

# Our Town, Our Future: Stevensville's Comprehensive Growth Strategy



Adopted:  
12/18/2025

# **TOWN OF STEVENSVILLE**

## **Montana**

### **Growth Policy**

**December 2025**

Prepared by: Great West Engineering, Inc.  
Prepared for: Town of Stevensville  
Stevensville, MT 59870

Funded by: Community Technical Assistance Program (CTAP)

Adopted by Resolution: No. 577 on December 18th, 2025



RESOLUTION NO. 577

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE STEVENSVILLE GROWTH POLICY 2025

**WHEREAS**, under 76-1-605(2)(a), MCA, a growth policy is not a regulatory document and does not confer any authority to regulate that is not otherwise specifically authorized by law or regulations adopted pursuant to the law; and

**WHEREAS**, 76-1-604(3)(a), MCA, authorizes the Stevensville Town Council to revise an adopted growth policy following the procedures of Chapter 1, Title 76, Part 6, MCA, for the adoption of a proposed growth policy; and

**WHEREAS**, the Stevensville Planning & Zoning Board recently prepared an updated revision to the Stevensville Growth Policy following the procedures outlined in Chapter 1, Title 76, Part 6, MCA; and

**WHEREAS**, the proposed revision meets the standards of a Growth Policy, as outlined in 76-1- 601, MCA, and is hereby referred to as the Stevensville Growth Policy 2025; and

**WHEREAS**, the Stevensville Planning & Zoning Board has duly considered all public comments and made clarifying revisions.

**WHEREAS**, after due consideration including holding a public hearing on December 10, 2025, the Stevensville Planning and Zoning Board recommended adoption of the Stevensville Growth Policy 2025; and

**WHEREAS**, 76-1-604, MCA, allows the Stevensville Town Council to adopt, adopt with revisions, or reject a proposed growth policy after first adopting a resolution of intention to adopt, adopt with revisions, or reject the proposed growth policy or any of its parts; and

**WHEREAS**, the Stevensville Town Council solicited public comment on the Stevensville Growth Policy 2025; and

**WHEREAS**, on December 18, 2025, the Stevensville Town Council adopted Resolution

No. 577, to adopt the Stevensville Growth Policy 2025; and

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Stevensville Town Council hereby adopts the Stevensville Growth Policy 2025.

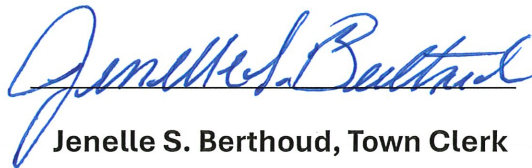
**PASSED and ADOPTED** by the Stevensville Town Council this 18<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2025.

**APPROVED:**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "B. Michalson", written over a horizontal line.

**Bob Michalson, Mayor**

**ATTEST:**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jenelle S. Berthoud", written over a horizontal line.

**Jenelle S. Berthoud, Town Clerk**



## **Acknowledgments**

The completion of the Stevensville Growth Policy would not have been possible without the dedicated efforts and valuable input of many individuals and groups. We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to the following:

Thank you to the Stevensville Planning and Zoning Board members for their thoughtful guidance, commitment, and volunteer work throughout the development of this policy. Your time and effort in reviewing, discussing, promoting public input and refining the key elements of the Growth Policy have been indispensable.

- Greg Chilcott (County Commission Rep.)
- Stacie Barker (Council Rep.)
- Angela Lyons (Urban Area Rep)
- Dwayne Gibson (Urban Area Rep)
- John Anderson (Town Rep.)
- Tamara Ross (Town Rep.)

We also want to express our appreciation to the Stevensville Town Council for their continued support and leadership. Your collaboration and encouragement have been crucial in ensuring the success of this project. We are grateful for your dedication to making Stevensville a better place for all residents.

- Bob Michalson, Mayor
- Stacie Barker, Ward 1
- Wally Smith, Ward 1
- Samantha “Sam” Bragg, Ward 2
- Cindy Brown, Ward 2

We extend our sincere thanks to the staff for their invaluable assistance and support throughout the development of this Growth Policy. Their dedication, insight, and commitment to the community have played a vital role in shaping a plan that reflects the town’s values and vision for the future.

- Jenelle Bethoud, Town Clerk
- Andrena Case, Deputy Clerk

We extend our sincere thanks to the staff of the Montana Department of Commerce Community Technical Assistance Program for their invaluable assistance and support throughout the development of this Growth Policy.

- Dani Arps

Lastly, we want to sincerely thank the public for their active participation and feedback during the policy development process. Your engagement, suggestions, and willingness to share your thoughts have enriched this document and helped shape the future of Stevensville. We are grateful for your involvement and for helping ensure that this Growth Policy reflects the needs and aspirations of our community.

Together, through the contributions of the Planning and Zoning Board, Town Council, Town Staff, and the public, this Growth Policy represents a collective effort to guide the future of Stevensville in a thoughtful and sustainable manner.

Thank you all for your contributions to this important work.

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# Executive Summary

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## What is a Growth Policy?

A growth policy is a guiding document adopted by a city, town, or county that outlines the community's vision for its future and is driven by State statute (76-1-601). Similar to what other states call comprehensive plans; a growth policy is used by local governments to guide decision-making about the community's land use and development. A growth policy is not a regulatory document and does not require regulations to be adopted and utilized. But regulations such as zoning and subdivision must be consistent with and supported by the growth policy, for the purposes of consistency and clarity.

This updated plan is meant to help the Town Council, Planning and Zoning Board, residents, and potential new residents or prospective investors make decisions regarding the economy, infrastructure, local services, and land use. The update should help these stakeholders achieve specific goals instead of reacting to individual events and applying short-term fixes year after year. Issues of concern to the Town range from providing additional housing and improving infrastructure (water-sewer-streets) to enhancing local services and reviewing the Town's land use regulations.

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

- Goals, Objectives, and Actions: Taking advantage of opportunities and overcoming challenges does not happen by chance. Town residents must be willing to set practical and achievable goals to make things happen.
- Introduction: A description of the Town, its location, features, and history.
- Population: A brief description of the Town population and demographics.
- Economy: A description of the Town's current economic situation and a vision for addressing issues and capitalizing on economic opportunities and challenges.
- Local Services and Public Facilities: A description of the Town's revenues and expenditures, and its services, including those that the Town is responsible for operating and maintaining.
- Infrastructure: A description of the Town's infrastructure.
- Housing: A description of the current housing opportunities in the Town.
- Natural Resources and Cultural Characteristics: A description of the abundant natural resources and the strong cultural characteristics of the Town.
- Land Use: A description of land use in the Town, including future growth, the impacts of flooding and wildland fire, historic preservation efforts, the potential for new land use regulations such as zoning, and the administration of subdivision regulations.

## **Community Description**

Stevensville's name is derived from Isaac I. Stevens, a surveyor sent out to determine the feasibility of a northern connector railroad route across the continent. The Town was born from a trading post, like so many other communities across Montana, in 1863. The Town was officially platted in 1879, and after the creation of Ravalli County in 1898, served as the County seat until it lost a hotly contested election for the permanent County seat of Ravalli County.

Residing in the Bitterroot Valley, the Town sits to the east of the Bitterroot River and is sandwiched between the Sapphire Mountains and the Bitterroot Mountains.

Historically, Stevensville's economy revolved around agriculture but was also supported by the timber industry through the development of a lumber mill. There were also small-scale mining operations, as well as a flour mill in Stevensville, which supplemented the local economy.

## **Vision**

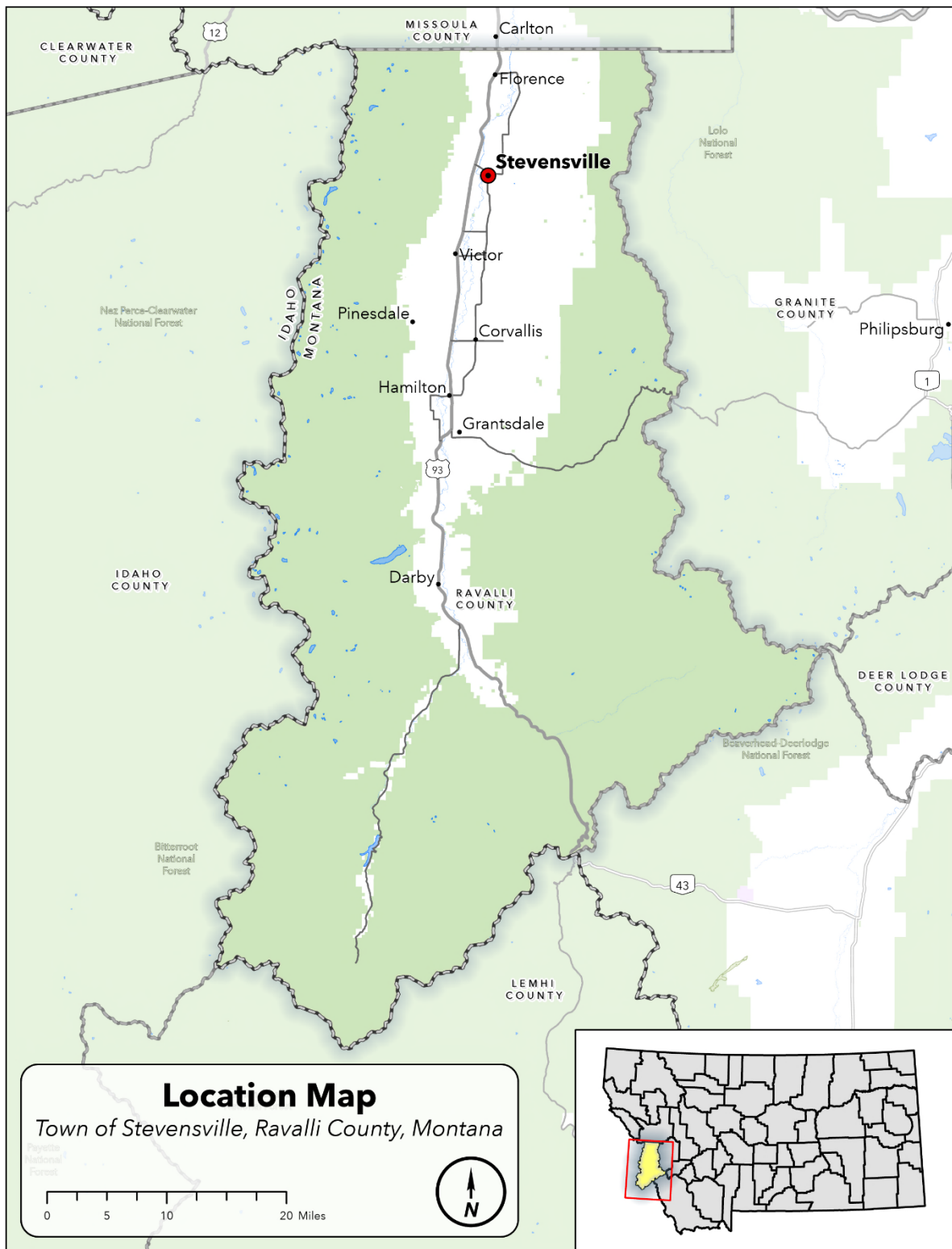
The Town of Stevensville envisions a thriving, resilient community that is deeply rooted in its rich history and natural surroundings, while promoting sustainable growth, economic vitality, and a high quality of life for all residents.

## **Town-County Coordination**

Ravalli County has three Commissioners who serve on the board. One of which is based in the Stevensville district.

The Town will coordinate its efforts to implement this Growth Policy with Ravalli County in the following ways:

- Coordinate with the Town on maintenance of pedestrian and vehicle infrastructure to ensure the safety of all Town and County residents.
- The Town will confer with the County on all future annexations to ensure the proper procedures are followed.
- The County will provide the Town with the opportunity to provide comments on any proposed subdivision that is within one mile of the Town limits.



Map 1 – Location Map, Montana State Library



# Community Outreach

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The development of this Growth Policy was grounded in public input gathered through a variety of methods. The Town conducted a community-wide survey to gather residents' opinions on topics such as housing preferences, community priorities (e.g., parks, infrastructure, housing, economic development), and desired types of development. The survey was open from July 25 to August 8, 2025, and received a total of 146 responses.

Key findings from the survey include:

- Residents identified infrastructure, community services (e.g., law enforcement and healthcare), and natural resources as top priorities.
- The most desired types of development were single-family homes, followed by senior housing.
- The top projects respondents wanted the Town to focus on included improvements to the water system, street maintenance, law enforcement, and wastewater treatment.
- Parks' priorities included restrooms, a swimming pool, and trail development.
- Respondents also emphasized the need for better promotion of community events to help revitalize the downtown area.

The Planning and Zoning Board utilized this input to inform the development of the Growth Policy's goals, objectives, and actions. A draft of these elements was presented to the public at an open house held on October 22, 2025, to gather additional feedback. The open house was held at Town Hall, and a total of 17 people attended. Though there was a small turnout, the feedback and discussions that helped drive the content found in this Growth Policy.

Public input gathered through both the survey and the open house ensured that the Growth Policy reflects the diverse perspectives and priorities of the community, particularly in the development of its goals, objectives, and action items.

# Planning Efforts

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Over the years, the Town of Stevensville has steadily worked to shape its future through a series of thoughtful planning efforts. These initiatives have reflected the values, concerns, and aspirations of its residents, balancing the preservation of small-town character with the need to adapt to growth and modern demands.

- 2010 Capital Improvements Plan (CIP)
- 2012 Wastewater Preliminary Engineering Report
- 2016 Growth Policy
- 2019 HDR Wye Area Annexation Study
- 2020 Water Preliminary Engineering Report
- 2021-2023 Strategic Plan
- 2023 Airport Master Plan

This Growth Policy builds on previously adopted planning efforts, creating a unified vision for Stevensville's future over the next 5 to 8 years. In addition to integrating past initiatives, it actively supports and guides current planning documents that may evolve with legislative sessions or changes in state statutes, including but not limited to:

- 2022 Subdivision Regulations
- 2023 Municipal Code

# Goals, Objectives, and Actions

The following are the goals, objectives, and actions meant to be achieved to address the opportunities and challenges identified in this plan. The goals and objectives in this section are listed by topic and area, followed by the actions identified to achieve them. Actions intended to implement the Growth Policy include, but are not limited to, measures such as considering how to protect the historic character of the Town, evaluating the potential need for updating the Town's Zoning Code and Subdivision Regulations, ensuring cooperation between the Town and Ravalli County, upgrading infrastructure, and providing day-to-day services.

## Economy

The Town's residents are experiencing steady growth and economic prosperity by expanding economic opportunities across various sectors. The town has identified goals and objectives to maintain and grow the local economy.

Goal	Objective	Action	Responsibility
E.1 – Create an attractive and business-friendly downtown	A. Maintain and improve the visual appearance of the historic downtown area while maintaining the Town's Cultural Character.	E.1 -A: Consult with the Montana State Historic Preservation Office and pursue National Park Service Historic District nomination.	Town, SHPO
	B. Market business opportunities within the Creamery Targeted Economic Development District/ Tax Increment Financing District.	E.1 -B: Create information material on TIF and TEDD Districts such as fact sheets and packets that highlight the incentives of development in the TIF/ TEDD.	Town
	C. Create a pedestrian-friendly atmosphere.	E.1 -C: Conduct a walkability audit to identify gaps and safety issues in the Commercial district to ensure that residents and visitors are safe to enjoy the downtown area on foot.	Town, local civic groups (e.g., Eagle Scouts, High School students, etc.)
	D. Encourage business development that contributes to Stevensville's sense of community and history	E.1 -D: Develop incentives and guidelines that support locally owned businesses and adaptive reuse of historic buildings to strengthen Stevensville's sense of community and historic identity	Town

E.2 – Attract and diversify business opportunities in the Town.	A. Market the Town’s quality of life, rural lifestyle, services and amenities: schools, hospital, library, trails, etc.	E.2-A: Create a “Community Events Calendar” on the Town’s website.	Town
	B. Identify the makeup of the local economy.	E.2-B: Review American Community Survey data yearly to understand year by year employment trends to ensure a strong understanding of the local economy.	Town, Bitterroot Valley Chamber of Commerce
	C. Support business investments and improvements through programs like C-PACE District and other available resources.	E.2- C: Examine the potential to adopt a C-PACE (Commercial Property-Assessed Capital Enhancements) District.  E.2-C: Pursue enrollment in the Montana Main Street Program	Town
	D. Market the Town and its community events.	E.2-D: Explore marketing opportunities to continue to bring in visitors to experience Stevensville’s local events.	Town, Bitterroot Valley Chamber of Commerce
E.3 – Improve industries identified as important by the community, such as arts and entertainment, recreation facilities, hotel/ motel, institutional, medical, etc.	A. Generate community-driven creative ideas for events.	E.3-A: Consider the establishment of a local working group to workshop new community events and ideas.	Town
E.4 – Maintain the historic downtown	A. Promote economic vitality in the historic downtown by supporting local businesses and incentivizing the adaptive reuse of historic buildings.	E.4-A: Explore the option of establishing a tax increment financing district in the downtown area.	Town, TIF/ TEDD Board

## Housing

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

Goal	Objective	Action	Responsibility
H.1 – Encourage the development of diverse housing types	A. Ensure all housing types are supported by existing and future Town infrastructure.	H.1-A: Update the current zoning regulations to comply with the current state statute for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs).	Town
	B. Identify barriers to the development of new single-family residences	H.1-B: Review the existing zoning code and amend the code if barriers towards development of single-family residences are identified.	Town
H.2 – Support additional housing needs by encouraging infill and redevelopment	A. Develop incentives for new development on vacant property and structural improvements.	H.2-A: Explore the possibilities of applying for the Montana Department of Commerce Housing Development and Rehabilitation Grant	Town
	B. Identify educational opportunities to property owners (resources, finances, lack of awareness, etc.)	H.2-B: Provide information resources through the Town's website to assist the public in development and code compliance.	Town
H.3 – Expand access to diverse and workforce housing options by developing regulatory strategies and securing funding sources	A. Identify and implement regulatory changes that facilitate development, while also pursuing public and private funding sources.	H.3-A (1): Review and update the current fee schedules for land development permitting.  H.3-A (2): Inventory the existing Short Term Rentals within the Town and review the current zoning regulations to address short-term rentals.	Town

	B. Identify grant and loan application for rehabilitation of existing housing.	H.3-B: Compile and maintain a housing funding inventory by researching available federal, state and local grant and loan programs and update the funding inventory annually.	Town
	C. Assist non-profits with identifying funding opportunities for construction of workforce housing	H.3-C: The Town will work with non-profits to identify applicable grant funding opportunities and support said non-profits by being the primary sponsor of the grant	Town, local non-profits

## Land Use

To be successful, the Town will need to retain its residents and businesses and potentially attract new ones, and the Town's regulatory environment must be predictable and fair. New development should occur in areas with limited potential of natural hazards such as flooding, or wildfire and where it is efficient for the Town to provide services.

