
P.E.R.S.	64,500	5.68
Total County-wide	4,379,340	150.35
<u>Districts</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Mill Levies</u>
Valley Fire	78,900	15
Philipsburg Ambulance	126,848	1.63
Drummond Ambulance	64,000	1.94
Soil Conservation	31,850	1.86
Cemetery 1	53,000	5.93
Cemetery 2	110,500	6.89
Solid Waste District	465,098	\$122/Unit

Table 1X.1

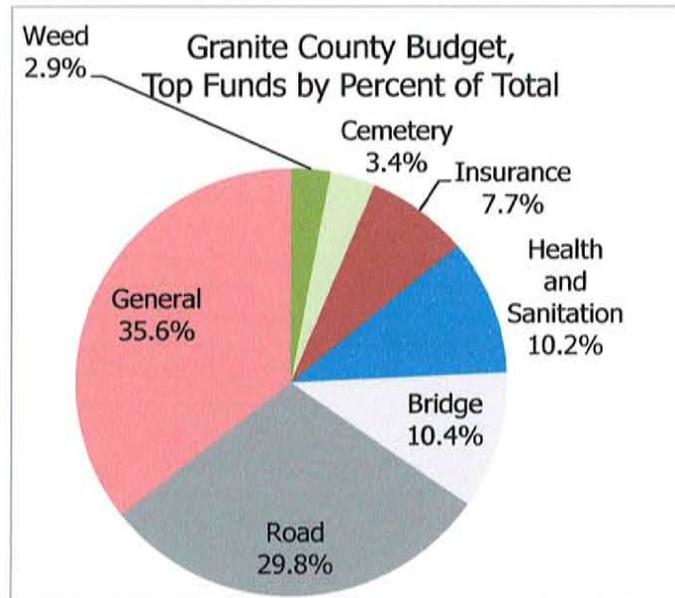


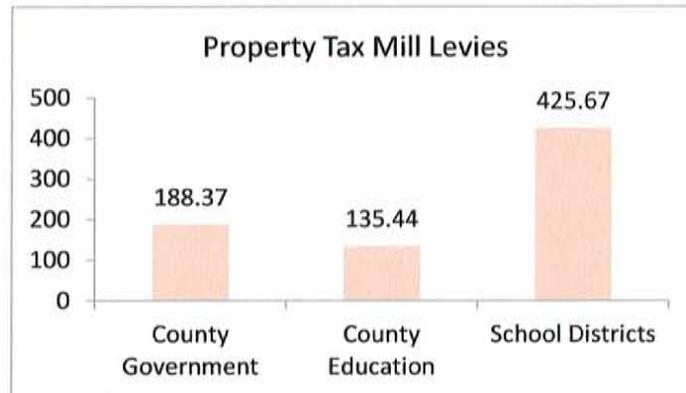
Table 11 below shows the revenue sources that fund the Granite County budget. Property taxes, state and federal agency payments in lieu of taxes (PILT), state and federal grants, fees, fines and charges, and cash on hand are the major sources of revenues. The "Other" category includes many different sources such as assessments and receipts from interest, rents, and licenses. Cash on hand is the unexpended, unencumbered money carried over from the previous fiscal year in the many different budget line items among the various departments, boards, and districts.

Table 11 – Revenue Sources, Granite County 2010

<u>Non-levied Funds</u>	<u>Revenue (\$)</u>
County Land Info Fee	1,500
CDBG	2,636
MCH	2,654
Planning Coal Tax	3,200
Record Preservation	3,600
Junk Vehicles	7,500
Rumsey Mountain	13,000
Crime Control	20,200
Council Aging	22,982
Drug Forfeiture	23,631
HB 645	24,474
Gas Tax	58,021
Compensated Absence	68,780
Title III	69,000
Weed	80,275
Capital Projects	87,000
Flint Creek Project	96,300
911 Emergency	100,500
Payments In Lieu of Taxes	232,019
	<u>Revenue (\$)</u>
Property Taxes	1,995,506

Residents of Granite County pay property taxes to a number of units of local government through mill levies. The chart below shows that property owners in the unincorporated area of Granite County paid (a) 188 mills levied by Granite County on all private properties, (b) 135 mills levied county-wide for university, elementary and high school funding, and (c) an average of 426 mills levied by elementary and high school districts. Property owners in the various school districts pay different school levies because each district sets its own district levy. Landowners also pay property taxes and assessments to special taxing districts for services such as fire protection, cemeteries, ambulance and solid waste collection. Property owners in the Towns of Philipsburg and Drummond pay county (except the road fund) and school district taxes, plus taxes to each Town. Table 12 and the bar graph show three categories of mill levies. "County Government" includes the 188 mills that Granite County levies to fund county departments and boards. "County Education" is county-wide education levies that include a 6 mill levy for the state University System and 126 mills in levies to help fund elementary and high school transportation and teachers' retirement. "School District" is the average 426 mill levy that the Granite County high school/elementary school districts levy to help fund education costs incurred by the districts for grades K-12 education.

Table 12 – Property Tax Mill Levies



D. AGRICULTURE IN GRANITE COUNTY

The following tables [*on the following pages*] show the importance of agriculture to Granite County. There are approximately 166 farm and ranch units in the County on 303,000 acres of crop and grazing land. Agriculture employs 215 people and brings in a total of \$12.1 million in agricultural cash receipts. The County produces 51,000 tons of hay (95% from irrigated hay lands) and 24,000 head of cattle. Not only do irrigated lands produce 95% of the County's hay – Granite County's most important crop – the lands generate 27% of the County's agricultural tax base.

Three storage reservoirs provide much of the irrigation water for Granite County. Georgetown Lake (actually a man-made reservoir) is the dominant water body in the County, having a storage capacity of 31,000 acre-feet. The dam was built in 1885 to provide electric power to a mill and mines in the area south of Philipsburg. Construction on the hydroelectric facility was begun in 1891. Water flows from the dam into Flint Creek.

The Flint Creek Project, initiated in 1935, includes the construction of the East Fork Rock Creek Reservoir (with a storage capacity of 16,000 acre-feet) and a series of canals and ditches that supply irrigation water to the Flint Creek Valley as far as Drummond. The East Fork dam, 15 miles southwest of Philipsburg was completed in 1938. A siphon carries water from the East Fork of Rock Creek into the Flint Creek drainage. The dam was constructed by the State Water Conservation Board (now the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation), and the Flint Creek Water Users Association, formed in 1935, manages and maintains the dam and canals. The Allendale Irrigation Company, formed in 1912, purchases water from the Flint Creek Project.

The Lower Willow Creek Dam was constructed in 1960 by a private irrigation company. The reservoir has a capacity of 4,800 acre-feet, which supplies irrigation water for crop lands within the Lower Willow Creek drainage.

Table 13 [*on the next page*] shows the number of farms/ranches, total acres, and average size of farms/ranches in Granite County (the latest Census of Agriculture, taken every five years, is 2007). The number of farms and ranches decreased steadily over the 10-year period of 1987-1997 due to substantial land subdivision and development. This was followed by a 36 farm increase (28%) from 1997-2007. While the number of farms grew during that ten-year period, the average size decreased 8.7%, showing a trend of an increasing number of smaller farms in the county. This is in contrast to the previous trend of farm size increasing with the total number of farms decreasing.