Goal	Objective	Action	Responsibility
LU.1 – Ensure that new development should complement the surrounding area in a manner that protects property value and maintains the surrounding neighborhood and Town as a whole	A. Land use ordinances and regulations shall be enforced and amended as necessary.	<p>LU.1-A (1): Continue to review and update the existing zoning code to ensure it is in full compliance of all state statutes</p> <p>LU.1-A (2): Review the current subdivision regulations to determine if amendments are needed for the public infrastructure design standards.</p>	Town
	B. The future land use map will be considered when reviewing new land development.	LU.1-B: Update the existing zoning map, to include an interactive online zoning map	Town

	C. Implementation of share-cost to public infrastructure, through impact fees with developers	LU.1-C (1): Review and implement impact fees for new development  LU.1-C (2): Set up and implement an impact fee committee	Town
LU.2 – Development of existing lots within the Town will be prioritized over annexing new land when possible	A. Develop policies and procedures to address annexation.	LU.2-A: Create and annually review a strong annexation plan.	Town
	B. Incentives should be identified to encourage infill development versus annexation	LU.2-B: Discuss and adopt incentives that value infill development of annexation.	Town
	C. Ensure the Town has the capacity for water and sewer services prior to annexation	LU.2-C: Continue to upgrade current water and sewer infrastructure to handle future annexation and growth in accordance with an established annexation plan.	Town
LU.3 – Ensure new development is located in areas with minimal hazards	A. Enforce the Town zoning and floodplain ordinances.	LU.3-A: Continue to annually review all land use ordinances to ensure they are statutorily compliant and serve the best interest of the residents	Town
LU.4 - Improve the visual and structural quality of existing commercial and residential structures	A. Utilize existing resources such as the Department of Revenue's physical condition analysis to identify areas for redevelopment.	LU.4-A: Annually coordinate with the Department of Revenue to receive updated physical condition data to determine areas that are prime for redevelopment.	Town, DOR

	B. Increase density of housing where services are already available.	LU.4-B: Annually review the zoning map and code to continue to determine the most suitable areas for increased housing density in association with infrastructure capacity.	Town
LU.5 – Future residential subdivisions in the Town should be developed in a coordinated and logical manner that minimizes the cost of operations and maintenance to the Town.	A. Land use ordinances and regulations shall be enforced, updated, and amended as necessary.	LU.5-A: Coordinate with the County on annexation of a portion of Park Avenue that is maintained by the County.	Town, Ravalli County
	B. Development should be sited to minimize the infrastructure needed to provide service i.e. gravity flow sewer etc.	LU.5-B: Create an annexation area map or a Future Land Use Map to guide the growth of the Town in prioritized areas.	Town
	C. Developers should pay for needed infrastructure.	LU.5-C: The Town should review and determine the need for impact fees to be applied to the cost of infrastructure development.	Town
	D. Increase density of housing where services are already available.	LU.5-D (1): Conduct a Town wide survey to ensure the existing Town limits are correct.  LU.5-D (2): Conduct an inventory and analysis of non-annexed properties.	Town



## Local Services

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

Goal	Objective	Action	Responsibility
LS.1 – Ensure the hospitals and affiliated services long-term and cost-effective operation.	A. Encourage the continued cooperation between Providence Health Care and the Town.	LS.1 - A: Coordinate with Providence Health Care to discuss shared priorities between Providence and the Town regarding community health needs and joint projects.	Town, Providence Health Care
	B. Retain and attract high-quality medical staff.	LS.1 - B: Collaborate with local healthcare officials to identify workforce needs and barriers to housing for medical staff.	Town, Health Care providers
	C. Support Fish Wildlife and Parks and the Montana Food Bank Network's Hunters Against Hunger program to combat food insecurity.	LS.1 - C: Promote Hunters Against Hunger through Town communication channels, with collaboration from FWP.	Town, FWP
LS.2 – Ensure that residents have high-quality school facilities and staff.	A. Work with the school district to provide incentives for retaining and attracting staff.	LS.2 - A: Collaborate with the school district to identify staffing needs such as housing support, to help recruit and retain staff	Town, School District
LS.3 - Ensure residents are provided effective law enforcement and emergency	A. Provide adequate facilities, equipment, and personnel.	LS.3 - A: Annually assess all facility needs, equipment conditions, staffing levels to prioritize budget requests and to pursue grant funding.	Town

management, and fire protection.	B. Continue collaborating efforts for the enforcement of Town ordinances by both law enforcement and the Justice of the Peace.	LS.3- B: Conduct annual reviews of all Town ordinances with law enforcement and the Justice of the Peace to determine if said ordinances are applicable and can be enforced properly.	Town, Police, Justice of the Peace
	C. Improve emergency response times.	LS.3- C: Conduct periodic reviews of response times and identify needed upgrades to enhance emergency response time.	Town, Police, EMS, Fire
	D. Sustain visual blight and physical decay enforcement while supporting clean up incentive programs.	LS.3- D: Review and discuss implementation of a community clean up assistance program to support clean-up of decayed property.	Town
LS.4 – Provide additional recreational opportunities for residents, including youth facilities, parks and recreation facilities and pedestrian/ bicycle trails.	A. Identify recreational needs and priorities.	LS.4- A: Conduct public outreach on the current recreational needs of the Town residents.	Town
	B. Identify funding sources for additional recreational facilities and programs.	LS.4-B: Pursue grant funding through the Montana Department of Commerce, and Montana FWP for CDBG planning grants and Land & Water Conservation Fund Recreation Grants for community recreation planning.	Town, MDOC, FWP
LS.5 – Maintain a sense of community by ensuring services are being provided to all demographics	A. Assess community needs for young families, physically disabled, seniors, etc.	LS.5- A: Support community events in the downtown area and continue to promote these events on the Town website and at Town Hall.	Town

	B. Identify gaps in community services.	LS.5-B: Support the efforts of the County's WIC program.	Town, Ravalli County
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## Infrastructure and Public Facilities

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

Goal	Objective	Action	Responsibility
IPF.1 – Improve energy resiliency through diversification, capacity building, and protection of energy resources.	A. Support homeowners who are seeking alternative energy sources. .	IPF.1-A: Coordinate with Northwestern Energy on hosting workshops for Town residents on energy resources.	Town, Northwestern Energy
IPF.2 – Provide Town residents services cost-effectively and efficiently	A. Perform regularly scheduled maintenance and replacement based on an infrastructure priority plan.	<p>IPF.2-A (1): Annually review and update the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP)</p> <p>IPF.2-A (2): Continue to upgrade public works equipment, including work trucks with four wheel drive, and a snow plow.</p> <p>IPF.2-A (3): Maintain a GIS database</p> <p>IPF.2-A (4): Continue to upgrade all Town-owned facilities such as the Town Hall, the annex, public works maintenance building and the well house, and create a maintenance plan for each building.</p>	Town

	B. Ensure that new development is responsible for the cost of installing infrastructure.	IPF2-B: Adopt and enforce development regulations, including impact fees, subdivision improvement agreements, and developer-installed infrastructure requirements	Town
	C. Site new development where it is cost-effective to provide service.	IPF.2-C: Continue to review annexations and make decisions based on capacity of the existing infrastructure to withstand additional Town properties.	Town
IPF.3 - Improve the quality and long-term reliability of the Town's drinking water.	A. Ensure sustainability of the water system and quality.	<p>IPF.3-A (1): Continue to upgrade the Town's SCADA system utilizing the remaining ARPA funding to ensure the system is fully functional and can integrate with the other SCADA systems in the future.</p> <p>IPF.3-A (2): Rehab existing water tank</p> <p>IPF.3-A (3): Identify the proper location and construct a new water tank</p> <p>IPF.3-A (4): Replace water mains annually as needed.</p> <p>IPF.3-A (5): Continue to work with the Town's homeowners to transition the water meters from the inside to the outside of homes to facilitate an easier method of meter reading.</p> <p>IPF.3-A (6): Identify planning grants such as Community Development Block Grants or</p>	Town, MDOC

		<p>Montana Coal Endowment Program Grants to produce a water PER determining existing wells that could potentially join the existing water distribution network.</p> <p>IPF.3-A (7): Continue to replace hydrants throughout the Town to ensure that the Town has adequate water capacity for fire suppression.</p> <p>IPF.3-A (8): Pursue planning grant funding for an update to the water PER</p>	
IPF.4 – Provide safe and efficient streets	A. Repair and maintain streets, particularly those with high traffic volumes or identified as being hazardous.	<p>IPF.4-A (1): Create a street maintenance plan</p> <p>IPF.4-A (2): Create an annual maintenance plan for the stormwater system</p> <p>IPF.4-A (3): Conduct a thorough assessment of public parking in the downtown area.</p> <p>IPF.4-A (4): Conduct paving on West 3<sup>rd</sup> Street.</p> <p>IPF.4-A (5): Conduct paving on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street.</p> <p>IPF.4-A (6): Conduct paving in the public alley behind First Security Bank.</p>	Town

	B. Install traffic control devices and traffic calming measures to slow traffic on residential streets, where it is necessary.	IPF.4-B: Conduct neighborhood traffic assessments to identify problem areas and, where warranted, install appropriate traffic control devices	Town
	C. Incorporate diverse measure to reduce stormwater runoff and shallow flooding (i.e. Green infrastructure)	IPF.4-C: Integrate green infrastructure practices, such as bioswales, rain gardens, permeable pavement, and expanded tree canopy, into public projects and development review standards to reduce stormwater runoff, improve infiltration, and minimize shallow flooding in vulnerable areas.	Town
IPF.5 – Provide safe and efficient pedestrian/bicycle facilities, particularly routes used by children.	A. Repair and/or maintain existing sidewalk system, particularly in those areas most used by pedestrians.	IPF.5-A: Collaborate with local volunteers to conduct a sidewalk inventory and assess the Town's pedestrian infrastructure.	Town, local civic groups (e.g., Eagle Scouts, High School students, etc.)
	B. Promote walkable neighborhoods and interconnected trails systems in the City.	IPF.5-B: Review and update the subdivision regulations, as needed, to ensure that new developments are walkable in nature and have efficient connectivity to existing pedestrian infrastructure.	Town
	C. Identify potential funding sources to incentivize the repair of sidewalks.	IPF.5-C: Identify state and federal grant opportunities for upgrades and or repair work to existing sidewalk infrastructure.	Town
IPF.6 -Maintain and improve park and recreation facilities	A. Inventory and assess the condition of all parks and recreation facilities.	IPF.6-A: Upgrade the electrical system at Lewis and Clark Park.	Town

and programs, including trails.	B. As resources allow, expand park and recreation facilities and programs.	IPF.6-B: Create a Capital Improvements plan that is specific to parks and recreation and prioritize projects based on community needs and costs to the taxpayers.	Town
	C. Identify potential funding sources to enhance parks and recreation.	IPF.6-C: Pursue planning and construction grants through public entities and private foundations for parks and recreation upgrades.	Town
IPF.7 – Improve the quality and long-term reliability of the Town’s wastewater system	A. Continue to secure funding and continue to implement phased capital improvements to ensure a reduction in failures and to meet future demand.	IPF.7-A (1): Continue to upgrade the Town’s SCADA system utilizing the remaining ARPA funding to ensure the system is fully functional and can integrate with the other SCADA systems in the future. IPF.7-A (2): Replace the existing sewer line on Riverside Avenue.	Town
IPF.8 – Contribute to mitigating costs of improvements to facilities within the public rights-of-way.	A. Explore a cost-share program sidewalk improvements.	IPF.8-A: Conduct an impact fee study for infrastructure upgrades for new developments.	Town
	B. Identify programs and funding that the Town can leverage for improvements.	IPF.8-B: Utilize existing engineering work in the Town to build the basis for grant funding applications for infrastructure upgrades.	Town

IPF.9- Use green infrastructure such as rain gardens, swales or permeable surfaces to help the Town's existing drainage system manage stormwater at a low cost to the Town residents.	A. Continue to support and expand the urban forestry program to ensure maintenance is allocated for future trees.	<p>IPF.9-A (1): Create a "New to Stevensville" page on the Town website to provide easy education to new residents on sidewalk and tree maintenance.</p> <p>IPF.9-A (2): Educate the Town residents on how trees, landscaping, and other permeable surfaces provides filtration of stormwater to protect the Bitterroot River and reduce the cost of stormwater infrastructure.</p>	Town
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## Natural and Cultural Resources

The preservation of present natural and cultural resources within the Town is vital to the well-being of the residents. The goals and objectives of this particular section hold an important place in the growth patterns of the Town.

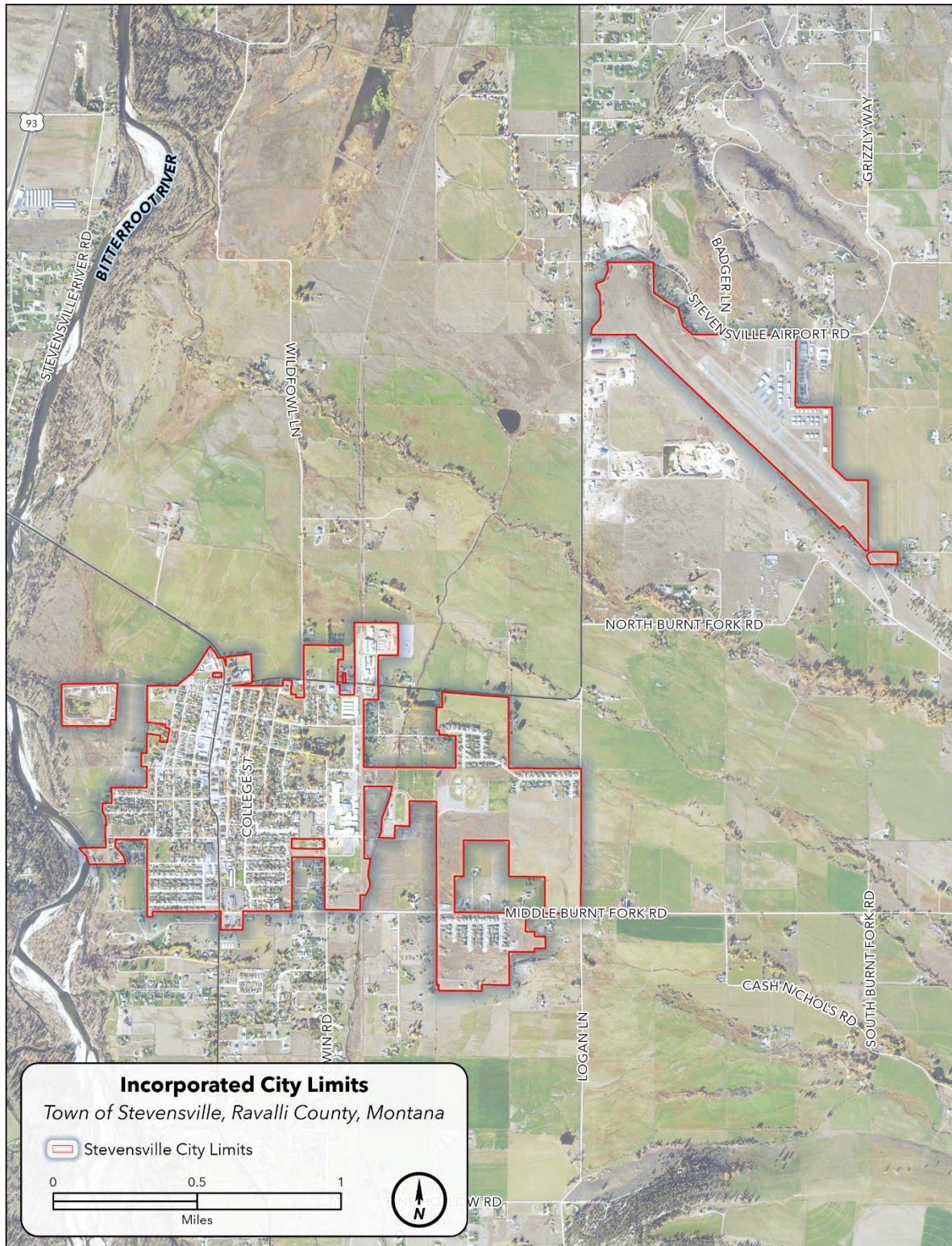
Goal	Objective	Action	Responsibility
NR.1 – Balance growth with the rural lifestyle of Stevensville.	A. Ensure that orderly development has no negative impacts to natural resources	NR.1 -A: Continue to review subdivisions in a fair and predictable matter that takes into consideration development impacts on natural resources.	Town
	B. Direct growth in a way that mitigates impact on agricultural opportunities.	NR.1 -B: Ensure that future development is adjacent to existing infrastructure and developments to limit the impact on agricultural areas.	Town



	C. Protect the historic character of Stevensville.	NR.1 -C: Discuss and implement design guidelines that preserve the historic character and complement Stevensville's existing historic character	Town
NR.2 – Improve recreational opportunities.	A. Continue to coordinate and support other agencies and jurisdictions on identifying low impact but underutilized recreational opportunities along the Bitterroot River.	NR.2 -A: As opportunities arise, continue to support other agencies, such as Fish Wildlife and Parks and private property owners in determining the feasibility of expanding recreational opportunities along the Bitterroot River.	Town, FWP, Private property owners
	B. Assess improvements to walking trails, fishing access, etc.	NR.2 -B: Continue to coordinate with the County on the maintenance of existing trails, clearly establishing each jurisdiction's responsibility.	Town, Ravalli County
NR.3 – Sustain community events	A. Support community events rooted in the historic and cultural values of Stevensville.	NR.3 -A: Continue to provide the community with an easy to use calendar that helps market local events to the community and visitors.	Town

NR.4 – Ensure park protections and sustainability of maintenance	A. Continue to maintain park open space primarily at River Park and Lewis and Clark Park.	<p>NR.4-A (1): Create a stakeholder and public engagement plan to discuss a Special Improvement District with the Town residents.</p> <p>NR.4-A (2): Continue to update the pool to ensure adequate ADA compliance.</p> <p>NR.4-A (3): Continue to upgrade the skate park to ensure that residents and visitors have a strong mix of features that are both safe and cost-effective to construct.</p>	Town, local stakeholders
	B. Identify sustainable funding mechanisms for park and trail maintenance and operation.	<p>NR.4-B (1): Explore the financial feasibility of creating a Special Improvements District for Parks</p> <p>NR.4-B (2): Pursue grant funding for a Parks, Trails, and Recreation master plan.</p> <p>NR.4-B (3): Discuss the need of funding and producing a feasibility study for the pool.</p>	Town
NR.5 – Reduce human-wildlife conflict.	A. Identify ways to support proper waste management for pets in the public recreation facilities.	NR.5-A: Continue to ensure that residents have pet disposal bags and trash cans and provide educational resources on why to pick up pet waste.	Town
	B. Identify wildlife corridors and crossing areas.	NR.5-B: Coordinate with Fish Wildlife and Parks on educating the public on how to reduce human wildlife conflict by using non-intrusive development methods such as wildlife friendly fencing.	Town, FWP

NR.6 – Create and sustain a community resilience to natural hazards	A. Cooperate with the County DES for hazard mitigation and readiness.	NR.6-A: Coordinate with the County DES when the hazard mitigation plan is updated.	Town, Ravalli County DES
	B. Support awareness of the Wildland-Urban Interface and creating defensible space.	NR.6-B: Work with the fire department to provide residents with information on how to manage their property to reduce fire risk, especially those located near the wildland-urban interface.	Town, Stevensville Fire Department



Map 2 – Incorporated Town Limits Map, Montana State Library



# Population

Population demographic analysis can assist a community in creating policies and procedures for growth that benefit the community as a whole. Likewise, an analysis of the population can identify any gaps in local services within a community for a variety of demographic groups. This could be senior services, childcare, recreational services, and so on.

## Trends

Stevensville had an estimated population of 2,210 people in 2023, according to the Montana Department of Commerce's Census and Economic Information Center (CEIC), which will be referred to as CEIC within this document. The population is 52.5% female and 47.5% male. This is a ratio of approximately 90 males per 100 females.

Population trends in Montana have been impacted greatly by the COVID-19 pandemic. This has been especially prevalent in Ravalli County. However, Stevensville saw a slight increase in population between 2019 and 2020, before trending upwards until 2023. Figure 1 below shows the percentage change in population since 2018.

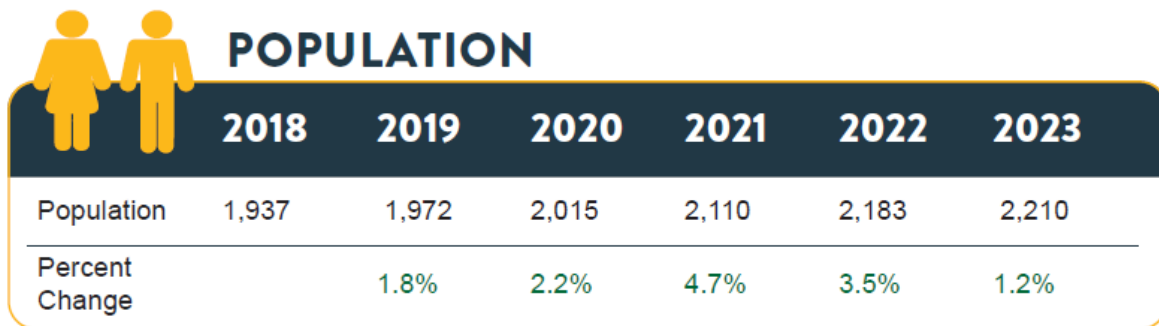


Figure 1 – Population of Stevensville, Montana Department of Commerce, Census and Economic Information Center

Estimating future population growth can be difficult to project, but it plays a key role in determining future land use policies and procedures, infrastructure upgrades and existing capacity, and upgrades to local services. For Stevensville, it was determined that since 2021, the average growth rate was approximately 4.6%. Using this growth rate could greatly skew the data and show Stevensville growing at a rate that is not sustainable.

For this analysis, the 4.6% average over three years (2021-2023) was divided by 17 years (2040) to obtain a more sustainable growth rate of approximately 0.3%. The Figure below shows two growth rates, 0.3% and a higher 0.5% growth per year.

The Town should continue tracking demographic trends closely. Significant shifts in age distribution could influence service needs such as senior care, educational and recreational facilities for youth, and workforce stability for local businesses.

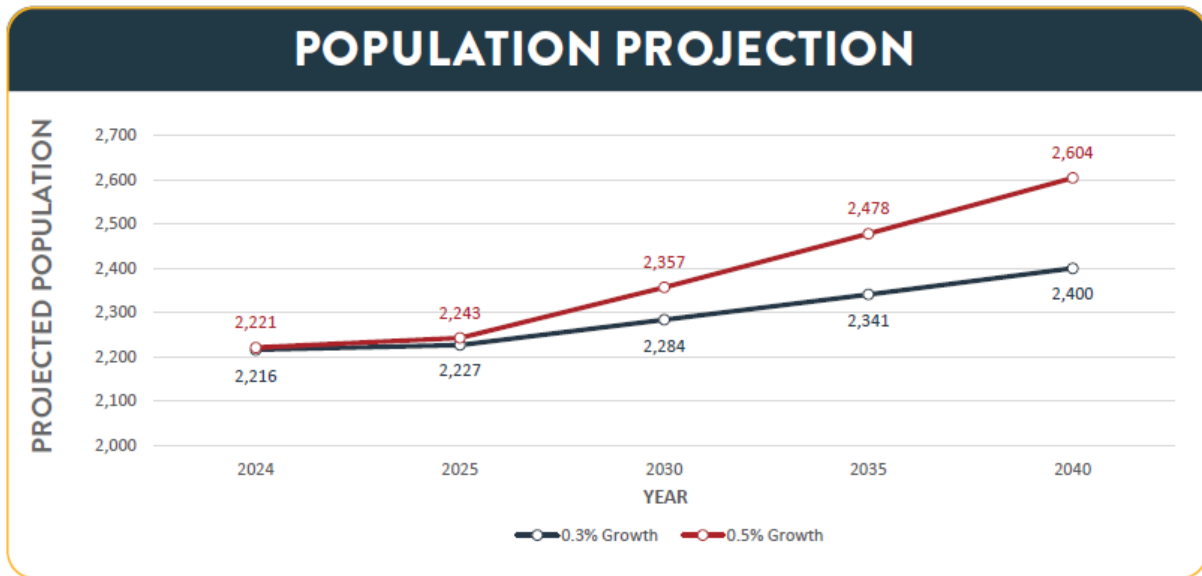


Figure 2 – Population Projections, American Community Survey, Decennial Census

## Age Classes

The median age of the population of Stevensville as of 2023 was 38.9 years old, according to the ACS. This was an increase of 0.4 years since 2020, when the average age was 38.5 years.

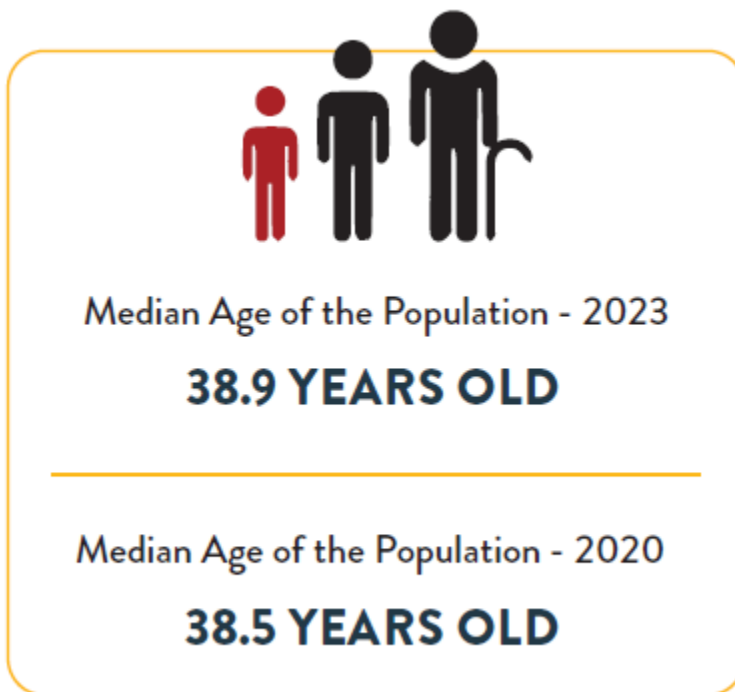


Figure 3 – Median Age of the Population, American Community Survey

Figure 4 below shows the 2023 age breakdown of the Town of Stevensville

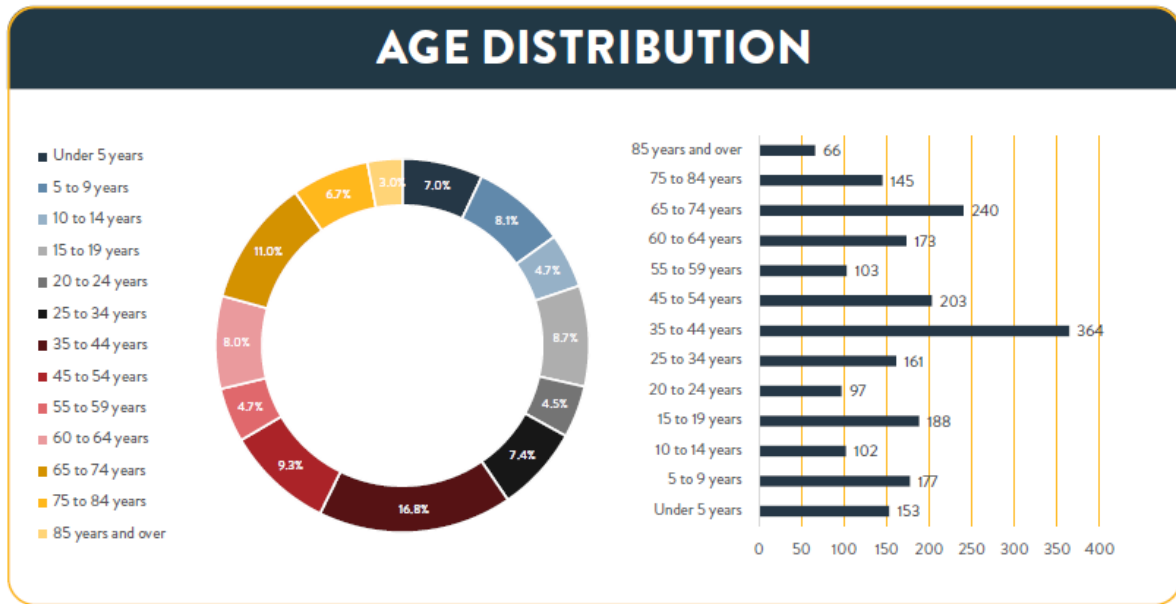


Figure 4 – Age Distribution of Stevensville, American Community Survey, Headwaters Economic Profile System

# Economics

Economic analysis provides strong insight into the health of a community. Strong economies often lead to a higher quality of life. This section of the Growth Policy breaks down the economy of Stevensville by analyzing the current economic conditions, opportunities, and issues for economic growth, as well as determining strategies to support an adaptable economy.

## Jobs

In 2022, the Town of Stevensville had a total of 919 jobs within the Town. The Town had been slowly increasing the number of jobs since 2018. Figure #5 below shows the trend in total jobs within the Town since 2018.

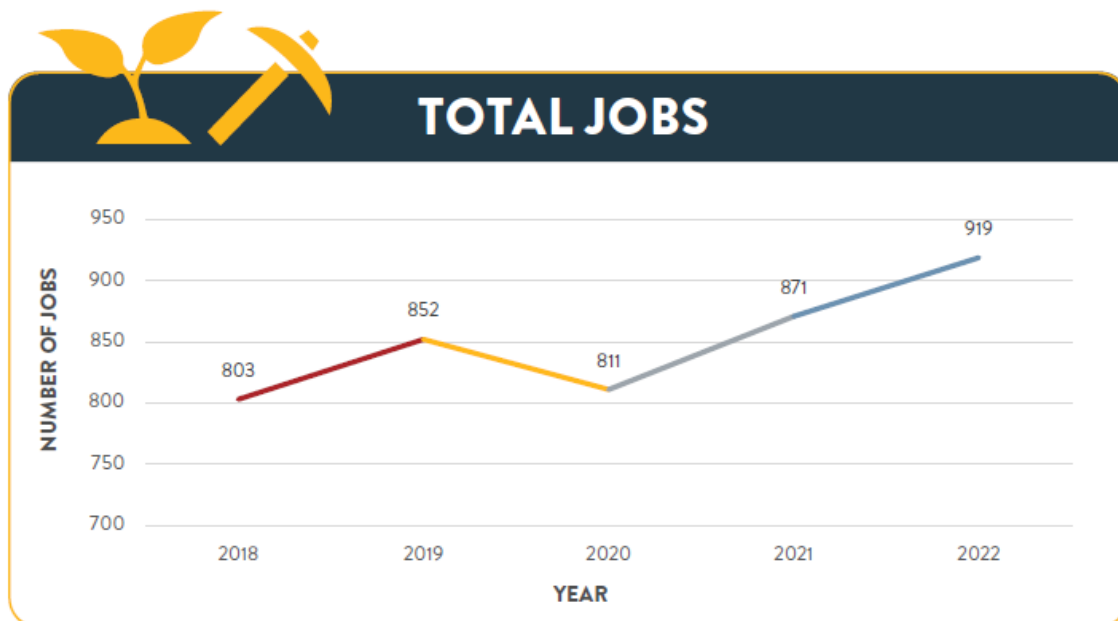


Figure 5 – Total Jobs, Census Bureau’s Center for Economic Studies Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics Program

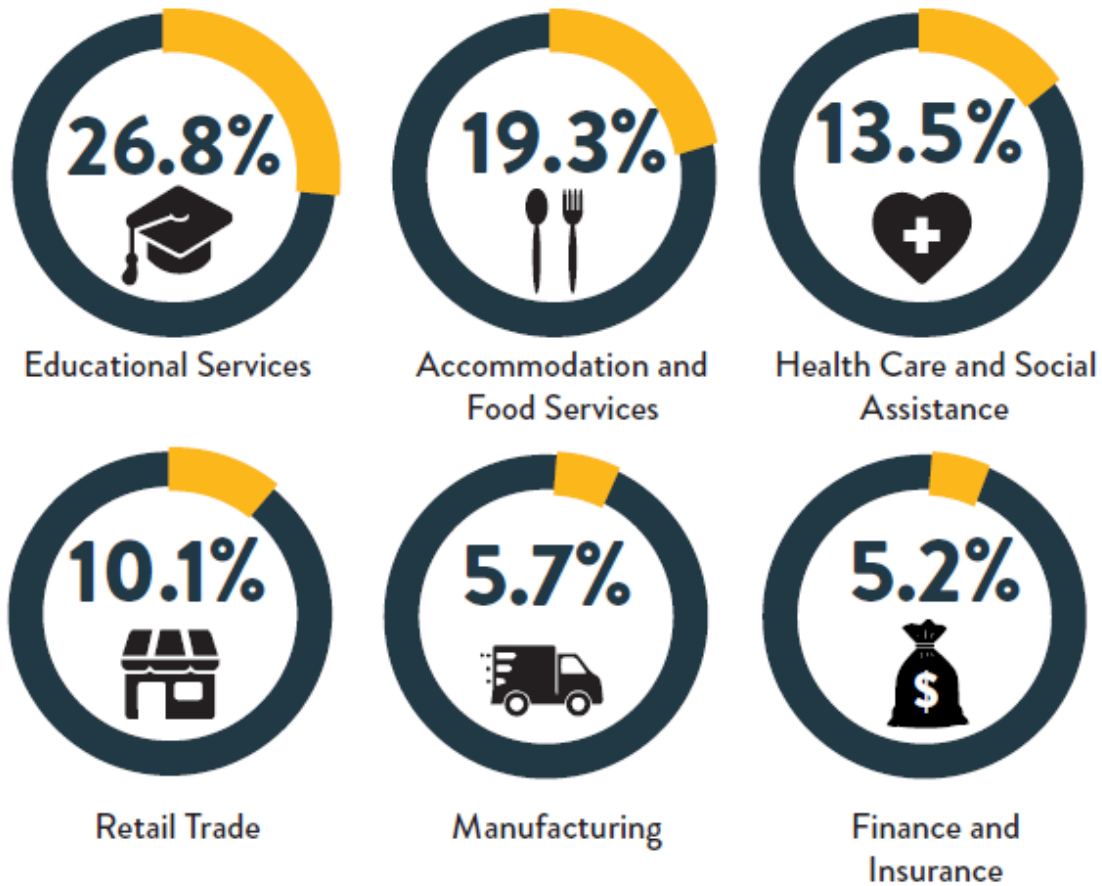
Of the total jobs in 2022, 22.2% of the jobs were held by workers between the ages of 29 and younger, 49.9% between the ages of 30 to 54, and 27.9% were held by those aged 55 and older.

The top six industry sectors in Stevensville, according to the United States Census Bureau, were the following:

- Educational Services (26.8%)
- Accommodation and Food Services (19.3%)
- Health Care and Social Assistance (13.5%)
- Retail Trade (10.1%)
- Manufacturing (5.7%)
- Finance and Insurance (5.2%)



## TOP 6 JOB SECTORS FOR STEVENSVILLE



*Figure 6 – Top Six Job Sectors, Census Bureau’s Center for Economic Studies, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics Program*

### Wage Income

The Town of Stevensville had a median household income of \$52,745 in 2023. The figure below displays the household income distribution of Stevensville as of 2023.

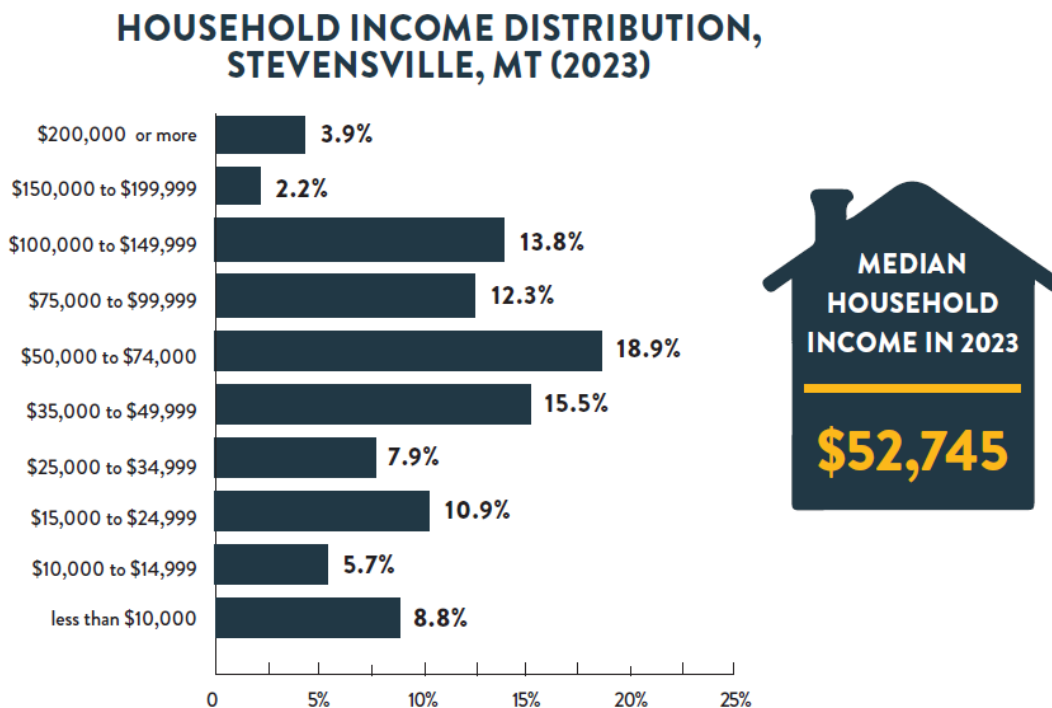


Figure 7 - Household Income Distribution, American Community Survey, Headwaters Economic Profile System

As it will also be noted in the housing section of this document, the cost of housing is outpacing the household income distribution, with 33.4% of all owner-occupied, mortgaged homes exceeding 30% of the household income. For Stevensville residents, it is equally hard financially to rent affordably with the current income distribution, with 42.8% of renters spending more than 30% of their income on rent.

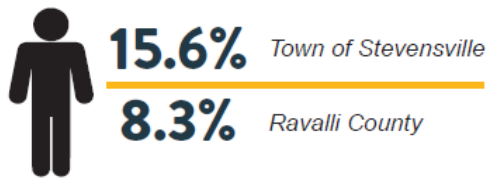
According to research conducted by the National Low Income Housing Coalition, it was estimated that a minimum wage employee in the State of Montana (\$10.30) would have to work 64 total hours to afford a modest 1-bedroom rental home at fair market rent.

These figures underscore the need for Stevensville to develop strategies or policies to address the growing gap between housing costs and income levels in the community.

## Poverty

As of 2023, the Town of Stevensville had a poverty prevalence of 15.6% for individuals and 15.5% for families. Both of these percentages are above the percentage of Ravalli County, which is 8.3% and 4.4% respectively. By analyzing the poverty rate, the Town can use the data to assess land use policies associated with housing affordability, such as different housing types, and also address any gaps in the existing local services for the community.

## INDIVIDUALS AT OR BELOW POVERTY LEVEL



## FAMILIES AT OR BELOW POVERTY LEVEL

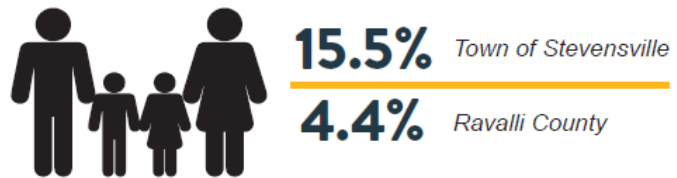
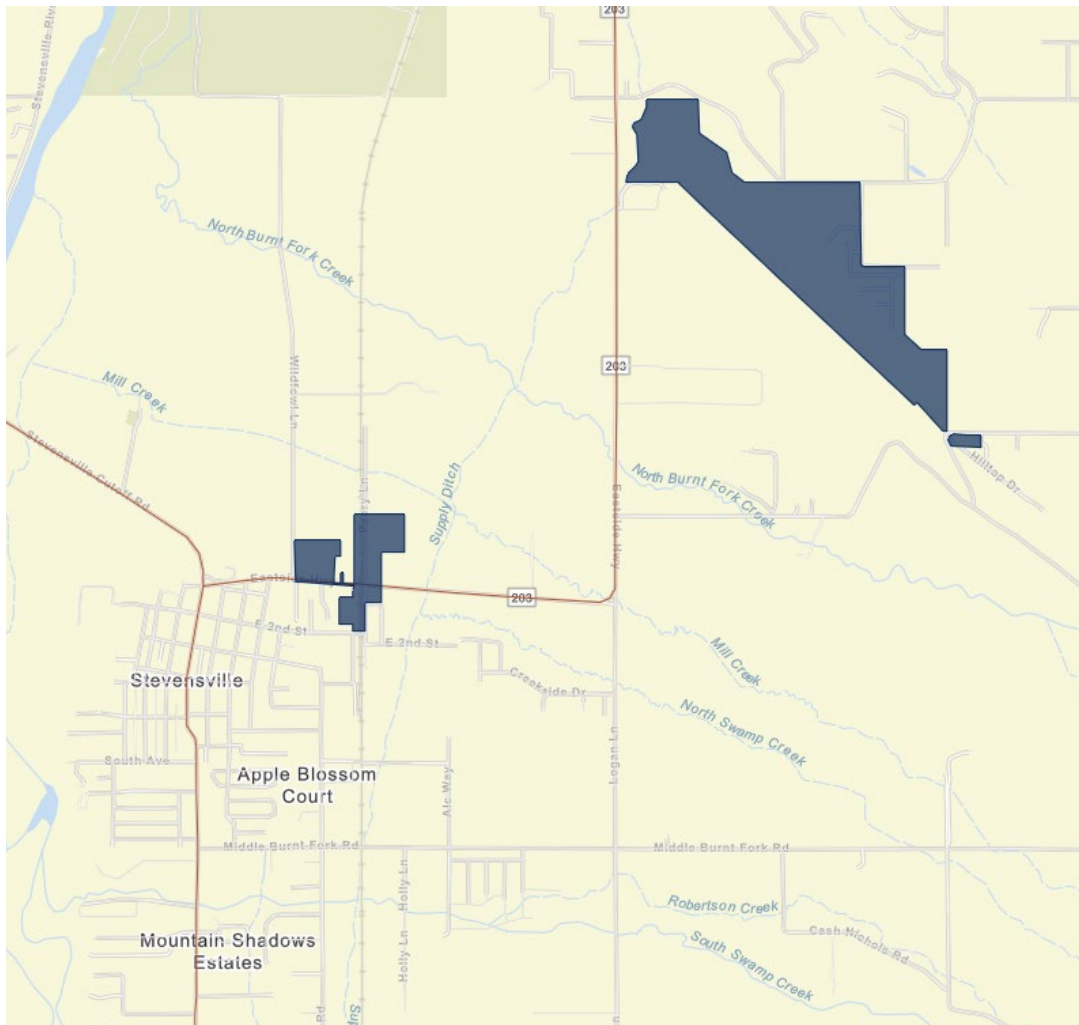


Figure 8 – Poverty Level, American Community Survey, Headwaters Economic Profile System

## Tax Increment Financing & Targeted Economic Development Districts

The Town of Stevensville has one TIF district and one TEDD district adjacent to the Town.