Table 13 – Number of Farms, Total Acres, Average Size in Granite County

	<u>No. of Farms/Ranches</u>	<u>Acres in Farms/Ranches</u>	<u>Avg. Size of Farms/Ranches</u>
2007	166	302,973	1,825
2002	140	282,907	2,021
1997	130	260,070	2,001
1992	138	349,938	2,536
1987	149	348,102	2,336

Source: Census of Agriculture, 1987-2007

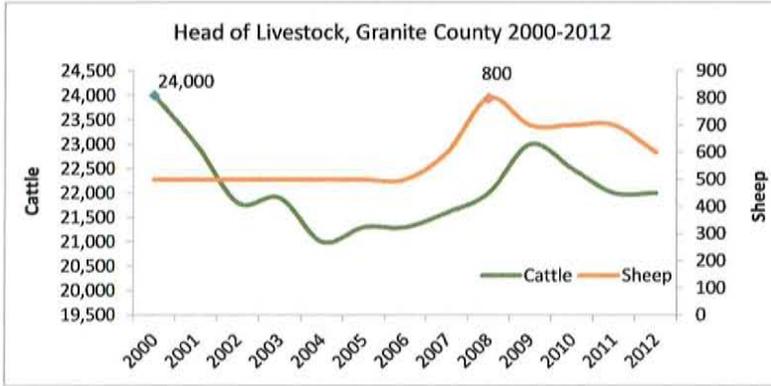
Table 14 – Granite County Crops: Acres and Production in 1997, 2002 and 2007

	<u>Hay (tons)</u>	<u>Total All Crops</u>
<u>2007</u>		
Acres	24,000	35,460
Irrigated Acres	22,000	25,050
Production (tons)	59,500	
Irrigated Production (tons)	55,400	
Percent Irrigated Production	93%	
<u>2002</u>		
Acres	26,520	38,532
Irrigated Acres	25,700	27,091
Production (tons)	65,400	
Irrigated Production (tons)	63,500	
Percent Irrigated Production	97%	
<u>1997</u>		
Acres	30,500	46,945
Irrigated Acres	29,000	32,140
Production	81,000	
Irrigated Production	78,500	
Percent Irrigated Production	97%	

Source: Montana Department of Agriculture, US Agricultural Census

Table 15 – Numbers of Livestock, 2000 to 2012

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2012</u>
Head of Cattle	24,000	21,800	21,000	21,300	22,000	22,500	22,000
Head of Sheep	500	500	500	500	800	700	600



Source: Montana Agricultural Statistics, Montana Department of Agriculture

Table 15 [above] shows that the number of livestock in Granite County experienced a brief period of growth in the late 2000’s before stabilizing in the early 2010s. Sheep production has remained stable throughout the past decade, while cattle inventory has fluctuated. Table 16 [on the next page] shows the gross agricultural cash receipts from livestock, crops, and government payments for 1995, 2000, and 2007 in Granite County. Total cash receipts increased 31% between 2000 and 2007. In 2007, livestock produced 91% of the total agricultural receipts in Granite County.

Table 16 – Agricultural Cash Receipts in 1995, 2000, and 2007

	<u>1995</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>Percent of 2007</u>
Livestock; Products	\$7,259,000	\$9,269,000	\$12,121,000	91%
Crops*	<u>899,000</u>	<u>480,000</u>	<u>960,000</u>	7%
Total Cash Receipts	\$8,194,000	\$10,249,000	\$13,081,000	
Government Payments	<u>115,000</u>	<u>141,000</u>	<u>121,000</u>	0.9%
Total Cash Receipts	\$8,309,000	\$10,389,000	\$13,202,000	

*Includes hay

Source: Montana Agricultural Statistics, Montana Department of Agriculture

Table 17. [below] shows the various classes of property that make up the agricultural tax base. The percentages in parentheses are the tax rates used to calculate taxable value from assessed value. In Granite County, range land constitutes 81% of agricultural acreage, and provides 25% of the agricultural taxable value, behind irrigated land that provides 27%. Non-qualified agricultural land is land in parcels 20-160 acres in size that are not eligible for assessment and taxation as agricultural land. These non-qualified lands are assessed at seven times the assessed value of grazing land.

Table 17 – Market Value and Taxable Valuation of Agricultural Lands, 2000
(Updated values for 2010 not available at time of adoption)

	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Percent of Ag Land</u>	<u>Market Value</u>	<u>Taxable Value</u>	<u>Percent of Agriculture</u>
Range Land (3.6%)	202,500	81%	\$ 6,605,000	\$240,000	25%
Dry Cropland (3.6%)	1,000	1%	170,000	6,000	1%
Wild Hay (3.6%)	9,500	4%	2,940,000	106,000	11%
Irrigated Land (3.6%)	26,100	11%	7,107,000	258,000	27%
Non-qualified Ag Land (25.4%)	8,300	3%	297,000	75,000	8%
Livestock (3%)			6,196,000	186,000	20%
Farm Machinery (3%)			<u>2,635,000</u>	<u>79,000</u>	<u>8%</u>
			\$25,950,000	\$950,000	100%

Source: Montana Department of Revenue

Tables 14 and 17 [above on the previous pages] show the importance of irrigated land to Granite County.

Table 14 shows the total acres and production of crops (primarily hay), and the acres and production of irrigated hay lands. Irrigated lands have provided 92% or more of the hay production in the County.

Table 17 shows the contribution of irrigated lands to the Granite County property tax base. The table presents the taxable value of the various components of agricultural property. Irrigated land constitutes only 11% of the total agricultural land acreage, but represents 38% of the taxable value of all agricultural acreage. Irrigated lands generate 27% of the taxable valuation of all agricultural property.

F. HOUSING

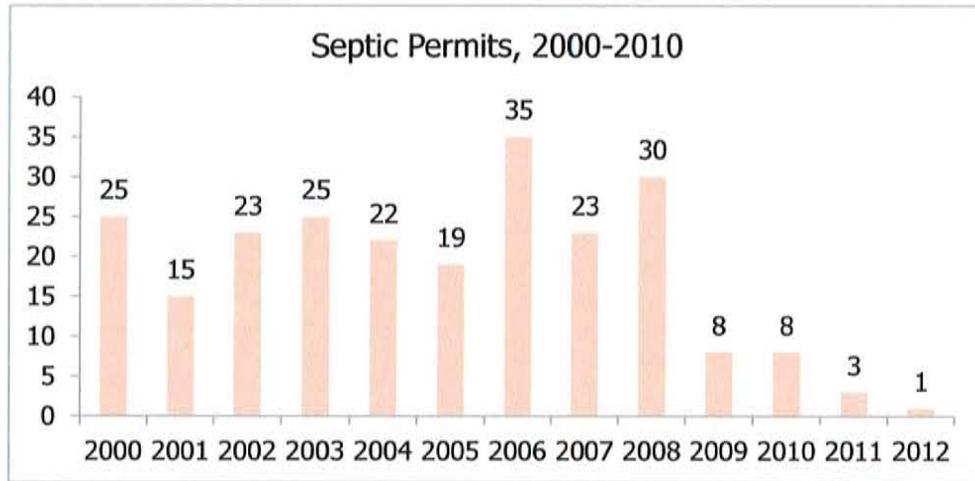
According to the 2010 Census, Granite County has approximately 2,679 housing units. Of those households, approximately 600 are in Philipsburg and 250 are in Drummond. The vacancy rate is 8%, not counting vacation units. Vacation, seasonal, recreation, or occasionally used units account for 41% of the total. Of occupied housing units, 75% are owner-occupied and 25% are renter-occupied. Most of the housing units (79%) are single-family homes; 2% are duplexes or apartments of 3-4 units; 0.8% are housing units in structures with 5 or more units. Mobile homes accounted for 17% of the housing units in the County. Approximately 13% of the homes in Granite County were built in the 1990s and 30% were built before 1939. Thirty-eight percent (38%) of the homes heat with natural gas; 31% heat with propane, kerosene, or fuel oil; and, 26% heat with wood stoves.