### STEVENSVILLE TAX INCREMENT FINANCING INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT

Stevensville's TIFID is situated on 40 acres at the north end of town and is home to a variety of industrial uses. The TIFID area includes properties of MT Fabrication Corporation, which is engaged in steel fabrication and serves the western United States, Alaska and western Canada, as well as some adjacent vacant land and some pre-existing residential uses. MT Fabrication's manufactured products are large and many of them must be shipped out by oversized flatbed trailers.

The purpose of the TIFID was to address the immediate needs of the companies in the district and then to develop additional infrastructure to encourage the location, expansion, and retention of industrial and value-added industries in the Town of Stevensville. To that end, both public water and public sewer mains were recently extended into the district, enabling existing and future industries to utilize those services.

The district provides land for a wide range of activities, including manufacturing and other light industrial businesses. Because the district is in close proximity to residential areas, the types of industrial uses will be limited to those with minimal adverse off-site impacts.

### STEVENSVILLE AIRPORT TARGETED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

The Stevensville Airport Targeted Economic Development District (TEDD) occupies 174 acres and is currently home to aircraft-related industries. Stevensville's Airport TEDD is intended to provide the local government with the ability to employ tax increment financing (increases in tax revenue) for appropriate public infrastructure projects in support of aviation-related light industrial businesses at the Stevensville Airport. There are currently nine businesses with a total of about 20 employees. Of these, seven businesses are engaged in value-added light industrial activities, and the majority of their revenue is derived from outside the State of Montana. Of those seven businesses engaged in value-added enterprises, three are also engaged in research and development associated with providing new innovations to the aircraft market, including home kits, bush aircraft, and experimental aircraft engines. However, further growth of value-adding businesses and industries at the site is limited by the lack of adequate sewer and water infrastructure.

The Stevensville Airport TEDD is located on land that was recently annexed to the town. The recently annexed airport land is suitable for value-added, light industrial, and technology development if the proper infrastructure and public improvements can be provided. One limiting factor to the development of these types of enterprises is the fact that water and wastewater infrastructure do not currently extend to the airport. The town views the Stevensville Airport TEDD as an opportunity to incentivize appropriate locations for light industrial and manufacturing businesses. Proper infrastructure for water and wastewater is a key component of this effort.

The TEDD clearly defines appropriate, sustainable space in the community of Stevensville where secondary, value-adding business growth can occur. Its purpose is to develop additional infrastructure to encourage the location, expansion, and retention of value-added industries suitable for location at an airport, compatible with Federal Aviation Agency (FAA) regulations. As the district is also in close proximity to residential and commercial areas, the types of industrial uses will be limited to those with minimal adverse off-site impacts.

## Downtown Development

The Town of Stevensville has an extremely historic downtown area and also serves as a vital social and economic hub for the residents. The majority of the residents responded to the community survey stating that they would like to encourage the Town to hold more community events in the downtown area. There were also quite a few written comments submitted that address the need for increased economic vitality, as well as infrastructure upgrades in the downtown area.



It was not outright stated by the respondents, but based on the responses that were received, the residents love the small town identity of their community and would encourage economic growth in the downtown area.

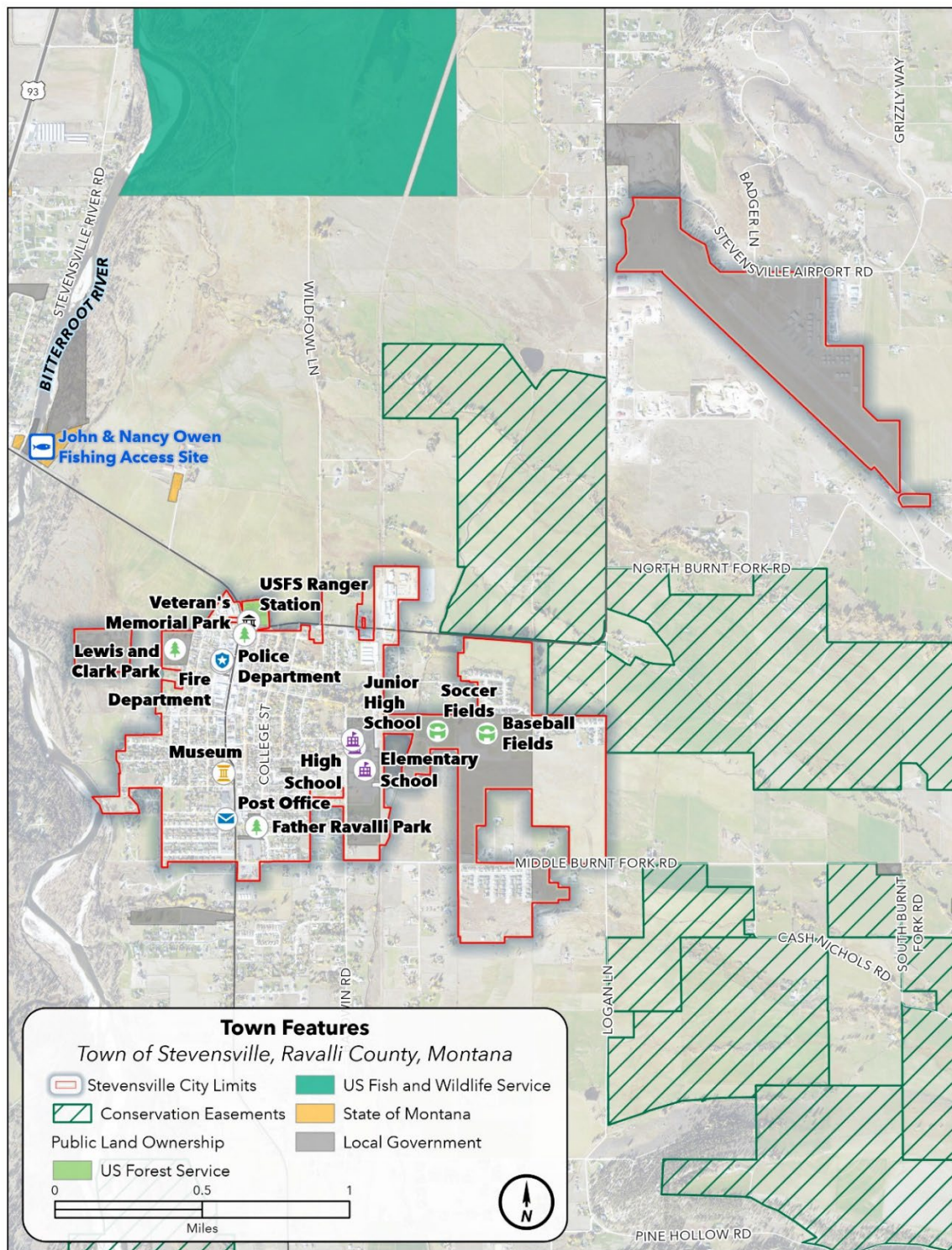
### COMMERCIAL AREAS

Stevensville's commercial development is unique, extending beyond its historic downtown into two additional areas. To support these districts and maintain essential infrastructure, the Town adopted Resolution 259 in 2010, which updated its Capital Improvements Plan (CIP). This plan provides a strategic framework for managing infrastructure and equipment needs within commercial-zoned properties near the current ACE Hardware along Eastside Highway and a strip of commercial development along the southern corridor of Eastside Highway.

The CIP prioritizes capital projects and equipment replacement, establishes timelines for implementation, and identifies potential funding sources. By adopting this plan, Stevensville ensures a proactive approach to maintaining and upgrading its infrastructure, supporting both existing businesses and future commercial growth in areas outside the historic downtown, as current funding is limited to these designated areas.



# Local Services



Map 3 – Town Features, Montana State Library

## Government Revenues and Expenditures

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

Based upon data from the Montana Department of Administration, and the Town, in fiscal year 2024 the Town generated over \$1.3 million in government revenues. The two largest sources of revenue in that year were taxes and assessments, which were over \$400,000, and intergovernmental payments which were over \$200,000.

Based upon data from the Montana Department of Administration, and the Town, in fiscal year 2024 the Town had expenditures of over \$995,000. The Town's largest expenditure was for public safety, being over \$430,000.

## Market Value and Taxable Value

Based on data from the Montana Department of Revenue, the market value of real property in the Town has increased steadily, while the taxable value of property has remained stable. In 2014, the market value of all real property in the Town of Stevensville was over \$94 million. By 2025 this figure had increased to over \$401 million, a 326 percent increase. During the same period, taxable values in the Town only increased from over \$2.2 million to over \$3.6 million.

## Law Enforcement

### TOWN POLICE

The Stevensville Police Department has a very clear and concise mission statement.

“The mission of the Stevensville Police Department is to provide professional police services and reduce criminal opportunity through proactive policing, while improving the quality of life within our community. The Stevensville Police Department is committed to maintaining a safe and comfortable quality of life for all citizens and visitors of the Town of Stevensville through excellent Law Enforcement Services.”



The department is managed by the Chief of Police, who oversees two other officers.

The department is in need of updated equipment such as radios and police vehicles. As the Town creates a capital improvements plan, these items should be included in the prioritization and budgeting for the department.

The Police department should also collaborate with the Town council on further recruitment of additional officers and how to retain those officers as well.

### COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

The Ravalli County Sheriff's Office provides law enforcement coverage for the area outside of the Town limits; however, the Sheriff's office will provide support for the Town Police if needed. The Sheriff's office has over 100 employees who provide service in some regard. Below is a brief list of positions within the department.

- Patrol
- Administration
- Detective
- Reserve Deputy
- Detention Officer
- Communications Specialist
- Civil Records Clerk
- Emergency Management
- Detention Medical Services
- Search and Rescue

## Fire Protection

Fire protection is essential in a town to safeguard lives, property, and the environment. A well-organized fire protection system helps prevent fires, respond quickly to emergencies, and minimize damage when incidents occur.

### TOWN FIRE

The Town fire department has been in operation for over 125 years. There are currently 40 volunteers in the department. The Town's Volunteer Fire Department has served the community for over 125 years. Like many small Montana towns, it operates as an all-volunteer force, providing fire protection and emergency medical services, including responses to medical calls, vehicle accidents, and fires, as well as training and community outreach. The department has 40 volunteers, though stations are not staffed around the clock. At times, volunteers choose to cover shifts without pay. The department also partners with the Stevensville Rural Fire Department to serve the community.

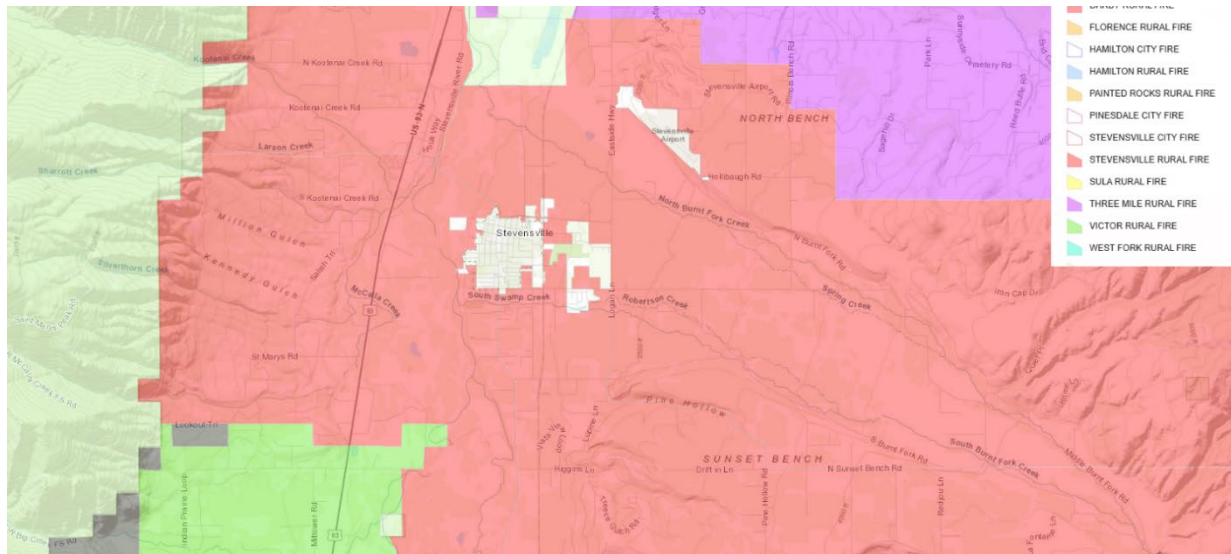


### RURAL FIRE

The Stevensville Rural Fire Department consists of 31 volunteer firefighters at 4 fire stations: Burnt Fork, Sunset Bench, Westside, and Etna. In 2024, the rural fire department received 705 total calls, responded to 42 active fires, 502 medical emergencies, 29 vehicle accidents, and 132 other identified responses, which include Hazardous Conditions, Other Rescues, Service Calls, Good Intent, and False Alarms.



The district provides the community with homeowner with public education, homeowner preparedness, burn permits, and community safety.



## Senior Services

The Stevensville Senior Center is a community hub that is operated by the Ravalli County Council on Aging. The center offers a wide range of support to older adults. There is a congregate lunch that is offered Monday through Friday, and not only provides nutritious food to the community, but also a strong community connection for older adults. The Meals on Wheels program is a vital aspect of the center, as it provides meals to those who cannot physically be present at the center. The center also provides a strong social hub and recreational opportunities to keep seniors engaged and connected to one another.

The senior center enhances dignity, independence, and well-being for its users. Seniors remain active, social, and connected to their community through the senior center.

## Medical

Stevensville has a variety of medical options within the Town. There are Bitterroot Health, Community Medical Center, and Providence primary care. These three medical services are the most widely known in the area.

Bitterroot Health offers a variety of services, such as CT scans, behavioral health, mammography, pediatric care, primary care, physical therapy, urgent care and a variety of other services.

Community Medical and Providence both offer primary care services to Stevensville and the surrounding community.

## Emergency Medical Services

EMS services are provided to the community by the Stevensville Rural Fire Department and Bitterroot Health. The Rural Fire Department will often train with other volunteer departments and will often respond to a wide range of accidents, including but not limited to motor vehicle accidents.

Bitterroot Health provides 24/7 EMS services and has a wide range of up-to-date technology to be deployed in the event of an emergency. These technological tools are Power Pro stretchers, Zoll X-series defibrillators, and Sapphire IV pumps.

## Schools

There are three schools located in the Stevensville School District: an elementary school, a middle school, and a high school. These schools serve kindergarten through sixth grade, seventh through eighth, and ninth through twelfth grade, respectively.

According to the Office of Public Instruction's school profiles, the 2024-2025 enrollment numbers for the three schools were 482 students in the elementary school, 145 in the middle school, and 346 students in the high school.



Oftentimes, the student teacher ratio metric is used to measure the supervision and safety of the students, more personalized instruction and attention, and better child development. Lower student-to-teacher ratios have been proven to leave a mark on children by increasing test scores, reducing the dropout rate, and increasing the graduation rate, according to the Hun School of Princeton, a private boarding school located in Princeton, New Jersey.

The student-to-teacher ratio at the elementary school in 2024-2025 was 14:1, the middle school was 13:1, and the high school was 12:1. These ratios fall below the national average for student-to-teacher ratio of 15:1 according to the National Center for Education Statistics.



## Library

The North Valley Public Library, located along Main Street, has been in operation since the doors opened in 1904, adjacent to Town Hall. Originally established as its own entity through the Reading Room Society, books, magazines, and librarian salaries were paid for by the Reading Room Society. In 1914, the library became a Town property.



The library's location was moved a couple of times in the 1980s and 90s, before Ken and Norma Bangs donated the current location of the library on Main Street, where it has been located since 1991.

The library became an independent library district, according to the Library's website, in 2004, after a local election was held. The voters passed a property tax mill levy that would go on to continue to fund the operations and services of the library. This historic election created the first independent library district in the State of Montana.



# Infrastructure and Public Facilities

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## Interlocal Agreements

Interlocal agreements are an important tool for coordinating infrastructure planning, construction, and maintenance across jurisdictional boundaries. These agreements allow the Town to collaborate with neighboring municipalities, county agencies, and utility providers to share resources, align service expectations, and reduce duplication of effort. By formalizing roles and responsibilities, interlocal agreements help ensure that infrastructure systems, such as roads, water and wastewater utilities, stormwater facilities, and emergency services, are managed efficiently and consistently. Through these partnerships, the Town can leverage funding opportunities, achieve economies of scale, and improve the long-term reliability of critical infrastructure systems that serve residents, businesses, and regional users.

The Town is encouraged to continue reviewing and maintaining all existing interlocal agreements to ensure they remain relevant to the joint mission of the Town and its partners, and to actively pursue new agreements where opportunities arise. Future agreements will focus on shared responsibilities for transportation networks, water and wastewater systems, emergency services, stormwater management, and other priorities identified by the Town and collaborating agencies. By fostering collaboration, the Town aims to leverage resources, reduce duplication of effort, and secure joint funding opportunities that enhance long-term reliability and cost-effectiveness. These partnerships will be reviewed regularly to ensure alignment with community priorities and evolving regulatory requirements, creating a framework for sustainable growth and regional resilience.

## Airport

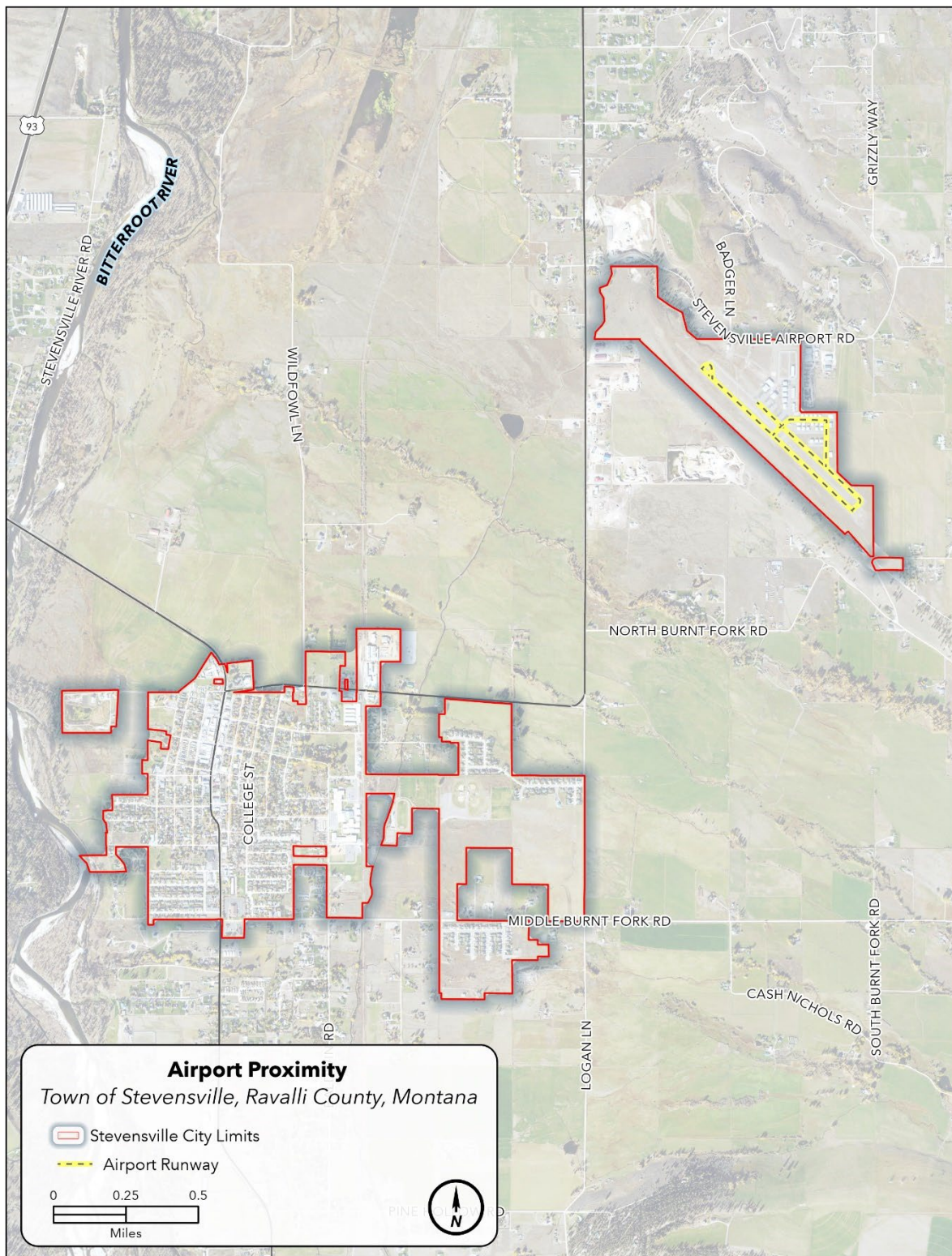
The Stevensville Airport is located two miles northeast of the Town of Stevensville. It is Montana's fastest-growing general aviation airport. The airport consists of 117 acres of land owned by the town at an elevation of 3,610 feet above sea level. There is one paved runway that is 75 feet wide and 3,800 feet long. The Stevensville Airport Board operates the airport, and the Airport is owned by the Town.

In 1989, the Town of Stevensville enacted the Airport Zoning Ordinance to limit the height of objects and address land use around the Stevensville Airport. The ordinance enables the town to identify and remove objects that penetrate the described airspace, or issue permits for non-conforming objects that may be marked and lit.

Land use at the Stevensville Airport includes aircraft hangars and automobile parking. Construction of a terminal building has been discussed. Existing land around the airport is in agricultural and residential uses, both of which are generally compatible with the existing and proposed airport operations.

The airport will soon see welcome improvements to its self-serve fueling system. The Town currently leases the existing 30-year-old fuel farm. In early 2025, the Town secured 100% funding for a brand-new, 12,000-gallon self-serve fuel farm. Construction is scheduled to begin early 2026, with completion expected in the second quarter of

2026. This project represents a major win for the airport, as it will significantly increase overall fuel-sale revenue by eliminating the lease payments associated with the current system. Other major projects for 2026 include pavement maintenance and rehabilitation, all of which are being completed in accordance with FAA grant assurances and our Capital Improvement Plan. Looking ahead to 2027, the Town is developing a strategy to construct new Town-owned T-hangars. Rentable aircraft storage is in high demand nationwide, and particularly in our region. The rental revenue generated from Town-owned hangars would make a substantial and positive impact on the Airport's annual budget.



Map 4 – Montana State Library

## Water

In 2021, the Town of Stevensville and its on-call engineering firm, HDR, created a preliminary engineering report (PER) for the existing water system. A PER is a comprehensive document that evaluates current system conditions, identifies deficiencies, and sets priorities for new construction. It also presents a range of alternatives for system upgrades.

The PER found that the current water storage capacity does not meet DEQ Circular 1 requirements for maximum day flow. The existing 430,000-gallon storage tank will need to be upgraded, or an additional tank added. HDR recommended that any new tank should provide 500,000 to 1,000,000 gallons of additional storage.

Each year, the Town of Stevensville issues a water quality report to residents, summarizing details about water quality and supply. At the time of this report, the Town operated five groundwater wells—Wells 1, 5, 6, 7, and 8—which are all connected. Well 1 is 325 feet deep; the others range from 430 to 455 feet deep. Two additional wells were taken offline in 2015, and the Town also stopped using water from Mill and Swap Creeks. Water is treated with a small amount of chlorine to minimize corrosion of lead and copper in users' pipes.

Like many Montana communities, Stevensville faces aging infrastructure that requires replacement, often through large-scale capital projects. The Town needs to upgrade undersized water mains, particularly the 6-inch mains along Main Street, which should be replaced with 12-inch mains.

The water system operates using a Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system, which should be updated to improve operational efficiency and match the capabilities of the wastewater SCADA system.

Ongoing leak detection and repair are essential to maintaining system integrity. The Town is encouraged to continue pursuing federal and state grant funding opportunities to support these necessary upgrades.

### WATER RIGHTS

The Town of Stevensville is actively working to secure water rights for areas outside its current place of use. In the mid-1980s, the town was unable to successfully secure or renew these rights, and subsequent efforts over the years did not result in completion. In recent years, renewed attention has been given to this issue, and as of November 2025, significant progress has been made through collaboration between the Town's Public Works Department, legal counsel, state agencies, and consulting partners. Finalizing the water rights will bring the town into compliance with regulatory requirements and enable both ongoing and future development within town limits, including projects that are currently on hold. Approval of these water rights is anticipated in the spring or summer of 2026.

## Sewer

The last wastewater PER that was conducted for the Town of Stevensville was in 2012. At the time of the last update, the following priorities were identified in the PER,

- Meet new upcoming regulatory requirements
- Upgrade the aging infrastructure
- Implementation of biological nutrient removal



- Install modern headworks.

This PER should be updated as funding becomes available in order to keep up with the changing needs and growth of the Town. Being 13 years old, the PER is out of date when it comes to regulatory requirements identification, as things may have changed since this publication date.

At the time of the PER, the sewer rates in Stevensville had exceeded the state's target affordability threshold, which makes grant funding essential for the Town.

## **Streets/Roads**

Stevensville partnered with Professional Consultants Inc. in 2006 to create the “Street Master Plan”. This plan is essentially a PER for the transportation network. Since the adoption of this plan, the Town has continued to grow, and the data in this master plan is out of date. The master plan provided recommendations on right-of-way width for future growth. For example, the development code has a 60-foot right of way (ROW) with paved streets and curb and gutters. The plan recommended that the major collector streets' ROW be increased to 70 feet.

The master plan provided recommendations that future streets provide for the organized and systematic growth of the transportation network. This recommendation should still be followed to this day. It is imperative that, as the Town continues to grow, future streets shall maintain the current structure of the transportation network.

### **MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION SPEED STUDY**

In 2023, the Town of Stevensville requested that the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) conduct a speed study along Eastside Highway/ Main Street (S-269) from milepost 17 north to the US-93 intersection. The study was initiated in response to concerns from the Stevensville Police Department and community members regarding speed transitions south of town, pedestrian safety at key intersections, and difficulty for vehicles turning at 2nd Street and the Eastside Highway.

The roadway transitions from rural to rural-town to downtown environments and carries between 4,800 and 8,000 vehicles daily. Shoulders are narrow or nonexistent in many areas, and on-street parking and pedestrian activity are significant within the town center. Crash data (2021–2023) shows 58 crashes, with concentrations near US-93 and at the north and south ends of town. Many crashes involved wild animals or rear-end collisions; speeding was a factor in a smaller portion.

Speed sampling at 14 locations found that actual driving speeds generally matched posted speed limits, though some sections showed slightly elevated speeds relative to what roadway design and context would support. Notably:

The short 55-mph zone north of town created a rapid speed-up/ speed-down effect and had a high crash rate.

Within Stevensville, the 85th percentile speeds in the 25-mph zone were around 32 mph, indicating higher typical speeds but not enough to justify increasing the limit given pedestrian activity and local desire to maintain low speeds.

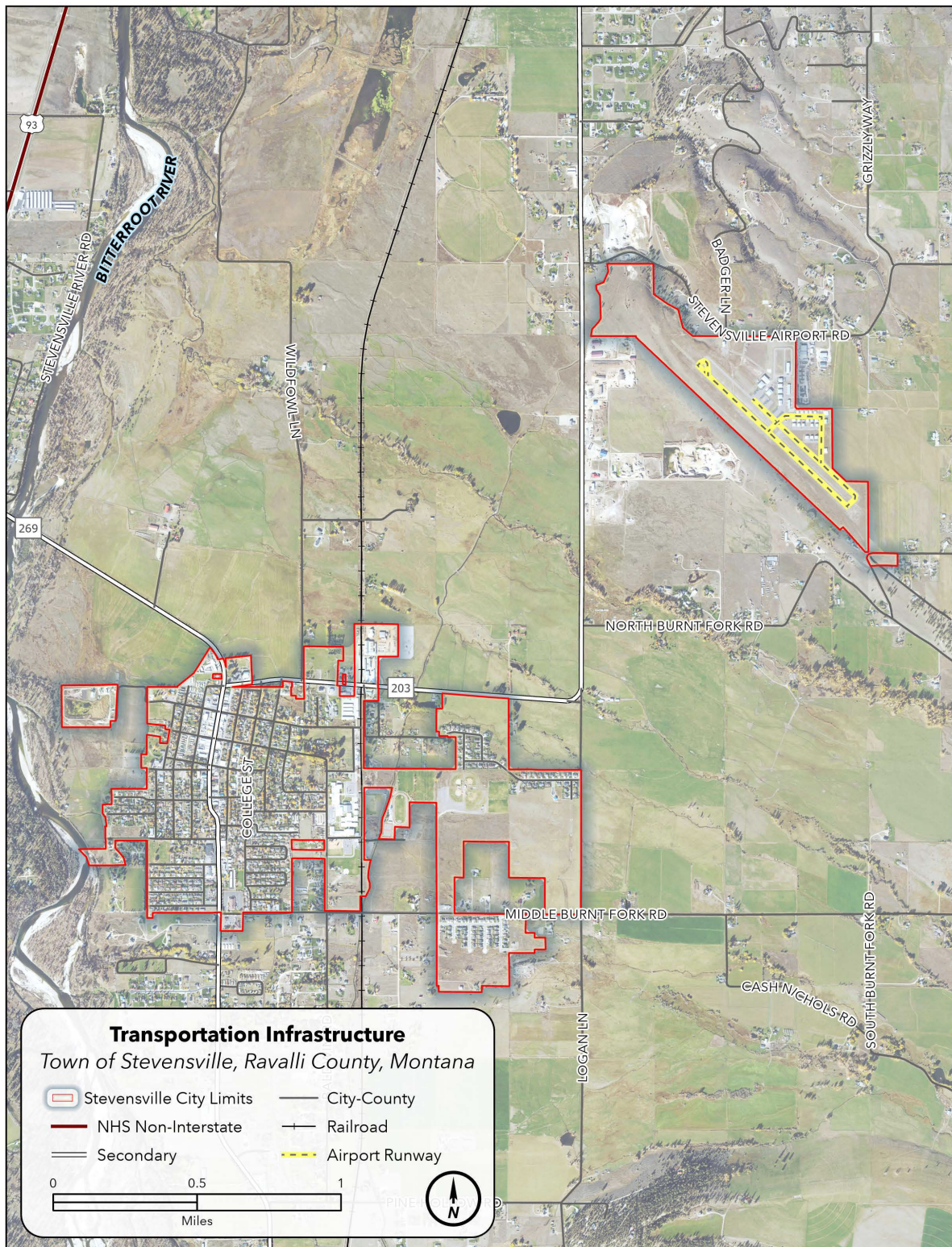
MDT also considered national research (NCHRP Report 17-76) emphasizing roadway context—such as shoulders, pedestrian activity, and roadside environment—when determining appropriate speed limits.



To create safer, more consistent speed transitions and better reflect roadway context, MDT recommends:

- Extend the south 35-mph transition zone to 1,600 feet approaching Stevensville.
- Retain the 25-mph zone through downtown but extend it 300–350 feet north to improve visibility and reflect pedestrian areas.
- Extend the north 35-mph transition zone to 1,600 feet, leaving town.
- Replace the short 55-mph section north of Stevensville with a 45-mph zone, creating a continuous 45-mph segment from town to US-93.
- Simplify the north-of-town speed sequence from four changes (45-55-45-35-25) to just three (45-35-25).

These adjustments aim to reduce abrupt speed changes, account for high pedestrian activity, better match roadway design constraints, and improve overall safety.



Map 5 – Vehicular Transportation Infrastructure, Montana State Library

## Buildings

The Town owns and maintains a number of facilities, such as, Town Hall, the Town annex building, the public works maintenance building, and the well house.

The Town recognizes that ongoing maintenance of its public buildings is becoming increasingly critical. Several components within Town Hall—including the furnace, doors, and windows—are nearing the end of their service life and will soon require replacement to ensure the building remains safe, functional, and energy-efficient. Proactive planning for these upgrades will help the Town avoid unexpected failures and manage costs more effectively.

In addition to building improvements, the Town is also evaluating opportunities to modernize its utility infrastructure. A priority need is the replacement of all existing water meters with cellular-enabled meters. Although this transition represents a significant upfront investment, it is expected to provide long-term cost savings through reduced staff time and improved efficiency in monthly meter reading. The Town has begun testing five cellular meters on a trial basis to better understand their functionality and potential benefits before implementing a full system upgrade.

## Parks

### FATHER RAVALLI PARK

This park is located on the south end of the Town, adjacent to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This park consists of a swing set, playground equipment, a basketball court, and open green space. It should be noted, a new fence installation will be completed prior to the adoption of this Policy, which will replace the old, damaged chain-link fence that had become a safety hazard and an eyesore. This project was prioritized after community concerns and finalized through the town's fiscal budget.

### LEWIS AND CLARK PARK

L&C Park is home to a majority of the Town's parks and recreation infrastructure. Located on the northwest end of the Town, this park consists of two playgrounds (Bear Mountain and the Cub Cave), a swing set, basketball and pickleball courts, two pavilions with charcoal grills, a swimming pool, a splash pad, restrooms, a skate park, and open green space. The park is in need of electrical upgrades in order to cater to more than one event by having a second electrical location.

### VETERANS PARK

This park is considered a mini park by the National Parks and Recreation Association classification standards. Mini parks tend to offer specific amenities. In this case, the park consists of the Blue Star Military Memorial. There are also picnic benches, trash cans, and an informational kiosk located in this park.

### RIVER PARK

This park is considered a nature park and is primarily used for open space. There is also the Nature River Trail located in the park, as well as a pavilion with a charcoal grill. This park offers a location for gatherings such as family reunions, community events, to name a few. The park also includes river access managed by Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, formerly known as the John and Nancy Owen Fishing Access Site, to honor their historical contributions to the Bitterroot Valley. Planned improvements for 2025 include updated signage, improved river access, campsites, and toilets to enhance public use.



### RIVER PARK TRAIL

The River Park Trail allows residents to enjoy serene open space adjacent to the Bitterroot River. This Trail connects to the Stevensville bike path, creating a much larger trail network for the Town. This park is located out in the County and is not maintained by the Town of Stevensville.

### TAD LANGE PARK

Another mini park, this park offers some landscape design adjacent to an art installation, picnic tables, and open green space. This park has tree shading. It is important to note that trees located in all of the public parks are considered Town assets and should be treated as such.

### LEGACY PARK

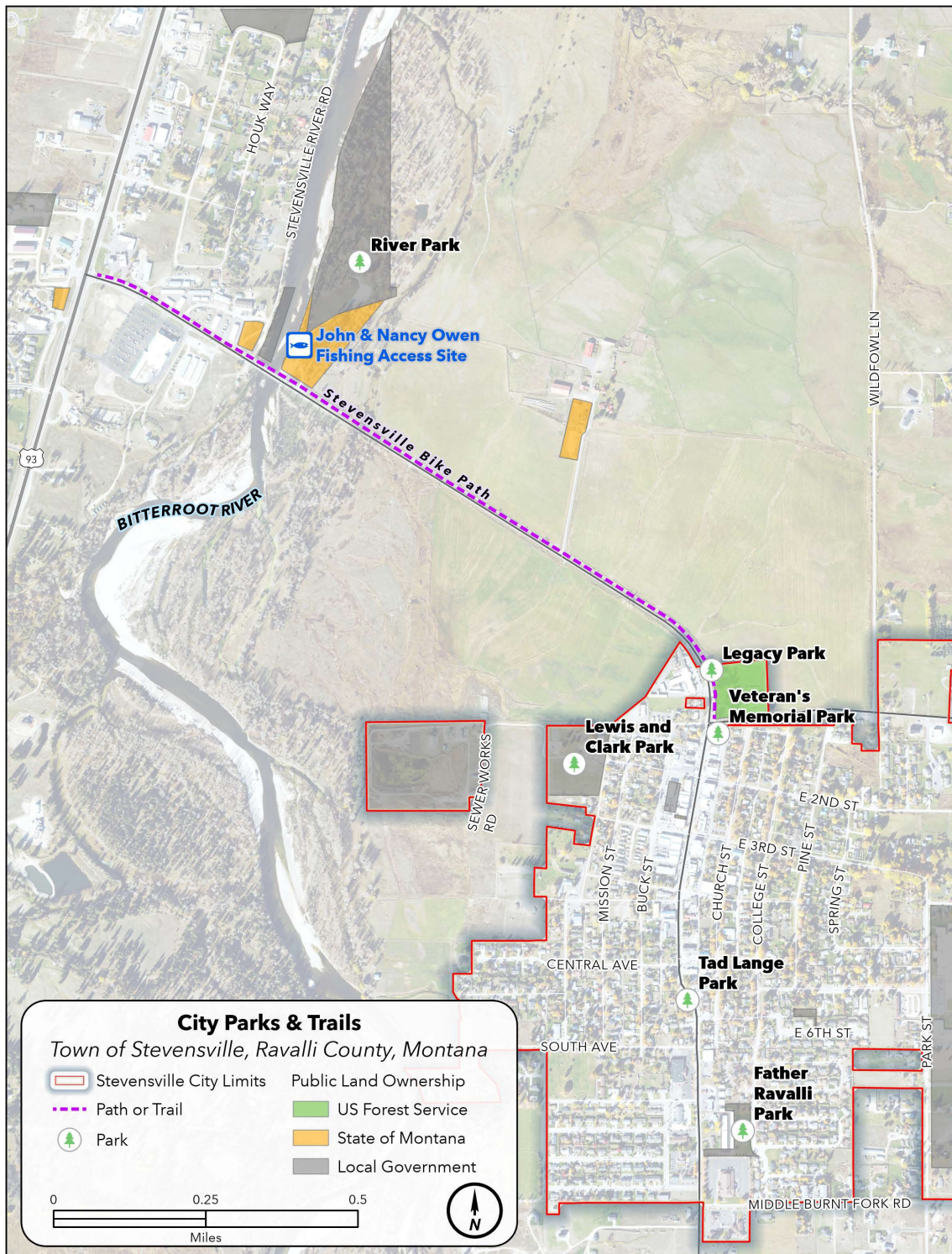
This park is an open space park that is located off the Stevensville Bike Path. This park contains many of the native plant species of the Bitterroot Valley.

### DICKERSON PARK

Dickerson Park is a fairly small park that consists of a basketball court, dog waste stations, and a small open green space. This park is located adjacent to residential homes and could be considered a neighborhood park.

### CREAMERY PARK

Creamery Park is located on Main Street, tucked between several businesses along the 200 block. The park offers picnic tables and a comfortably shaded setting, making it an inviting spot to relax during the summer months.



Map 6 – Town Parks and Trails

## PARKS MASTER PLAN

A Parks Master Plan is an essential tool for guiding the long-term development, management, and maintenance of a community's park system. As public expectations for recreation opportunities continue to grow, a master plan helps the Town identify current needs, prioritize future improvements, and ensure that limited resources are used efficiently. By evaluating existing park conditions, identifying gaps in amenities, and engaging the community in a shared vision, the plan provides a structured framework for decision-making.

Equally important, a Parks Master Plan helps the Town plan for ongoing maintenance and operational needs. Well-maintained parks support public safety, enhance community pride, and extend the life of amenities and equipment. The plan allows the Town to anticipate maintenance and replacement cycles, estimate long-term costs, and schedule improvements in a fiscally responsible manner. With clear priorities and documented needs, the Town is also better positioned to pursue grants and partnerships that can help fund park upgrades. Overall, a Parks Master Plan ensures that the community's recreation assets remain safe, attractive, and aligned with the needs of current and future residents. It is recommended that the Town annually review the need for a parks, recreation, and open space master plan and consider all funding opportunities to cover the cost of the document creation.

## Trails

### STEVENSVILLE BIKE PATH

The Stevensville Bike Path is a Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) and county-maintained trail system, although the Town will contribute to removing trash and conducting small maintenance items along the trail. This path connects directly to the River Park Trail, creating an extended trail network for residents.

A unique component of the Stevensville Bike Path is the strong community involvement in its improvement. Solar lights will be installed prior to 2026 by local volunteers and businesses, led by Justin Swartz of Swartz & Sons Excavating. The project was organized and funded by Jimmy Edwards, owner of Burnt Fork Market, using proceeds from the annual Scarecrow Brewfest, with additional support from local businesses providing labor and materials at reduced costs. These collaborative efforts highlight the community's commitment to enhancing this amenity for the enjoyment of its residents. This Policy aims to promote an improved maintenance plan and foster continued cooperation between Town residents, Ravalli County, and the MDT.