In 2000, 11% of the homes were valued at less than \$50,000, 19% were valued at \$50,000 to \$100,000, and 75% were valued at more than \$100,000. Of homeowners, 48% have mortgages (52% are not mortgaged); 16% of the mortgages are \$300 to \$700 per month; 33% of mortgages are \$700 to \$1,000 per month; and, 51% are \$1,000 or more per month. For rental units, 12% rent for less than \$300 per month; 78% for \$300 to \$750 per month; and, 8% rent for more than \$750.

The following Table 18 [on the next page] showing the number of septic system permits, issued since 1998, is an indicator of the number of new housing units in rural Granite County:

Table 18 – Septic Permits, 2000-2012

2000	25
2001	15
2002	23
2003	25
2004	22
2005	19
2006	35
2007	23 (38 In Forest Service Lease Property)
2008	30 (22 In Forest Service Lease Property)
2009	8
2010	8
2011	3
2012	1 (As of June 2012)



The number of septic system permits (excluding those on Forest Service land leases) during the period of 2000 through 2012 averages approximately 20 per year.

G. PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

A CIP for the fiscal years of 2011-2015 was conducted in 2009 to project needs for the County's public facilities and services and is included in the appendix.

Law Enforcement

The Granite County Sheriff's Department provides law enforcement to the County and, under contract, police protection to the Towns of Philipsburg and Drummond. The department includes the Sheriff, 4 FTEs sworn officers, five dispatchers and up to two reserve officers. Under the contracts with the towns, the Sheriff's Department is to provide 16 hours per week service to Drummond and 40 hours per week service to Philipsburg. The Undersheriff and two deputies are in Drummond, and the Sheriff, and one deputy are located in Philipsburg.

The department has seven vehicles, including three all-wheel drive sport utility vehicles, two passenger cars and one four-wheel drive sports utility vehicle. The Sheriff tries to replace one vehicle each year with a rebuilt vehicle. The department has a jail facility that can accommodate nine male and two female inmates. With the repeater station installed at Slide Rock, there is fairly complete communication coverage over the County. The Sheriff operates search and rescue in Granite County.

Roads and Streets

Granite County. The Granite County road department maintains approximately 540 miles of county roads. The department employs two county road foremen and four additional employees. The department has shops in Philipsburg and Hall. The road department is funded by an annual levy in the range of 30 mills assessed against properties in the unincorporated area of Granite County, and by state gas tax funds.

Philipsburg. The Town of Philipsburg maintains approximately 16 miles of streets and alleys. The town crew consists of three employees. Philipsburg uses general fund monies and gas tax revenues to fund the street program.

Drummond. The Town of Drummond maintains approximately four miles of streets and alleys, using state gas tax revenues. One person handles the street and alley work.

Solid Waste

A county-wide solid waste district handles solid waste in Granite County. The district maintains collection sites at Drummond and Philipsburg; 40-yard solid waste containers are located at each

site. A private firm transports the containers to Missoula County, which charges Granite County a tipping fee for disposing of solid waste. The firm collects solid waste from Lower Rock Creek customers for a fee, and Granite Disposal collects waste for a fee from customers in Drummond and Philipsburg and throughout the County.

In 2012 Granite County revised the system for solid waste management from one based on volume to one based on weight. Scales were installed at both the Philipsburg and Drummond transfer stations.

Fire Protection

Fire protection is provided in Granite County by the Valley Rural Fire District (which is consolidated with the Drummond Fire Department), Philipsburg Volunteer Fire Department, and the Georgetown Lake Fire Service Area and the Flint Creek Fire Service Area. The Valley Fire District serves the Town of Drummond and the lower Flint Creek area. The Valley Fire District has been expanded to provide coverage to the Maxville area. A fire house has been constructed in the Maxville area. The Philipsburg Fire Department provides fire protection for the Town of Philipsburg. The Georgetown Lake Fire Service Area, with two fire stations, provides fire protection for the Georgetown Lake area. The Flint Creek Fire Service Area services the Upper Flint Creek Valley. On Lower Rock Creek, 20-pound fire extinguishers are located along Rock Creek Road for quick response in case of fire. Clinton Fire District services portions of the Granite County adjoining Missoula County, including portions of Lower Rock Creek.

Water Systems

Philipsburg. The Town of Philipsburg has a community water system that serves approximately 530 users. The town's water supply is Fred Burr Lake, located southeast of Philipsburg. The surface water is chlorinated in compliance with state water quality regulations. The town has two storage tanks of 200,000 gallons each and one storage tank of 12,000 gallons. Philipsburg has invested in computerized telemetry to maintain and control the flow of water into and from the storage tanks. Philipsburg has purchased one-half (½) of the water rights to the water produced by Montana Silver Springs from a cluster of underground springs within the town. The Town purchased the water rights from Montana Silver Springs, Inc., a private firm that bottles and sells bottled water. Philipsburg blends the Silver Spring water, a very pure water source with the Fred Burr Lake water to ensure a reliable water supply into the future.

The Town of Philipsburg generates electric power from its water supply system. The Town has two hydro generators on the transmission line transporting water from Fred Burr Lake to town. The approximate 1,000 foot drop in elevation from the lake to the Town provides sufficient force to energize the two generators. The generators provide 130 kilowatts of electric power, enough

to supply 13 users in Philipsburg: seven town government users, three schools, and three county government users. Northwestern Energy, the electric utility serving most of Granite County, owns the poles, wires, and other transmission facilities. Missoula Electric Co-op, Inc., supplies electric power to the Lower Rock Creek area.

Granite County. Granite County anticipates generating electric power from the Flint Creek project. The generation will provide 2 megawatts of energy. Energy created is under contract to Northwestern Energy.

Sewer Systems

Philipsburg. The Town of Philipsburg operates a community sewer system and sewage treatment facility that consists of a 2-cell facultative lagoon. The gravity-flow sewer system serves 530 users. Philipsburg continues to make improvements to its sewer system using state grant and loan programs.

Drummond. The Town of Drummond operates a community sewer system that serves approximately 200 residential and commercial users. The Town completed a lift station and slip lining of the outfall line to the lagoon in 2002, using grant and loan funding. Sewage treatment is provided by a 1-cell facultative lagoon. The Town is working to upgrade to a 2-3 cell facultative lagoon.

Hospital and Nursing Home

The Granite County Hospital District is classified as a Rural Frontier Critical Access Hospital with a swing bed designation. The facility has 25 beds, 5 beds for the hospital and 20 beds for the nursing home. The facility has two emergency rooms and two clinic rooms. A satellite clinic is located in the Town of Drummond with two exam rooms. The District has approximately 55 employees. The staff includes two nurse practitioners, two physician assistants, and a part-time medical director.

In 2009, the Granite County Hospital District was established by a majority vote of the residents of the county. Granite County retains ownership of the hospital buildings and grounds. All buildings and grounds are leased to the District. The facility is operated through an elected Board of Trustees. The hospital is funded by a county-wide mill levy and federal funding received through Medicaid and Medicare.

Emergency Medical Services

Ambulances are located in Philipsburg and Drummond, and Quick Response Units are located at Georgetown Lake and Lower Rock Creek. One problem with emergency medical services in Philipsburg and Drummond is the difficulty in keeping trained emergency medical technicians.