## Swimming Pool

The Town pool offers a variety of services to the community, such as general swim, water aerobic exercise, swim lessons, and can also be utilized for private pool parties. The Town sets low-cost use rates for the various levels of service.

Pools can often be an expensive burden for a Town to manage, mainly due to rising maintenance costs. It is important that the Town annually reviews the fee schedule to ensure that any revenue generated at the pool can alleviate some of the stress of maintenance, while staying as low-cost to the community.

Like many communities across Montana, the public swimming pool can be financially straining on the Town, though it provides a great service to the residents. The pool operates on a \$52,000 annual budget from the Town, which is paid out of the Town's general fund. In the past, the Town has received approximately \$14,000 in donations for the pool, one of the donations being a \$5,000 lifeguard chair from Missoula. Also, to help alleviate two major issues for the pool, hiring and retaining staff, local businesses have partnered with the Town to sponsor lifeguards in order to keep the pool operating functionally.

In 2025, the pool underwent a significant makeover through a three-phase improvement project that included replacing filters and pump-house components, repairing the crumbling pool edge and structural elements, and sealing and painting the pool.

These upgrades were funded entirely through community donations and local partnerships, with no taxpayer dollars used. Contributions came from local businesses, fundraising events, and discounted labor and materials provided by contractors. Once again, the community demonstrated a strong commitment to maintaining public amenities. Moving forward, the Town should focus on developing a sustainable maintenance plan, continuing partnerships with local businesses and organizations, and exploring grant opportunities to reduce reliance on the general fund, as expenses will continue to increase.

## Recreation

### WHITETAIL GOLF COURSE

Stevensville's location offers a wide variety of recreational opportunities for its residents. The Whitetail Golf Course is located on the Lee Metcalf Wildlife Refuge and offers nine holes of scenic golfing views. Not only is this course used in the spring and summer, but in the winter, the course transitions into a beautifully maintained, groomed cross-country ski course.



### LEE METCALF WILDLIFE REFUGE

The Lee Metcalf Wildlife Refuge itself offers scenic nature trails, with one being wheelchair accessible. Residents and visitors alike can enjoy 2,800 acres of pristine wildlife viewing. Recent efforts at the Lee Metcalf Wildlife Refuge have focused on habitat restoration, educational programs, and partnerships with private organizations to enhance visitor experiences and conservation goals. Infrastructure improvements include manicured hiking trails, observation areas, and ADA-compliant facilities.



### FORT OWEN STATE PARK

Fort Owen State Park transports visitors back to the 1840s when the fort was established with a reconstructed cabin, root cellar, and well house to match the original style from the 1850s. Also on the property is the original barracks that is still standing and in as good condition as it can be for being 175 years old. Interpretive signage can be found throughout the park to educate the many visitors who enjoy this historically significant state park. The state funding and local partnerships supporting Fort Owen State Park's maintenance and preservation include:

- Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) – Oversees management and operations of the park.
- Montana State Parks Foundation – Provides fundraising and project coordination for improvements.
- Friends of Fort Owen – A local nonprofit that partners with FWP under a formal Memorandum of Agreement to assist with preservation, maintenance, and educational programming.
- The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust – Awarded a major grant in 2020 to fund restoration of historic structures, improve access, and expand interpretive displays.
- Montana Historic Preservation Program – Contributes to restoration and conservation efforts.





## Utilities

### NATURAL GAS

The Town of Stevensville is served by Northwestern Energy for natural gas. The main connector for the gas line travels south down the Bitterroot valley from Missoula, where it branches off to serve Stevensville.

### ELECTRICITY

Stevensville is served by two different entities for electricity: Northwestern Energy and Ravalli Electric Cooperative.

### BROADBAND

The Ravalli Electric Cooperative recently acquired Grizzly Broadband and is now extending its broadband services in Ravalli County, including the Town of Stevensville. CenturyLink is a major fiber optic company that also services Ravalli County. It is also important to note that for high-speed internet, many residents across Ravalli County and the State of Montana are beginning to turn towards providers such as Starlink for their internet services.

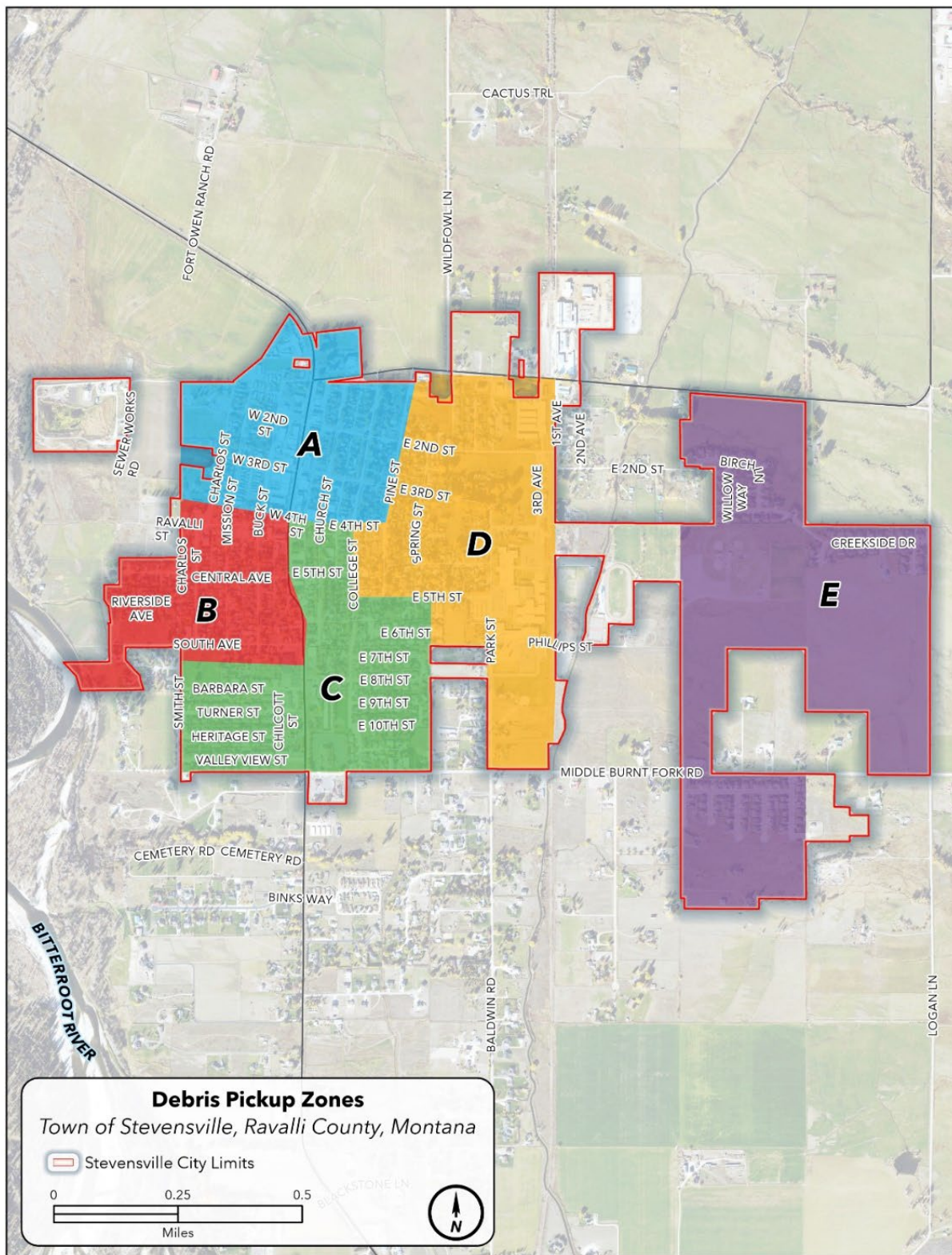
## Solid Waste

The Town of Stevensville utilizes Bitterroot Disposal for its solid waste collection. Bitterroot Disposal services all of Ravalli County for residential and commercial trash collection and has a transfer station in Victor that is open Monday-Saturday. Residential garbage collection occurs on Wednesdays for Stevensville

The Town of Stevensville Public Works offers the residents curbside pickup for debris removal. This service is provided to the residents for the removal of organic materials, for example, branches and leaves, but no household waste or trash. There are five different pick-up zones within the Town:

- Zone A
- Zone B
- Zone C
- Zone D
- Zone E

The Town sets a specific pick-up date for each of these zones, typically lasting one work week. The map below shows the different pick-up zones.



Map 7 – Town of Stevensville Debris Removal Zones, Town of Stevensville

# Housing

As Stevensville experiences potential population growth, housing becomes a central focus. Adequate, affordable housing, as well as a diverse housing stock, can assist the Town in facilitating population growth correctly and also lead to a healthy economy and a vibrant community. The availability of housing is impactful on the quality of life that is experienced by the residents.

The Town should continue to review policies that limit housing growth, such as outdated zoning and building regulations, and also address land use patterns and infrastructure capacities. Typically, for communities that do not have the infrastructure capacities for growth through annexation, their attention turns more towards infill development of existing vacant lots and lots that are candidates for redevelopment within the Town limits.

This section details the current housing stock, age, condition of housing structures, and the housing needs of the Town.

## Number of Units

The Town of Stevensville had 997 housing units as of 2023, according to the American Community Survey.

## Occupied and Vacant Units

Stevensville had an occupancy rate of 89.2% in 2023, according to the ACS. This comes out to be 889 occupied housing units in the town. Of the 889, the majority of the housing units were occupied by a 1-person household (41.2%). Figure #9, below, shows the count of household size for Stevensville.

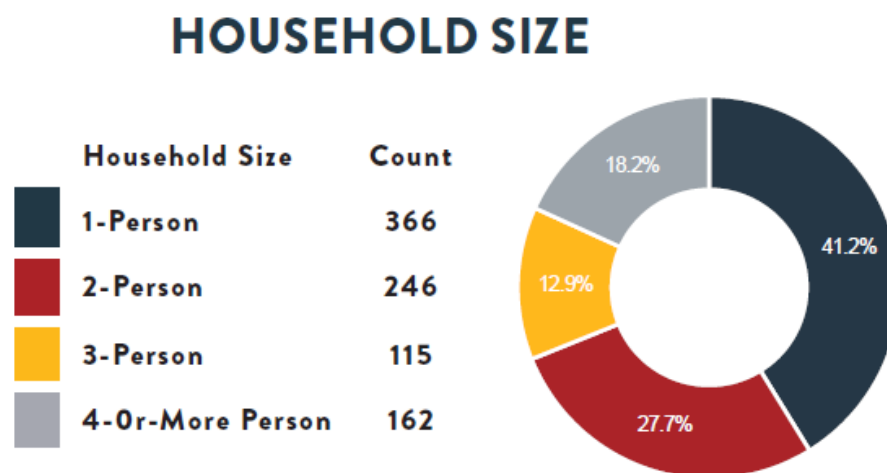


Figure 9 – Household Size, American Community Survey

The Town had approximately 108 vacant housing units. To be considered vacant, the ACS concludes that the structures can be for rent, rented but not occupied, for sale only,

sold but not occupied, seasonal, recreational or occasional, for migrant workers, or other. Figure #10 below shows the full breakdown of vacant structures. It should be noted that the ACS data for vacant housing units has a low reliability, meaning that the coefficient variation, or how far data can vary from the mean, is greater than 40%, meaning that the data is not 100% accurate.

## TOTAL HOUSING UNITS

### VACANT HOUSING BREAKDOWN

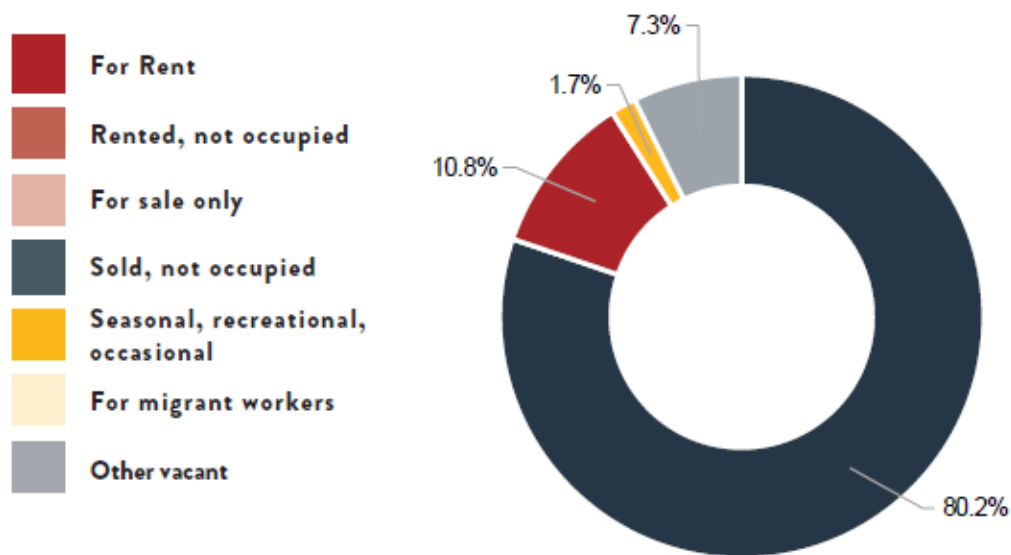


Figure 10 – Total Housing Units, American Community Survey, Headwaters Economics Profile System

## Age of Structures

The median age of the housing structures in Stevensville is 48 years old. The majority of the housing stock was built in the 1970s or earlier. Figure #11 below shows the breakdown of housing age in the Town.

## AGE OF RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURES

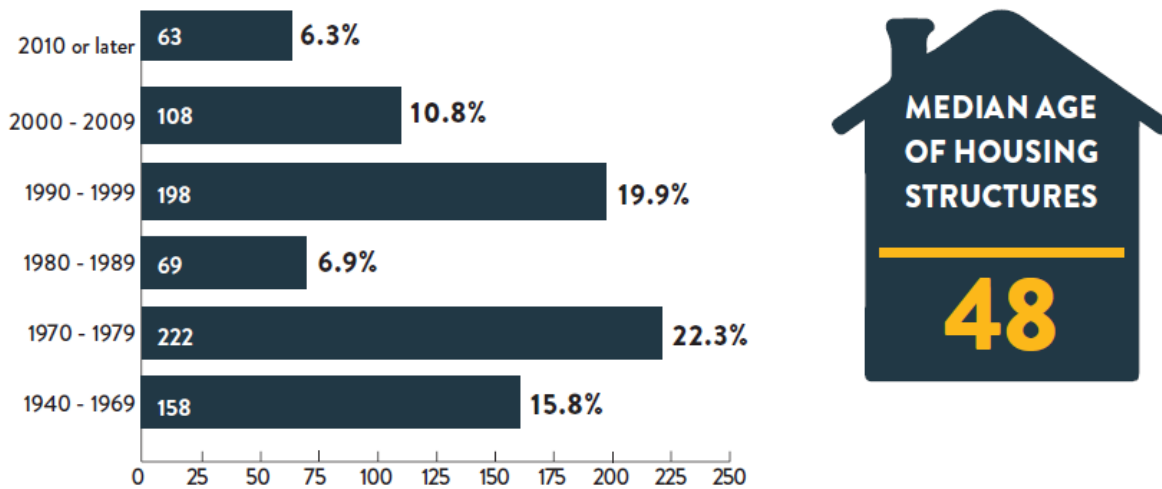


Figure 11 – Age of Residential Structures, American Community Survey, Headwaters Economics Profile System

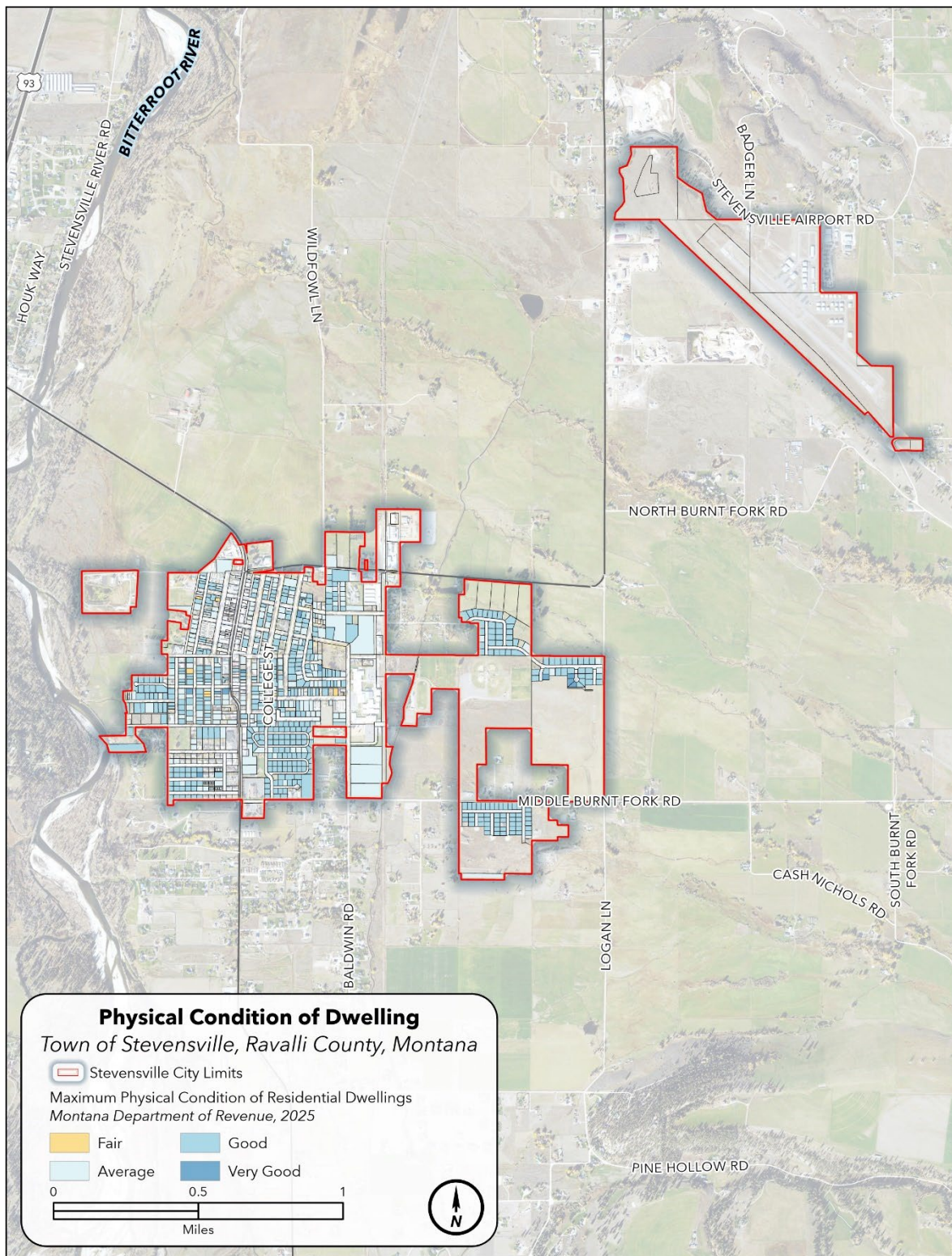
## Seasonally Occupied Units

According to the American Community Survey, there are few seasonally occupied housing units within the Town of Stevensville. However, the confidence level by the ACS for this data is considered to be low reliability. As short-term rentals continue to expand in Montana, it is recommended that if the Town has determined that STRs have become an issue for the overall housing market, the Town should invest in STR tracking software and or review and implement land use policies that control STRs.

## Condition of Structures

The condition of the housing structures within Stevensville is predominantly considered to be good by the Montana Department of Revenue. The Montana Department of Revenue only takes into consideration their assessment, structures that are listed under the residential property tax identification. This means that apartment complexes that are considered to be commercial for tax purposes are not listed on the map shown below. For properties that have multiple residential structures, the Department of Revenue will also only consider the structure that is in better condition for this analysis.





Map 8 – Physical Condition of Dwellings, Montana Department of Revenue

## Housing Needs

The Town completed a community survey that included a question asking what type of development is most needed in the Town. The majority of the 140 respondents stated that single-family home development is the most important development need for the community, followed by senior housing, rental homes, and duplexes and triplexes, before giving way to commercial development needs. Using a series of algebraic equations that take into consideration population growth estimates, the average household size, and the existing amount of housing units, the amount of housing units that will be needed in the future can be calculated. The table below shows the estimates of the additional housing units that would be needed in Stevensville from 2030 until 2045 using two different growth rates, 0.3% and 0.5% population growth. These calculations are based on the 2023 population estimate and the total housing units estimate.

Housing Needs Estimation*				
Year	Estimated 0.3% Population Growth	Additional Housing Units Needed	Estimated 0.5% population Growth	Additional Housing Units Needed
2025	2,227	13	2,243	22
2030	2,284	46	2,347	89
2035	2,306	90	2,478	183
2040	2,341	129	2,604	268
2045	2,374	164	2,617	330

Table 1 – Housing Needs Estimation, American Community Survey, all estimations are based on the 2023 ACS Data

Respondents also indicated that not only does the Town need sufficient single-family housing, but the housing itself needs to be more affordable, accommodating first-time home buyers and seniors on fixed incomes.

According to the Montana Regional MLS, the average sales price of a home in Ravalli County in 2022 was \$644,253. As of July 2025, the average sales price increased to \$818,112. The median home price in July 2025 was \$625,000. The definition of an affordable home is relative to a person's income level. A commonly used benchmark is that no more than 30% of a household's income should be spent on housing costs, including mortgage, property taxes, insurance, etc. The median household income in Stevensville was \$52,745 as of 2023, meaning that the median home price in Ravalli would be considered unaffordable to most of the residents of Stevensville.

# Natural Resources-Cultural Characteristics

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## Climate/Weather

Stevensville is located in what the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) calls the Moist Continental Mid-Latitude climate zone. This zone typically experiences warm to cool summers and cold winters. Winters can be severe in this climate zone with snowstorms, strong winds, and bitter cold from continental polar or Arctic air masses.

Stevensville typically receives 11.00 inches of precipitation annually, with the wettest month being May. The hottest month of the year is typically July, with an average maximum temperature of 89.2 degrees, and the coolest month of the year is January, with an average low temperature of 18.8 degrees.

### AVERAGE TEMPERATURE

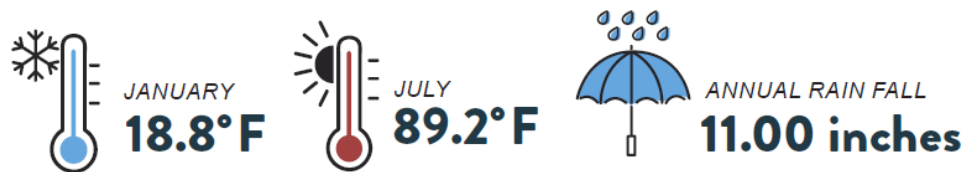


Figure 12 – Average Temperature, AgACIS, NOAA Regional Climate Centers

## Topography

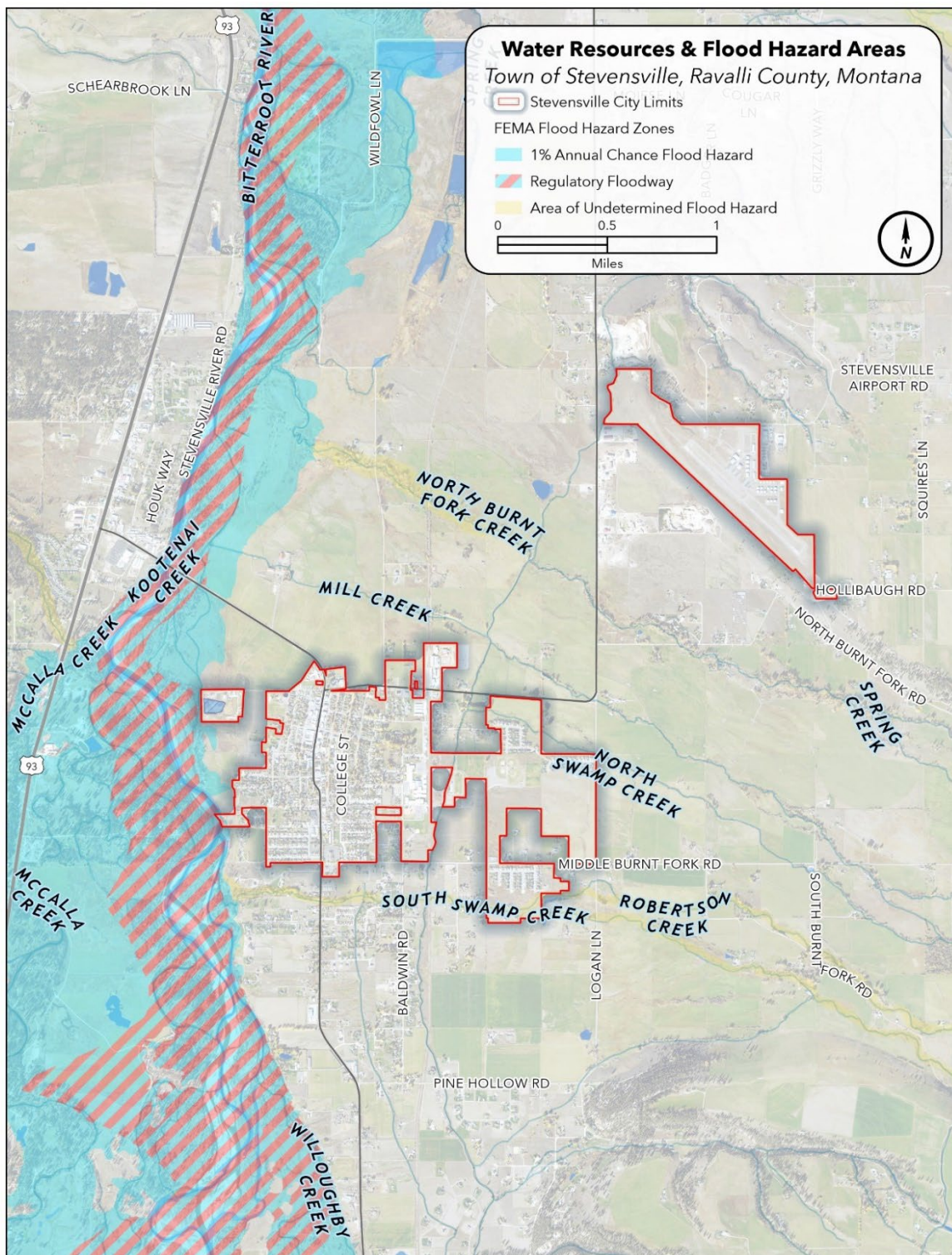
Stevensville is considered to be generally flat in nature. There is a very slight slope throughout the Town. The slope is primarily from east to west, as noticed in the direction of water flow from this side of Town towards the river.

## Water Resources

Stevensville lies to the east of the Bitterroot River, that major water resource in the immediate vicinity of the Town. The Bitterroot River flows from the south to the north as it passes Stevensville, where it eventually flows into the Clark Fork River near Kelly Island.

The Town also has a small smattering of perennial and intermittent streams within the area. Mill Creek, to the north of the Town, is considered perennial from approximately Perry Lane until it flows into the Bitterroot. North Swamp Creek is a seasonal intermittent stream that flows into an intermittent irrigation ditch that runs south to north through the east side of the Town. South Swamp Creek is perennial and gains flows seasonally at the confluence of Robertson Creek. South Swamp Creek flows from east to west before dumping into the Bitterroot River.



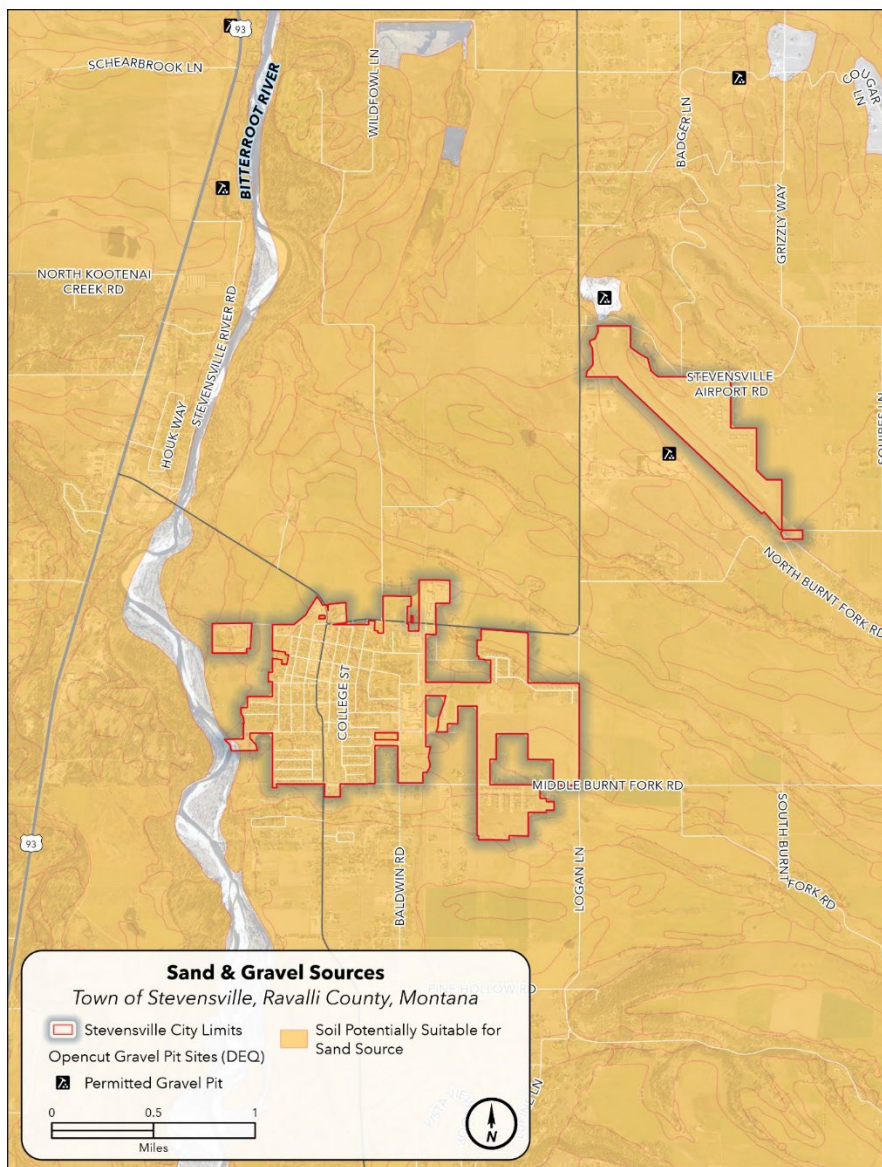


Map 9 – Water Resources & Flood Hazard Areas, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Montana State Library

## Sand and Gravel Resources

The Bitterroot Valley is a key source of sand and gravel resources. The entirety of the Town limits would be potentially suitable for sand and gravel extraction, in terms of geology. However, any municipal properties would be large enough to withstand a large industrial enterprise such as a sand and gravel mine. Outside of the Town limits, there are five permitted sand and gravel operations.

The proximity to these existing sand and gravel operations provides the Town with construction materials adjacent to the Town. The sand and gravel that is extracted can be used in public and private construction projects, for example, the development of a new road, where the gravel may be used as road base, or in private structural projects.



Map 10 – Sand and Gravel Resources, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Web Soil Survey



## Cultural Characteristics

The Town of Stevensville currently has 45 properties that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. These sites embody the identity of Stevensville and its rich development history. These cultural resources should continue to be protected by the community. The Town should continue to support the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) in its efforts to preserve Montana's rich heritage.

### COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS AND VOLUNTEERS

Community volunteers and organizations play a vital role in the well-being and resilience of Stevensville, Montana. As one of the oldest towns in the state, Stevensville relies on the dedication of local residents who give their time to support everything from emergency services and youth programs to historical preservation and environmental stewardship. These grassroots efforts foster a strong sense of connection, pride, and cooperation, helping to maintain the town's unique character while addressing local needs. Whether it's organizing community events, maintaining public spaces, or supporting those in need, volunteers and local groups are the backbone of Stevensville's enduring community spirit. These community groups are always in search of new community members to join and continue to allow Stevensville to thrive. These groups include, but are not limited to,

- Stevensville Civic Club
- Senior Citizen Center
- Stevensville Museum
- Stevensville Community Foundation
- North Valley Public Library
- Historic St. Mary's Mission
- Stevensville Playhouse
- Genesis House
- Pantry Partners
- Garden Club
- American Legion
- The Clothes Closet
- Stevensville Rural Fire Department
- Police Commission
- Park Board
- Airport Board
- Stevensville Airport Targeted Economic Development District

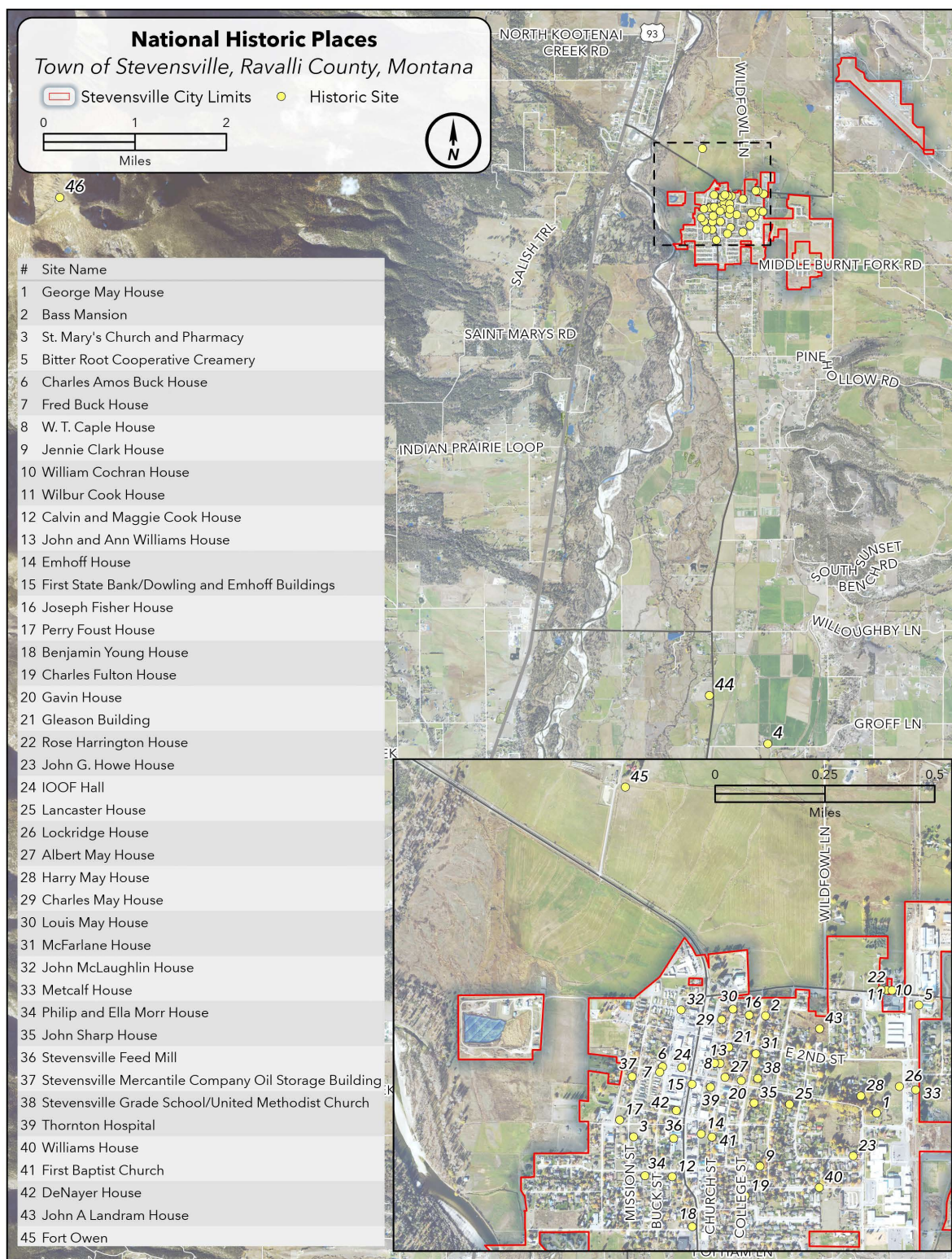
The Town shall remain a strong supporter of all of the local private, nonprofit, and public civic groups.

### COMMUNITY EVENTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

The Town of Stevensville provides a variety of community events and entertainment opportunities. These events attract not only residents, but also occasionally visitors who provide economic boosts during these events. Two of the major events to mention are the Creamery Picnic and the Farmers Market.

The Creamery picnic came to life in 1907 after over 50 local dairymen formed a cooperative in Stevensville. After a fire damaged the creamery in 1911, manager John Howe stated he would throw the largest celebration they had ever seen if the creamery could be rebuilt in 30 days, and the rest is history. The creamery picnic includes a wide variety of vendors, food trucks, and live music.

The Stevensville Harvest Valley Farmers' market has been a strong attraction for residents and visitors alike. The market includes fresh local produce, artisans, crafters, small businesses and non-profit vendors, and live music.

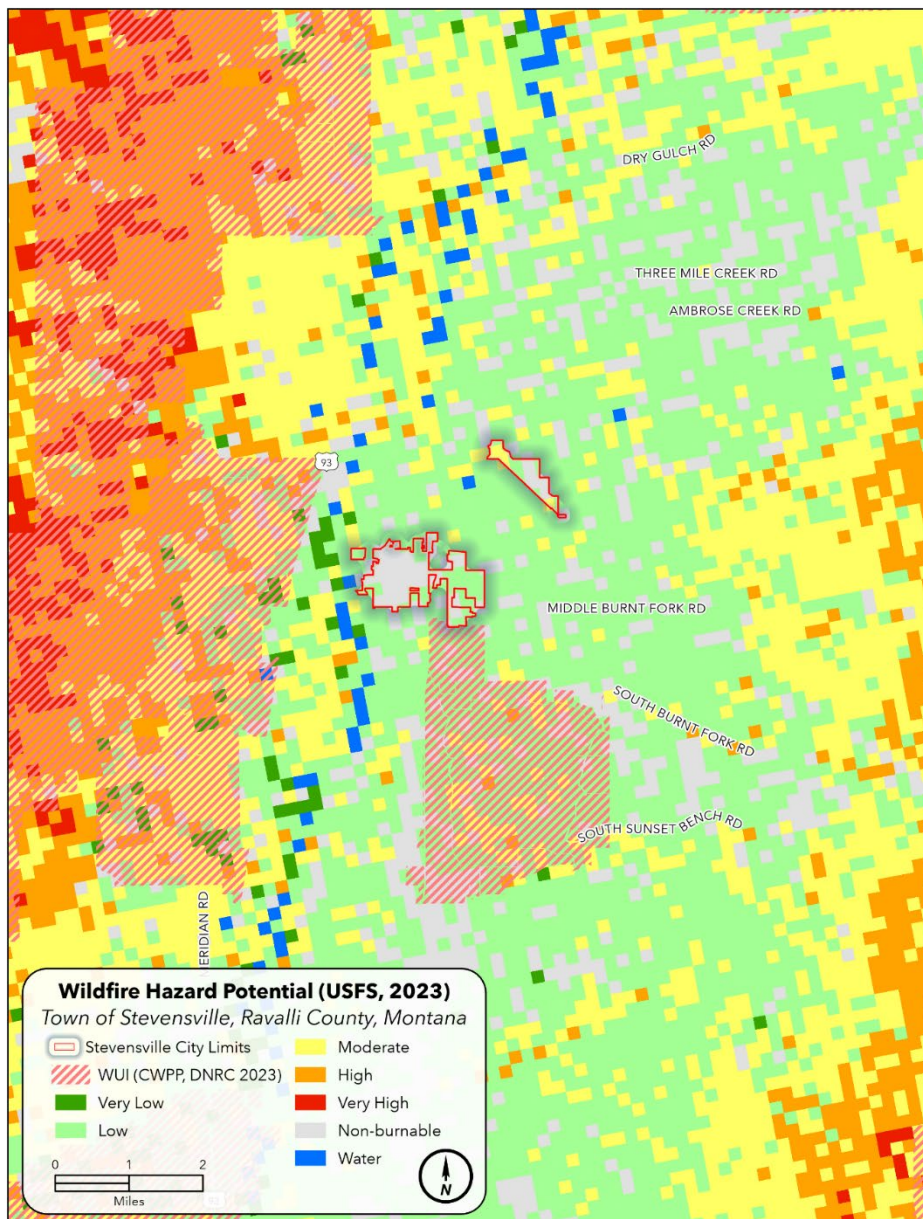


Map 11 – National Historic Places, National Parks Service, United States Department of the Interior



## Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)

The Town is located in an area that is designated as low wildfire hazard potential, but the wildland urban interface or WUI is located adjacent to the Town to the South, and to the West of the Town across the Bitterroot River, heading towards the National Forest. Though the wildfire hazard potential is low, it is not zero. The Town should continue to educate the public on the need for wildfire mitigation techniques, such as maintaining a clear defensible space around all structures, and noxious weed and decay ordinances.