Senior Center

Granite County supports senior center facilities in both Philipsburg and Drummond. The senior center in Philipsburg provides dinner meals three times a week. The Drummond senior center provides lunch meals three days per week. The senior centers are funded by Granite County through a property tax levy, plus fees.

Library

Philipsburg. The Philipsburg Library is located in the building that houses the Town Hall. The library is supported by a Town mill levy and is staffed by part-time employees.

Drummond. In Drummond, the Town and Drummond High School have entered into an interlocal agreement to jointly fund and operate the Drummond Community/School Library. The Town of Drummond provides funding through a mill levy and from an existing library grant. The high school district shares in the costs of a librarian, utilities, insurance, and other maintenance costs.

Museums

Philipsburg. The Granite County Museum and Cultural Center houses historic exhibits and photographic displays of the history and culture of the early mining days of Granite County. The facility includes a large scale replica of an early underground hard rock mine, as well as a replica of a miner's cabin and other period exhibits. The Museum and Cultural Center also provides a community meeting room for public meetings and events. The facility is funded by memberships, donations, and admission fees. The Museum is a non-profit organization, administered by a board of directors and is staffed with volunteers.

Drummond. The Lower Valley Historical Society is a non-profit organization managed by a board of directors and served by volunteers. The Society has moved a schoolhouse from its original site in New Chicago to Drummond. The building has been restored into a museum and educational facility open to the public.

Public Schools

Public schools in Granite County include Philipsburg Elementary (114 students), Granite High School (63 students), Drummond Elementary School (103 students), Drummond High School (70 students), and Hall Elementary School (27 students). Philipsburg schools employ 22 teachers, Drummond schools employ 24 teachers, and the Hall school employs two teachers.

H. NATURAL RESOURCES

Brief descriptions of Granite County's climate, topography, and agricultural and water resources are presented earlier in this Background Section. Below are descriptions of the County's forest and mineral resources.

Forest Resources

Nearly 70% of Granite County is classified as forest lands. Of that forested area, 85% has some commercial value. Approximately 23% of forested land in the County is in private ownership; 77% is in public ownership, primarily in the Beaverhead-Deer Lodge National Forest.

Douglas fir and lodgepole pine are the most abundant species. One major use of forest lands is timber harvest to provide commercial lumber. Two percent of county land is used for this purpose. A primary manufacturing plant in Granite County is a lumber mill located near Hall. Forest lands also provide watershed values, recreation, grazing, and mining. On private forest lands, subdivision development is an increasing use.

Mineral Resources

Granite County's inception and first growth was generated by the mining industry. Throughout the County, but particularly in the Philipsburg and Flint Creek area, silver was a significant mineral. In fact, Granite County, at one time, was one of the most productive silver producing areas in the United States. Associated with silver deposits are significant quantities of zinc, lead, and manganese. Other minerals in the County include gold and low-grade tungsten.

Gravel Resources

Granite County recognizes there are several areas located throughout the county where gravel resources are available and in some cases developed. Granite County uses the Natural Resource Conservation Services soil maps for gravel mapping purposes. NRCS maps are available for review online at www.nrcs.usda.gov.

Additional Informational Resources

Documents and efforts relating to land and water use are referenced for the benefit and information of Granite County citizens including but not limited to: Granite County Subdivision Regulations; Upper Clark Fork River Basin Aquatic and Terrestrial Resources Restoration Plan, Draft; Granite County Hazard Mitigation Plan; the Comprehensive Community and economic Development Strategy for Southwestern Montana Regional Plan; Plans which cover Federal Forest lands and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands.

SECTION II - GRANITE COUNTY PLANNING ISSUES AND CONCERNS

The following planning issues and concerns have emerged from the results of a county-wide citizens' opinion survey, many public meetings, informal citizen comments, and the experience of local officials and department personnel. The mailed survey generated 514 responses from Granite County households (representing 1,076 people), a return rate of 37%. Approximately 90 different citizens attended public meetings held throughout the County.

AGRICULTURE

Background

Irrigated land constitutes 11% of the agricultural acreage, but 27% of the taxable value of all agriculture land. Irrigated acres provide 95% of the County's hay production – the most important crop in Granite County. Agricultural property makes up 11% of the Granite County tax base. There are 22,000 head of cattle and 600 head of sheep in the County.

Issues and Concerns

1. Farmers and ranchers in Granite County strongly favor adoption of “right-to-farm” provisions in a Granite County Growth Policy Plan and in any subsequent regulations that might be drafted in the future. “Right-to-farm” provisions can protect farmers and ranchers from law suits against normal agricultural practices, minimize impacts to irrigation systems, crop production, and livestock production caused by residential and suburban development.
2. Agricultural land owners would like the growth policy plan to help protect irrigation and other agricultural water rights.
3. Given the vital importance of irrigated lands to the economy of Granite County, many agricultural land owners favor adopting some reasonable regulations to preserve irrigated and other productive agricultural lands. However, most farmers and ranchers would like the right to do some modest level of subdividing if ranch cash flows need to be augmented. There is general support for steering new growth into upland areas and avoiding the productive bottomlands and irrigated meadows and fields.
4. Two Montana statutes allow adoption of land use regulations in rural areas of Montana: (1) the County Zoning Act, which allows the planning board and county commissioners to draft regulations that comply with an adopted growth policy plan, and (2) the Planning

and Zoning District Act, that allows landowners to petition to create a planning and zoning district in which the landowners draft their regulations. Of the two Montana statutes allowing land use regulations in counties, most agricultural landowners favor forming planning and zoning districts, which have a more acceptable “bottom up” concept than do regulations under the County Zoning Act. Most believe that landowners in various areas throughout the County would want to form separate planning and zoning districts and draft different requirements for each individual area.

5. Farmers and ranchers are supportive of economic development, and they believe that the County should find suitable sites to locate new businesses and industries.

GROWTH AND LAND USE

Background

Granite County’s population has remained stable in the 2,700-3,000 range since 1970. The towns of Philipsburg and Drummond have declined in population since 1970. Granite County has experienced considerable subdivision development in the past fifteen years, particularly in the Georgetown Lake area.

To date, most of the subdivision development has occurred on marginal agricultural lands, thereby minimizing impacts on the irrigated and other productive agricultural lands. In the citizens’ survey, 70-90% of the responding households gave support for Granite County to adopt policies, even regulations, to influence sound, cost-effective development in suitable locations. In the public meetings, a number of citizens disapproved of the County adopting land use regulations, expressing support for protecting property rights. At the same time, a substantial number of residents favored protection of property values and preserving Granite County irrigated and productive agricultural lands.

Issues and Concerns

1. To what extent should Granite County adopt policies or regulations to influence the location of new growth? The citizens’ survey showed strong support for county action to ensure safe, healthful, orderly, and cost-effective growth. However, a number of people at the public meetings did not favor additional land use regulations, expressing concern for protecting private property rights.

PUBLIC SERVICES

Issues and Concerns

1. Because of limited sources of revenues and a property tax base of only \$8.5 million, Granite County can provide only a limited level of public services. Residents, especially new residents, need to understand the constraints on the County in providing services.
2. In some parts of the County, residents complain of inadequate services, such as poor road conditions or poor and untimely law enforcement. Granite County should look at services to see where improved services might be provided. Increasing taxes may be required, either on a general basis or through an improvement district, to provide improvements and a higher level of maintenance.
3. The Sheriff's Department has upgraded three new vehicles. Two vehicles still need to be upgraded to all-wheel drive vehicles. Replacing the oldest vehicles with rebuilt vehicles would enhance law enforcement. Also any new future growth will likely impact law enforcement. The Sheriff's Department and Granite County should be considering means to maintain effective law enforcement in light of future growth.
4. Abuses of alcohol and drugs, especially methamphetamine, have become growing problems for law enforcement in Granite County and impact public safety.
5. Granite County has developed a capital improvements plan (CIP) as part of its growth policy planning effort. The CIP includes a five year plan for scheduling and funding the improvement and upgrade of county roads, fire protection facilities and equipment, and law enforcement and detention facilities.
6. Granite County is considering building a new or larger airport. To date, many county residents do not favor constructing a new airport. In the near future, the Granite County Commissioners (hereinafter referred to as the "County Commissioners") and county residents will need to decide whether or not to build a new or expanded airport facility.

FIRE PROTECTION

Background

At present, fire protection in Granite County is provided by the Philipsburg Fire Department for the Town of Philipsburg; the Flint Creek Fire Service Area for the Upper Flint Creek Valley; the Valley Fire District for Drummond, Maxville area, and the northern portion of Granite County; the Georgetown Lake Fire Service Area for the Georgetown Lake area; and the Clinton Fire District for portions of Granite County adjacent to Missoula County, including portions of Lower Rock Creek. Twenty-pound fire extinguishers are located along Lower Rock Creek Road.

Issues and Concerns

1. Recruiting and maintaining sufficient numbers of volunteer fire fighters is a concern throughout all of Granite County.
2. New subdivision development should provide proper roads, turn-arounds, culverts or bridges, water supplies, and “defensible space” to help ensure the safety of fire fighters.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Background

Because of the County’s proximity to Missoula and Anaconda, Granite County residents purchase a large amount of goods and services out-of-county.

Agriculture employs the most people of the basic industries in Granite County, but manufacturing (primarily wood products) generates the most earnings, followed by mining and the federal government.

Issues, Opportunities, and Concerns

1. Suitable sites for commercial and industrial uses should be in locations with access to adequate water supplies, freight service, and power; these uses should be located to avoid floodplains, high fire risk, and incompatible conflicts with any residential uses.
2. Granite County should promote value-added processing of agricultural and wood products. Granite County already has some successful value-added businesses: additional processing of agricultural and timber products could include beef, hay, or wood chips.

3. The County should try to work with the Forest Service to explore the reasonable increase of supply of timber or wood products from federal lands. The County also could meet with private timberland owners to determine if a long-term supply of wood products might be available for prospective processing businesses.
4. Granite County experiences substantial “leakage” of money out of the county through the purchase of goods and services out-of-county. An effort should be made to keep more money and spending in Granite County.
5. Travel Montana studies show that travelers spend a majority of their travel dollars in communities where they spend the night. Granite County has historically generated the lowest amount of bed tax money among the nine counties in Travel Montana’s designated “Gold Country.” The development of attractive lodging/dining packages or other incentives may entice travelers to stay overnight in Granite County.
6. Travel and recreation offers real potential for economic development in Granite County. Georgetown Lake, Discovery Basin Ski Area, Flint Creek, the Pintler Mountains, Flint Range, Rock Creek, Clark Fork River, the Philipsburg historic district, the well-preserved Garnet and other ghost towns, Garnet Backcountry Byway, and the Pintler Scenic Route offer excellent opportunities for furthering tourism and recreation. Public lands constitute approximately 61% of the land in the County, so federal and state agencies control much of the recreational opportunities in Granite County.
7. Retirees offer an opportunity for Granite County economic development. A mild climate, natural resources, public lands for recreation, Georgetown Lake, Flint Creek, Rock Creek, and the Clark Fork River are all attractions for retirees. Retirees bring in and spend money, do not require schools, and have limited impact on most other public services, except medical services. Senior centers, retirement homes, assisted living, and senior housing developments are examples of facilities or services that could capitalize on retirement as an economic sector. For example, the County could facilitate the building of a planned retirement development. Senior citizens could strengthen the market for the hospital and local private doctors, dentists, and other health care providers.

HOUSING

1. Affordability of housing should be a key in the growth policy plan. Granite County should avoid the situation in nearby counties where housing for low and moderate income families is simply not affordable. Granite County, Philipsburg, and/or Drummond might consider facilitating a planned development of affordable housing.
2. Granite County and the towns might consider applying for financial assistance to help low and moderate income families renovate their homes, or obtain affordable housing. Assistance can be provided through housing programs such as CDBG, HOME, and Federal Home Loan Bank.

LOWER ROCK CREEK VICINITY

As a part of the Growth Policy update in 2010-2012, a neighborhood plan was developed for the Lower Rock Creek area. The Growth Policy amendment of Lower Rock Creek is Appendix D to this updated plan.

TOWN OF PHILIPSBURG

As a part of the Growth Policy update in 2010-2012, a neighborhood plan was developed for the Town of Philipsburg. The Growth Policy amendment of Town of Philipsburg is Appendix E to this updated plan.

TOWN OF DRUMMOND AND VICINITY

As a part of the Growth Policy update in 2010-2012, a neighborhood plan was developed for the Town of Drummond. The Growth Policy amendment of Town of Drummond is Appendix F to this updated plan.

GEORGETOWN LAKE

Background

Georgetown Lake is actually a man-made reservoir that backs up into Deer Lodge County behind a dam on Flint Creek. Prior to construction of the dam in 1885, the area that is now Georgetown Lake was grazed by cattle. In the 1860s, at least three gold mines were established in the vicinity. An earth dam was built in 1885 on Flint Creek to produce electric power for the Bimetallic mine and mill. The hydroelectric facility was built in 1891. In the 1920s, the dam was increased in height.

Georgetown Lake receives water from North Fork of Flint Creek, other creeks, Echo Lake, and many springs in the lake bed. After Flint Creek leaves the dam, it flows approximately two miles through a canyon then enters the meadows of the Flint Creek Valley. Before 1912, the lake contained cutthroat trout, native to Flint Creek. Beginning in 1912, other fish species were introduced, including arctic grayling, rainbow and brook trout, whitefish, steelhead, chinook, and silver salmon.

In August of 2008, the Georgetown Lake Homeowners Association organized a community meeting at the Georgetown Lake fire hall to discuss growth management issues and to gauge support for a special zoning district. In conjunction with that meeting, a preference survey was conducted both through the mail and online. The meeting was attended by approximately 50 people, and a straw poll at the end of the meeting indicated that a substantial majority favored a more thorough investigation of a zoning district of some kind. Of the 72 persons who responded to the survey, over 56% said that they would be willing to sign a petition requesting that a special zoning district be established. Only 8.5% responded that they would be unwilling to sign such a petition. This Growth Policy was amended to recommend that Granite County continue to work with the Georgetown Lake Homeowners Association and the residents of the Georgetown Lake area to adopt and administer land development regulations that address the specific growth management and environmental issues raised by area residents and property owners.

Because of its scenic beauty, rural character, and ready access to outdoor recreational opportunities, Georgetown Lake has been one of the fastest growing areas of Granite County over the past decade. Land development regulations addressing residential and septic system density, environmentally sensitive areas, lakefront development, non-residential development, and other similar issues were established by Granite County in May 2011. Similar regulations are in place on the Deer Lodge County side of Georgetown Lake.

Fire suppression services are provided by the Georgetown Lake Fire Service Area. This fire protection authority maintains a main fire station and training facility located on Fire Lane off of Southern Cross Road. Two additional stations are located on Piney Point and near the Anaconda DNRC field station. The board of directors of the Fire Service Area have prepared and adopted the Georgetown Lake Fire Service Area Fire Protection Standards, dated January 30, 2007, or as subsequently amended. These standards are hereby adopted by reference as a part of this Growth Policy. Law enforcement is provided by the Granite County Sheriff, in Granite County, and by the Deer Lodge County Sheriff, in Deer Lodge County. The U.S. Forest Service contributes funding toward law enforcement. A first-response vehicle is housed at Georgetown Lake. Granite Disposal and Anaconda Disposal provide garbage collection services to Georgetown Lake residents.

Issues and Concerns

1. Georgetown Lake residents would like to see Granite County and the U.S. Forest Service keep their respective portions of the roads in better condition. Residents frequently mention dust and potholes as the primary problems, although some residents feel that there should be better posting of speed limits. Also, people believe that the intersection of Georgetown Lake Road and Montana Highway 1 should have better lighting.
2. Maintaining a 40-yard solid waste container at Georgetown Lake would benefit the local residents.
3. Washington Development Company owns undeveloped land and Georgetown Lake residents are concerned about the type and densities of future development. They are very concerned about maintaining the water quality of Georgetown Lake and minimizing additional vehicular traffic.
4. Residents are concerned that campgrounds and other development by the Forest Service has a real impact on the area, and they would like to have more local input into development decisions on National Forest lands.
5. There is consensus among residents that Granite County, Deer Lodge County, and the state and federal agencies should develop a single, coordinated plan for the lake and vicinity.
6. Residents of Georgetown Lake are very favorable toward maintaining and properly administering the Georgetown Lake zoning district as a means to enforce reasonable standards and regulations affecting future growth.
7. Georgetown Lake residents recognize the importance of agriculture to Granite County's economy, but they know that travel, recreation, and tourism brings in substantial income to the County, especially to the Georgetown Lake area and businesses. Maintaining the aesthetics and attractiveness of the lake and surrounding area is vital to fostering the travel and tourist economy. Water quality, good roads, proper lighting, and well-planned future development are important to encouraging travel and tourism.

SECTION III – GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

AGRICULTURE

GOAL 1: New development may not interfere with or diminish the efficiency and management of agricultural operation

Policies: Developments adjacent to agricultural lands may not diminish or contaminate livestock or irrigation water supplies, nor obstruct or impair irrigation canals, headgates, ditches, culverts, or other irrigation facilities.

For developments adjacent to agricultural lands, the developer shall impose deed restrictions and covenants, running with the land and enforceable by Granite County that shall commit present and future landowners to:

- Construct and maintain fences capable of keeping out livestock;
- Prevent harassment of livestock by dogs and other pets;
- Waive the right to file nuisance suits against persons conducting normal agricultural operations within the vicinity of the development; and,
- Prevent the spread or dispersion of noxious weeds, litter, or hazardous materials onto adjacent properties. New developments must establish a weed management plan in coordination with the county weed board.

Encourage new growth to be compatible with Granite County’s agricultural and rural character.

- Developments designed to avoid blocking or altering natural drainages and designed and constructed to minimize cutting and filling of slopes;
- Developments designed and constructed to minimize the disturbance of trees and other natural vegetation, soils, stream banks, and lakeshores; disturbed soils revegetated within the earliest growing season. This requirement does not apply where homeowners construct a “defensible space” by removing trees, shrubs, and fire fuels to minimize property damage and risk to firefighters.

- Telephone and power transmission lines and transmitter and microwave towers located with respect to natural terrain and vegetation to minimize visual impact, and to minimize disturbance of soil and vegetation. Granite County subdivision regulations must be used as guidance to proper location and installation.

GOAL 2: Preserve irrigated and other productive agricultural lands that are critical to the vitality of Granite County’s economy; encourage new growth to locate near existing communities, where services can be efficiently provided, and the loss of agricultural and forest land is minimized

Policies: Granite County will enforce its subdivision regulations, evasion criteria, and the adopted Growth Policy Plan as a means of encouraging and directing new growth to preferred areas and to minimize the conversion of productive agricultural and forest lands.

Provide incentives to encourage new development to locate near existing communities:

- Simplified approval procedures under subdivision and/or land use regulations;
- Reduced review fees;
- Granite County may assist with grant writing to assist providing infrastructure to developments in suitable locations; and,
- Granite County may share part of the cost of extending services to serve new growth in desirable locations.

The County will encourage formation of a rural improvement district or a county water and sewer district to foster growth in locations that are near existing communities or development and in locations that minimize loss of productive agricultural land.

Granite County will encourage, support, and assist landowners considering petitioning for formation of planning and zoning districts to protect agricultural operations and preserve irrigated and other agricultural land.

Granite County will support farmers and ranchers who consider placing agricultural land in conservation easements.

GROWTH AND LAND USE

GOAL 1: Foster a pattern of land development that will make efficient use of land and allow the cost-efficient provision of services and utilities

Objectives: Ensure that:

- Residential areas are pleasant, convenient, safe, and healthy places to live;
- Commercial areas are functional, efficient, convenient places to shop and conduct business; and,
- Industrial areas are functional, efficient places to manufacture and process goods.

Ensure that new development:

- Is well-planned and designed to prevent or minimize public health and safety;
- Occurs on suitable building areas;
- Complies with Granite County Subdivision Regulations;
- Provides properly designed and constructed roads and approaches onto public roads;
- Provides proper grading and drainage;
- Provides proper easements for access and utilities; and,
- Provides safe and proper access for emergency vehicles services.

GOAL 2: Protect the rivers and streams, flood areas, riparian areas, and wetlands in the County

Policies: Discourage development in areas deemed to be flood-hazard areas.

For new development, including subdivisions approved under Granite County Subdivision Regulations:

- All non-agricultural structures set back from the high water marks of streams and irrigation canals and ditches. The setbacks will be based on the type of stream and adjacent topography; and,
- Assist and support residents of Rock Creek, Flint Creek, Georgetown Lake, and other waters to draft measures to protect water quality, riparian areas, wildlife habitat, and wetlands.
- Assist and support the resident of Georgetown Lake in drafting amendments to the adopted lakeshore protection standards in accordance with Part 2: Lakeshores, Chapter 7, Title 75, MCA.

As an umbrella policy in Granite County: Where landowners petition to form a planning and zoning district, the County Commissioners will ensure a process of drafting regulations and requirements that is initiated by, and meets the desires of, the affected landowners within the district.

In the Georgetown Lake area, there has been demonstrated support for forming a special zoning district as well as an extensive effort to identify the local issues that zoning regulations would address. Therefore, in the Georgetown Lake area only, Granite County will assist and support resident and property owners in establishing, amending and administering a zoning district through the process set forth in Part 2, Chapter 2, Title 76, MCA.

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Community Facilities and Services

GOAL 1: Provide public facilities and services that are adequate and cost-effective to serve residents and businesses, and at reasonable public costs and tax expenditures

Policies: Achieve efficiency, where feasible, by sharing services and facilities with the Towns of Philipsburg and Drummond and/or local schools.

Continue to update as needed the capital improvements plan to help provide sound and cost-effective public facilities. The CIP should include scheduling and sources of funding, construction, and engineering costs for providing county roads, fire protection, law enforcement and correction facilities, and recreation facilities.

Transportation

GOAL 2: Provide an efficient and functional transportation network that will adequately handle present and expected traffic

Policies: Provide and maintain county roads that meet engineering and safety standards. Assess the need for improved road maintenance on Lower Rock Creek and at Georgetown Lake.

Identify county roads in need of improvement and upgrade and incorporate needed road improvements in the county capital improvements plan as needed.

Provide reasonable public transportation for senior and handicapped citizens.

GOAL 3: Maintain an airport facility and service that serves private and commercial users and meets community needs

Assess the need for airport improvements. Explore the availability of grant funding for any needed airport improvements. If required for grant funding, enact airport land use regulations pursuant to Title 67, MCA, Regulating Noise, Heights, and Land Use at Airports, and Title 76, MCA, County Zoning Act.

Recreation

GOAL 4: Provide adequate recreation facilities to serve all segments of the population, including youth, senior, and handicapped

GOAL 5: Encourage quality commercial recreation developments, but protect natural resources and rights of individuals

Policies: Retain or promote public access to recreational and cultural areas such as forests, lakes, rivers, streams, and geologic, scenic, and historical sites.

Encourage and coordinate efforts by state, local, and federal agencies and private developers to provide recreational facilities. Work with state and federal land management agencies to maintain camping, picnicking, boating, and public access on public lands.

Develop a park and recreation plan to help ensure that useful and effective parks and recreation facilities are provided on donated park land or constructed or purchased with cash provided under the subdivision law.

FIRE PROTECTION

GOAL 1: Ensure the effectiveness of fire fighting in all of Granite County, minimize damage to property and risk of death and injury, and provide maximum safety for fire fighters, EMS, and law enforcement personnel through sound design of new development

GOAL 2: Minimize exposure within wildland/urban interface and other high fire hazard areas

Policies: The Granite County Subdivision Regulations will provide special requirements to ensure effective fire fighting, reduce fire damage, and safety in all new subdivisions proposed in high fire hazard areas.

Foster safety for fire fighters and minimize loss of property by ensuring that developments in forested areas have proper roads, bridges or culverts, turn-arounds, and water supplies.

Encourage new development to locate in areas of low fire hazard or areas where effective fire protection can be provided (sufficient water supplies, readily accessible for emergency vehicles, buildings with fire sprinklers).

Distribute information to prospective new homeowners in Granite County relating to recommended construction and maintenance of defensible space, sound electrical wiring, proper operation and maintenance of chimneys, fireplaces, and other facilities.

Update as needed the Granite County Community Wildfire Plan and if needed complete a capital improvements plan that establishes a schedule, estimated cost, and sources of funding for fire protection equipment and needs.

Foster recruitment of volunteers to serve as fire fighters.

Continue to explore the feasibility of creating (or expanding) a rural fire district, fire service area to provide effective fire protection to those portions of Granite County that are not currently covered by a fire protection entity.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOAL 1: Increase the number of jobs in Granite County, particularly in the basic economic sectors

GOAL 2: Increase the income and earnings in Granite County by expanding current businesses, starting up new businesses, and recruiting businesses to locate in Granite County

GOAL 3: Increase the amount of spending in Granite County by out-of-county travelers, tourists, and recreationists, and by out-of-county people buying Granite County goods and services

GOAL 4: Increase the level of in-county buying by Granite County residents/decrease the level of out-of-county spending by Granite County residents

GOAL 5: Broaden the property tax base of Granite County

Objective 1: Promote the start-up of new local businesses or the expansion of existing local businesses in the basic economic sectors.

- Objective 2: Promote recruitment of out-of-county industries and businesses interested in starting up or relocating to Granite County.
- Objective 3: Promote start-up businesses and expansion of existing businesses that would provide secondary goods and services that are currently purchased out of Granite County.
- Objective 4: Ensure that sufficient land is available for future needed commercial and industrial uses.
- Objective 5: Promote value-added processing of agricultural and wood products.
- Objective 6: Promote the travel/tourism and recreation industries.

HOUSING

GOAL 1: Promote the provision of a balanced variety of safe, decent housing types to meet the needs, preferences, and incomes of Granite County residents

Policies: Foster increased and diversified housing choices and affordable housing opportunities for all citizens.

Ensure that elderly and low-income households have reasonable access to decent, safe, affordable, and energy-efficient housing.

Inventory the housing stock in Granite County to determine the need for new and/or rehabilitated housing. Granite County will explore the possibilities for applying for state or federal assistance programs to rehabilitate or provide affordable housing for elderly and low and moderate income families. Rehabilitation will upgrade plumbing, wiring, foundations, roofs, and other core components of safe and decent housing. The County will consider using programs such as Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships Act (HOME), and Federal Home Loan Bank.

Identify locations within the County suitable for developing mobile home courts and other affordable forms of housing. Develop incentives to encourage developers to construct mobile home courts and other affordable housing.

SECTION IV – IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

This implementation Strategy sets forth the measures and strategies that Granite County plans to enact to carry out the goals, objectives, and policies specified in Section III of this Growth Policy Plan. These measures, taken together, establish a community framework for providing public facilities and services, managing land use and development, providing fire protection, and fostering economic growth.

ACTION PLAN

Agriculture

1. Granite County will encourage, support, and assist landowners considering petitioning for formation of planning and zoning districts to protect agricultural operations and preserve irrigated and other productive agricultural land.
 - The planning board will draft pamphlets or documents to explain the process of forming a planning and zoning district and adoption of regulations and requirements.
 - The planning board will provide technical assistance to landowners interested in forming a planning and zoning district.
 - The County Commissioners will ensure that property owners within a planning and zoning district initiate and draft the regulations and provisions for the district.
2. Granite County will support farmers and ranchers who consider placing agricultural land in conservation easements.
 - The County will facilitate communication and cooperation among landowners and land trust organizations to promote execution of conservation easements.
3. Granite County will consider enacting “right-to-farm” protections for farmers and ranchers operating agricultural operations within the County.

Land Use

1. Granite County adopted updated subdivision regulations in 2006 with legislative updates being adopted in 2010 and 2011. Upon adoption of this updated Growth Policy Plan, the County will review the subdivision regulations and, if necessary, revise those regulations to comply with newly enacted changes in state law.
2. Granite County will explore incentives to encourage new development to locate near existing communities, including:
 - Drafting simplified approval procedures under subdivision regulations for subdivisions proposed in suitable areas.
 - The County sharing part of cost of extending services to serve new growth in desirable locations; applying for grant/loan programs to assist developments in suitable areas.
 - The County will examine each request for formation of a rural improvement district or a county water and sewer district to determine whether or not the proposed district will foster growth in locations that are near existing communities or development and that minimize loss of productive agricultural land.
3. Granite County will encourage, support, and assist landowners in the Lower Rock Creek, and other areas who may consider petitioning for formation of planning and zoning districts to protect water quality, promote sound land use development, and ensure that their neighborhoods are attractive, safe, and healthful.
 - The planning board will draft pamphlets or documents to explain the process of forming a planning and zoning district and adoption of regulations and requirements.
 - The planning board will provide technical assistance to landowners interested in forming a planning and zoning district and drafting requirements.
 - The County Commissioners will ensure that property owners within a planning and zoning district initiate and draft the regulations and provisions for the district.

Public Facilities and Services

Capital Improvements Plan

Granite County has developed and adopted a capital improvements plan (CIP) that identifies current needs for improvements in county roads, law enforcement, fire protection facilities, and other services. The CIP sets priorities among those identified needs, estimate costs for each capital need, and propose probable funding sources.

Transportation

1. The Granite County Road Department will as needed prepare a road/bridge plan and make improvements on roads that need new surfacing. The road department also will replace or repair bridges and culverts in need of improvements.
2. The Granite County Road Department will work to draft agreements with Missoula County and the U.S. Forest Service to provide improved road maintenance on Lower Road Creek.
3. The Granite County Road Department will work to draft agreements with Deer Lodge County and the U.S. Forest Service to provide improved road maintenance at Georgetown Lake.
4. Assess the need for airport improvements. Explore the availability of grant funding for any needed airport improvements. If required for grant funding, enact airport land use regulations pursuant to Title 67, MCA, Regulating Noise, Heights, and Land Use at Airports, and Title 76, MCA, County Zoning Act.

Fire Protection

1. The needs for equipment and facilities identified for the various fire districts and departments in Granite County will be included as part of the Granite County capital improvements plan.
2. Explore the feasibility of creating (or expanding) a rural fire district, fire service area to provide effective fire protection to those portions of Granite County that are not currently covered by a fire protection entity.

Housing

1. Conduct a survey of the housing stock in communities in Granite County to determine any need for affordable housing or renovation of low and/or moderate income households.
2. Apply for grant/loan assistance from state and federal programs to rehabilitate low and moderate income homes and construct affordable housing for county residents.
3. Identify suitable locations for developing mobile home courts and other affordable types of housing. Develop incentives to encourage developers to construct mobile home courts and other affordable housing. Consider programs such as Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships Act (HOME), and Federal Home Loan Bank.

Economic Development

1. Granite County, the Town of Philipsburg and the Town of Drummond will work on developing the capacity and capability to assist businesses and industries in starting up or expanding.
2. Granite County will encourage processing of agricultural and timber products. Potential products and resources that might be suitable for further processing include post and poles, wood chips, beef, and hay.
3. Granite County, the Town of Philipsburg and the Town of Drummond, will continue to promote the travel and recreation industry.

GROWTH POLICY PLAN REVISION; COORDINATION

Conditions for Growth Policy Plan Revision

After initial adoption, Granite County will conduct a formal review of the Granite County Growth Policy Plan (the “Growth Policy”) every five years, or more frequently if unexpected circumstances occur within the County that warrant revising the Growth Policy. The planning board will initiate each review by seeking comments and suggestions for changes from the public, county officers, and staff. The planning board itself will examine the Growth Policy for possible needed revisions. After considering the County’s suggested changes and its own, the planning board will prepare a document describing all changes recommended by the planning board. The planning board will inform the public of the recommended changes, make them available to the public, publish notices, and hold at least one public meeting to discuss changes to the Growth Policy.

Coordination with Other Jurisdictions

Granite County interacts with a number of agencies and organizations: the Town of Philipsburg and the Town of Drummond; public schools in Philipsburg, Drummond, and Hall; Valley Rural Fire District, Flint Creek Fire Service Area, Clinton Fire District, Philipsburg Fire Department, and Georgetown Lake Fire Service Area; Granite County Medical Center; Granite County Weed Board; and, the Granite County Conservation District. Granite County provides police protection for the Towns of Philipsburg and Drummond, under a contract agreement. Granite County, the Towns of Philipsburg and Drummond, and the public schools face a number of mutual issues, including coordinating County/Town/School activities, sharing use of facilities, and handling traffic and safety on town streets and county roads.

As needed, the Granite County Planning Board will explore the need to arrange a coordination meeting that includes the Granite County Commissioners, Drummond and Philipsburg town councils, representatives of the public schools, the Sheriff’s Department, and Granite County Medical Facility to discuss the provision and costs of services provided by the affected agencies and departments.

DEFINING SUBDIVISION REVIEW CRITERIA AND PUBLIC HEARING PROCESS

Defining the 76-3-608(3)(a) Subdivision Review Criteria

Granite County defines the subdivision review criteria specified in 76-3-608(3)(a), MCA, by posing the following questions that must be addressed in the required Findings of Fact for each proposed subdivision. The Findings of Fact for each subdivision will be statements providing answers to the questions below.

Effect on Agriculture

1. How many, if any, acres of land will be removed from livestock or crop production? Are any of the lands taken out of production irrigated?

Effect on Agricultural Water Users

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

Effect on Local Services

- 1a. Will the subdivision connect to central water and sewer systems? Who will pay the cost of connecting to the central system? What, if any, increased costs for maintenance and operation will be incurred, and what approximately will be those costs? Will the lot buyers pay regular water and sewer charges?
- 1b. If the subdivision will use an on-site water supply and sewage disposal, has Granite County and the Department of Environmental Quality approved the sanitation facilities?
2. Which agencies will provide law enforcement, fire protection, and ambulance services? Will providing these services to the subdivision create increased costs to any of these agencies or Granite County? Approximately how much will the subdivision increase agency costs? Will the subdivider or subsequent lot buyers bear those increased costs, or will the taxpayers and/or rate payers bear the costs?
3. At an average of eight vehicle trips per day per lot, how many average vehicle trips per day will the subdivision generate? Will extension of public streets or roads be needed and, if so, who will bear the costs? Will the subdivision increase the costs or road

maintenance and, if so, by approximately how much? Will the subdivider/lot buyers or the public bear those increased costs?

4. At an average of 1.5 school-age children per lot, how many elementary and high school students will be added to public schools? What net financial effect would these additional students have for the public schools?
5. How much does the land affected by the proposed subdivision currently pay in local property taxes? After the subdivision is fully developed, how much will the land and improvements be expected to pay in local property taxes, at current mill levies?

Effect on the Natural Environment

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

Effect on Wildlife

1. Will the expected effects of pets and human activity generated by the subdivision significantly affect wildlife?

Effect on Wildlife Habitat

1. Will the subdivision be located in an area of significant wildlife habitat or in any critical wildlife areas?

Effect on Public Health and Safety

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

Procedures for Public Hearing on a Proposed Subdivision

Under the Montana Subdivision and Platting Act, a local government must give notice and hold a public hearing on any subsequent subdivision or any subdivision proposal that involves six or more lots. The Granite County Subdivision Regulations specify that the county planning board is responsible for holding a public hearing and the Granite County Board of Commissioners are also responsible for holding a public hearing. The following outlines the procedures the planning board will use in conducting the public hearings on proposed subdivisions.

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

- f. Planning board members may voice other considerations and may pose any relevant questions through the president.
- g. The president closes the hearing on the subdivision proposal.

Time Table for Implementation

- The Original Growth Policy Plan was adopted by the Granite County Board of Commissioners in December 2006 – Resolution #2006-42 following a majority vote of the Granite County voters in the General Election held on November 7, 2006, who voted in favor of adopting the proposed Granite County Growth Policy.
- Georgetown Lake amendments were adopted by the Granite County Board of Commissioners in November 2009 – Resolution #2009-33
- Appendix C - Capital Improvements Plan was adopted by the Granite County Board of Commissioners in September 2010 – Resolution #2010-17
- Appendix D – Lower Rock Creek Plan was adopted by the Granite County Board of Commissioners in November 2010 – Resolution #2010-23
- Appendix E – Town of Philipsburg Plan was adopted by the Granite County Board of Commissioners in December 2011 – Resolution #2011-24
- Appendix F – Town of Drummond was adopted by the Granite County Board of Commissioners in July 2012 – Resolution #2012-23
- Amended Growth Policy Plan, with statistical and factual updates and corrections, along with the inclusion of gravel resources was adopted by the Granite County Board of Commissioners in December 17, 2012 – Resolution #2012-33.