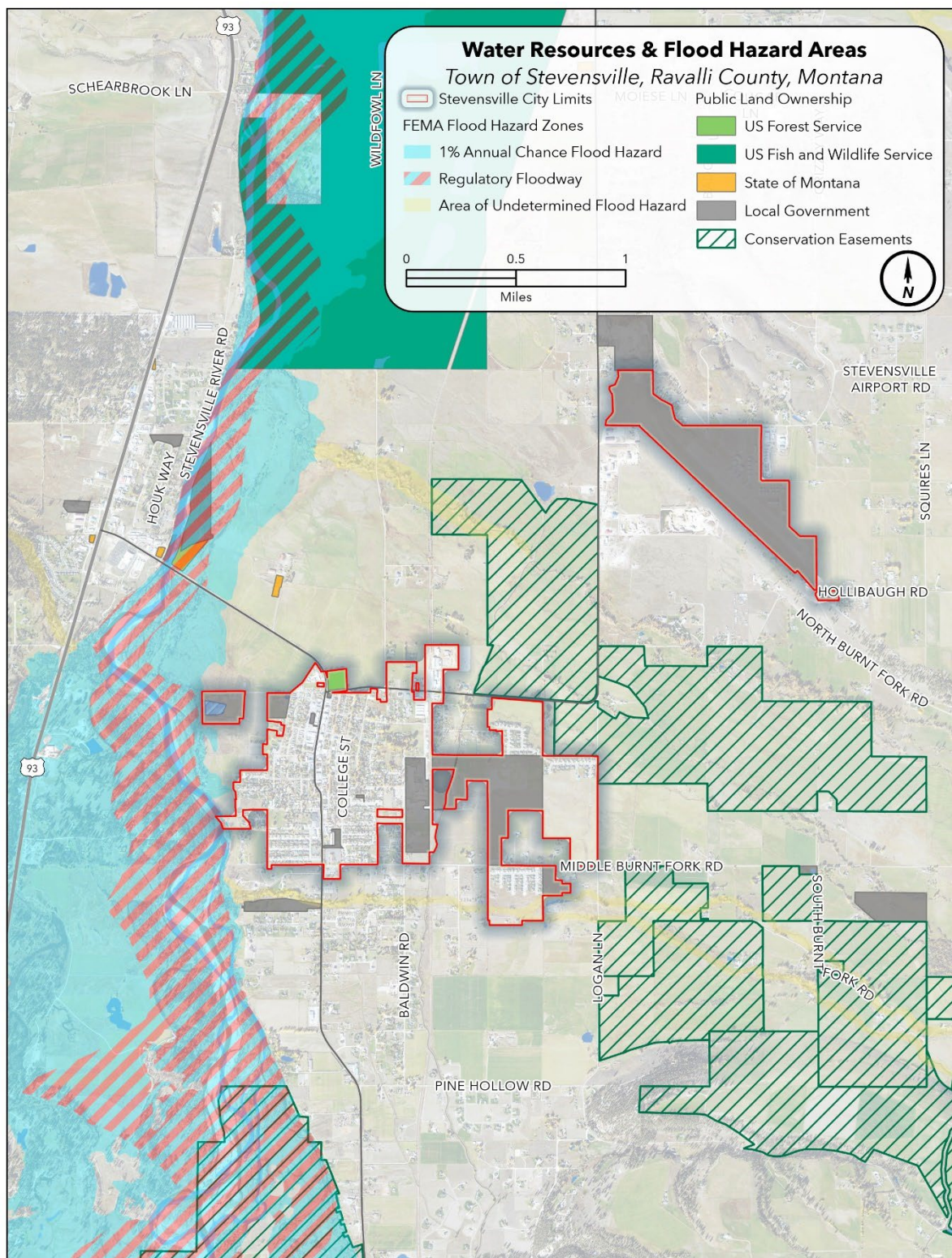
Map 12 – Wildfire Hazard Potential, USDA Forest Service



## **Land Ownership and Management**

The proximity to public lands has long been attractive to both residents and visitors alike and often has a significant impact on the economic growth of an area. Ravalli County has an extraordinarily high number of publicly managed lands. As of 2023, within Ravalli County, there were 1,531,098 total acres of land, of which 73.8% (1,130,165 acres) is federally managed land, with the majority being managed by the U.S. Forest Service. The County also has 33,952 acres of private land that is protected by a conservation easement. A conservation easement is a legal agreement made between a landowner and a land trust or local government to limit the use of the property to protect its conservation values, such as agricultural land or a wildlife corridor. Adjacent to the Town limits, there is approximately...acres of land held in a conservation easement. These conservation easements run in perpetuity with the land. These conservation easements are located to the north, east, and southeast of the Town limits, which would impact the future growth patterns of the Town.

North of the Town is the Lee Metcalf National Wildlife Refuge. This Refuge is managed by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service. Spanning 2,800 acres, this refuge was set aside for the protection of migratory bird species, spanning 235 different species according to the National Park Service. Offering scenic views of the Bitterroot and Sapphire Mountains, the refuge often brings in a large influx of outdoor recreationists to the Stevensville area.



Map 13 – Water Resources & Public Land Ownership, FEMA, Montana State Library

# Land Use Regulations

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## **Annexation**

Adopted in 2001 and amended subsequently in 2007 and 2015, the Town maintains an annexation policy. The annexation policy addresses the zoning of annexed properties, as well as the developer's responsibility for installing infrastructure, and the Town's future ownership of said infrastructure, such as water and sewer lines.

The annexation policy, however, does not address water and sewer connection capacity. It is imperative that the Town determine how many new connections can join the existing water and sewer network to ensure that the current residents maintain their water and sewer services, and that these services have the capacity to serve a growing population. The Town should have an analysis conducted, such as a preliminary engineering report for water or wastewater, to determine the number of connections, if it has not been done already.

The Town should also review the annexation policy and consider creating and adopting a future land use map (FLUM) to gather public feedback on the desired growth of the Town and the applicable land use designations that the community would like to see in the event of growth.

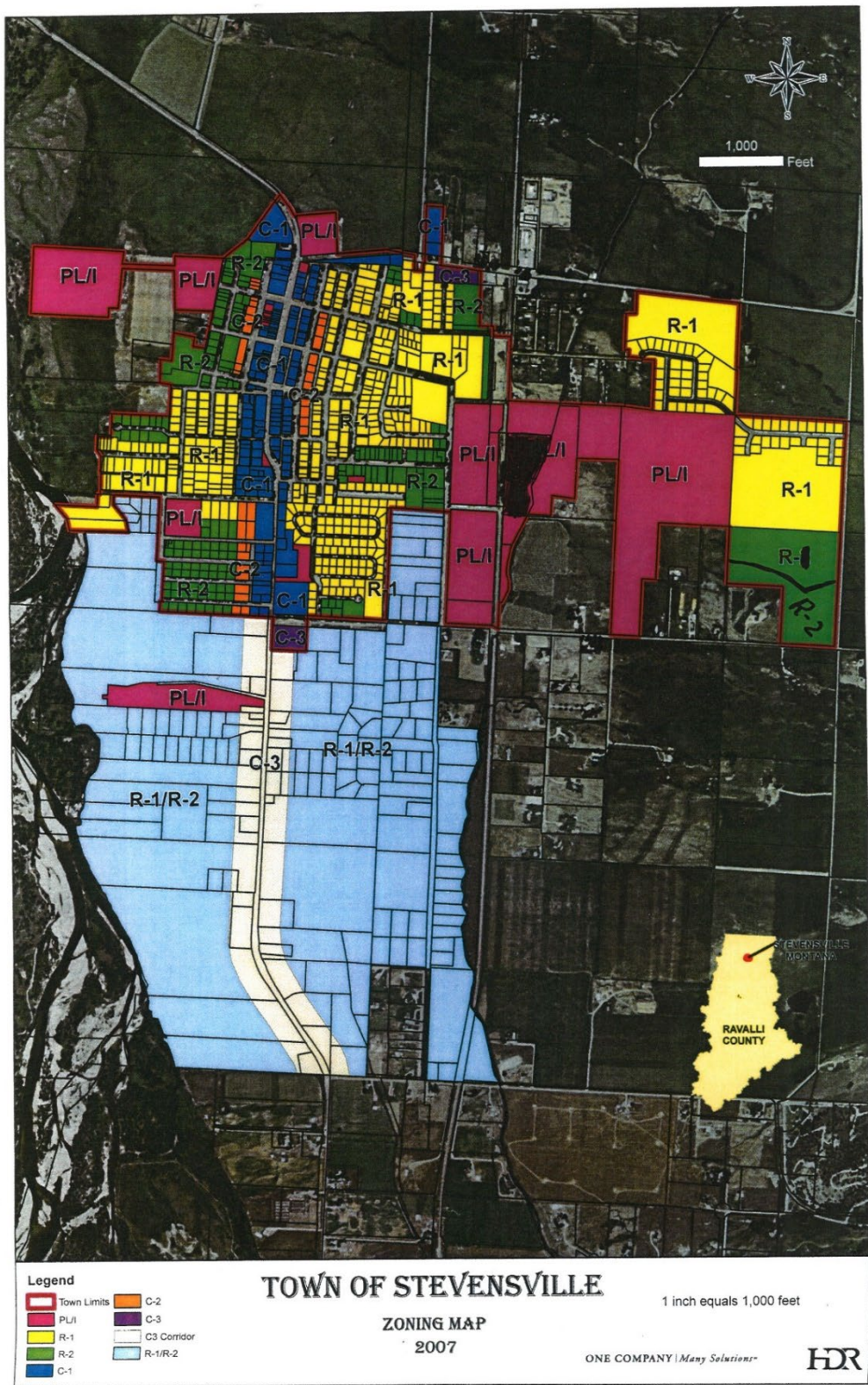
## **Zoning**

The Town of Stevensville has an adopted zoning and land use code. Originally adopted in 2001, the ordinance has undergone revisions in 2007 and 2015; the latter is still used today. The land use code establishes a series of land use districts and applicable land uses in said districts. The code also has associated design standards that are applicable to each district. These standards include lot dimensional standards, height standards, and lot density.

There are currently two zoned areas adjacent to the Town of Stevensville: the Holly Lane Citizen Zoning District and the Stevensville Extended Zoning Area. The Holly Lane district was established in accordance with the State of Montana's Part 1 zoning laws and is classified as a citizen-initiated zoning district. In contrast, the Stevensville Extended Zoning District was established by the Town Council in 1997 and is not a citizen-initiated district. Because Ravalli County did not sign the document establishing the Extended Zoning District, it is not considered a county-zoned area. As a result, this area is fully enforced by the Town, and the County does not issue development permits for it, often deferring review authority to the Town of Stevensville.

It is recommended that the Town review the zoning regulations annually to ensure they reflect the current desires and trends of the community, as well as full compliance with statutory changes enacted at the state level. The state of Montana has had a significant push in reviewing land use requirements that hinder housing growth as well. These are items such as residential dwellings located in commercial or mixed-use areas, typically located above street-level storefronts, as well as parking minimum requirements or density requirements.





Map 14 – Town of Stevensville Zoning Map, Town of Stevensville, HDR Engineering

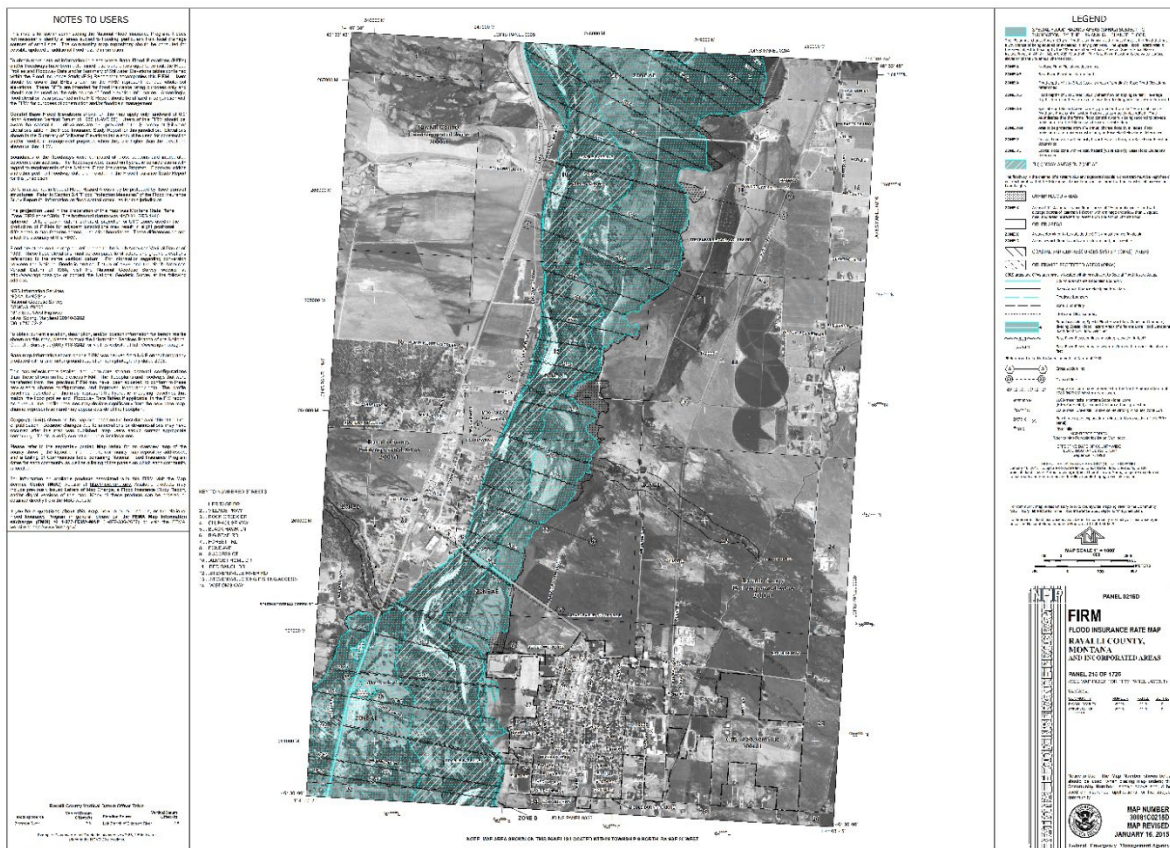
## Subdivision

Stevensville has fully adopted subdivision regulations, which were adopted by Resolution No. 514 on February 9, 2023. The majority of the subdivision regulations are driven by the Montana Subdivision and Platting Act (MSPA). The Town has full control over the design standards for subdivisions, such as street design, sidewalks and curbs, and gutters. With the recent conclusion of the 69th Montana Legislature, it is recommended that the Town review the current subdivision regulations and amend the regulations to reflect any Montana state statutes that may have changed in the last legislative session.

## Floodplain

The Town of Stevensville has adopted floodplain regulations and participates in the National Flood Insurance Rate Program through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The original floodplain maps for the community were adopted in November 1998, and the current effective regulatory maps were adopted in January 2015.

The Town does not have extensively mapped floodplains that fall within the Town jurisdiction, but should continue to review all developments to ensure that the risk of flooding is minimized. It is recommended that for properties that fall within the Special Flood Hazard Zone, the Town make consistent findings that reflect the floodplain regulations that the Town has adopted.



Map 15 – FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map, FEMA Map Service Center



## **Buildings for Lease or Rent**

The Town has adopted zoning regulations and therefore does not need to adopt Buildings for Lease or Rent Regulations

## **Other Applicable Ordinances**

Similar to many other Montana communities, the Town of Stevensville has passed an ordinance that addresses public nuisances. These nuisances address a variety of issues, and the Town will provide abatement to the property of the nuisance, and the Town will assess such an abatement on the property's taxes.

The nuisance ordinance also addresses the maintenance and removal of noxious weeds on a property. Owners are responsible for maintaining their property by mowing and abating their weeds. The Town may provide notice to owners that they need to remove all such weeds from their property. Any non-compliance with this ordinance can result in a misdemeanor offense.

# Conditions and Timing for Review and Revision

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To ensure the Growth Policy remains a relevant and effective document for decision-making in the Town, the Growth Policy will need to be periodically reviewed and updated.

The document will be reviewed every 5 years from the date of its adoption. The Town Planning and Zoning Board will be the entity responsible for reviewing the Policy and will make any recommendations regarding revisions or changes to the Town Council. Future reviews will include an evaluation of every section of the Policy. It is anticipated that a full update of the Policy will be necessary within 10 years of its original adoption.

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

# Adoption

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The Town Planning and Zoning Board held 5 work sessions to work through and discuss the various drafts of the Growth Policy. Each work session was publicly noticed, and varying numbers of Town residents participated in each session.

The Town Planning and Zoning Board held a hearing on December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025, to gather resident input on the Plan creation and recommend the adoption of the Plan to the Town Council. The Town Council held a public hearing on December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025, to consider the Planning and Zoning Board's recommendation. The Council voted on December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025, to formally adopt the updated Growth Polic

# Appendix A: Subdivision Regulations

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

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

## Definition of 76-3-608 Criteria

The Town of Stevensville will use the following definitions, as referenced in the Town of Stevensville Subdivision Regulations, effective February 9, 2023 by resolution 514.

- Agriculture: The practice of cultivating the ground, raising crops, and/or rearing animals.
- Agricultural Water User Facility: Any part of an irrigation system used to produce an agricultural product on property used for agricultural purposes.
- Local Services: Any and all services and facilities that local government entities are authorized to provide.
- Natural Environment: The physical conditions which exist within a given area, including land, air, water, mineral, flora, fauna, noise, and objects of historic or aesthetic considerations.
- Public Health and Safety: A condition of optimal well-being, free from danger, risk, or injury for a community at large, or for all people, not merely for the welfare of a specific individual or a small class of persons.
- Wildlife: Living things which are neither human, nor domesticated nor plant.
- Wildlife Habitat: Place or type of site where wildlife naturally lives and grows.

## Evaluation of Subdivisions Based Upon 76-3-608 Review Criteria

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

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

Upon completion of its review and evaluation, the Town will render a decision on the proposed subdivision with respect to the requirements of the Town Subdivision Regulations Town Zoning Code, the Town Growth Policy, other applicable plans and the Montana Subdivision and Platting Act.

## **Evaluation Criteria for Effects on Agriculture**

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

## **Evaluation Criteria for Effects on Agricultural Water User Facilities**

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

## **Evaluation Criteria for Upon Local Services**

- a. Will the subdivision connect to central water and sewer systems? Who will pay the cost of connecting to the central system?
- b. What, if any, increased costs for maintenance and operation will be incurred, and what approximately will be those costs? Will the lot buyers pay regular water and sewer charges?
- c. 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 Town of Stevensville? 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?
- d. At an average of eight vehicle trips per day per lot, how many average vehicle trips per day will the subdivision generate? Will the extension of public streets or roads be needed and, if so, who will bear the costs? Will the subdivision increase the costs of road maintenance and, if so, by approximately how much? Will the subdivider/lot buyers or the public bear those increased costs?
- e. 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?
- f. How much does the land affected by the proposed subdivision currently pay in local property taxes? After the subdivision is fully developed, how much will the land and improvements be expected to pay in local property taxes, at current mill levies?

## **Evaluation Criteria for Effect on Natural Environment**

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



## **Evaluation Criteria for Effect on Public Health and Safety**

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

## **Evaluation Criteria for Effect on Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat**

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

## **Public Hearing Procedure for Subdivision Proposals**

The Town Planning and Zoning Board conducts its public meetings following the public notification requirements, as described in State statute and the Stevensville Subdivision Regulations. Major subdivisions and those minor subdivisions treated as major subdivisions are subject to public hearings.

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

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

1. The Planning and Zoning Board Chair opens the hearing. The planner will present a report that provides background information and describes the key technical points of the application and the proposal's relationship to any land use regulations the Growth Policy, and the draft Findings of Fact.
2. The subdivider or representative may present information and testimony relating to the proposed subdivision. Planning and Zoning Board members are permitted to direct any relevant questions to the planner or the applicant.
3. Any written comments submitted prior to the hearing will be noted and made available to the public upon request. The President may read correspondence aloud. If the Chair deems that the written comments are numerous or voluminous, he may request that the written comments be summarized.
4. proposal. Comments should be factual and relevant to the proposal. Each person speaking must give his or her name, address, and nature of interest in the matter.
5. After public comment is complete, the subdivider or representative may respond briefly.
6. Planning and Zoning Board members may voice other considerations and may pose any relevant questions through the Chair.

7. The Chair closes the hearing on the subdivision proposal.
8. The Planning and Zoning Board will then deliberate the Findings of Fact and Conditions outlined in the planner's report, then vote to make a recommendation to the Town Council for approval as proposed, approval with conditions, or denial.

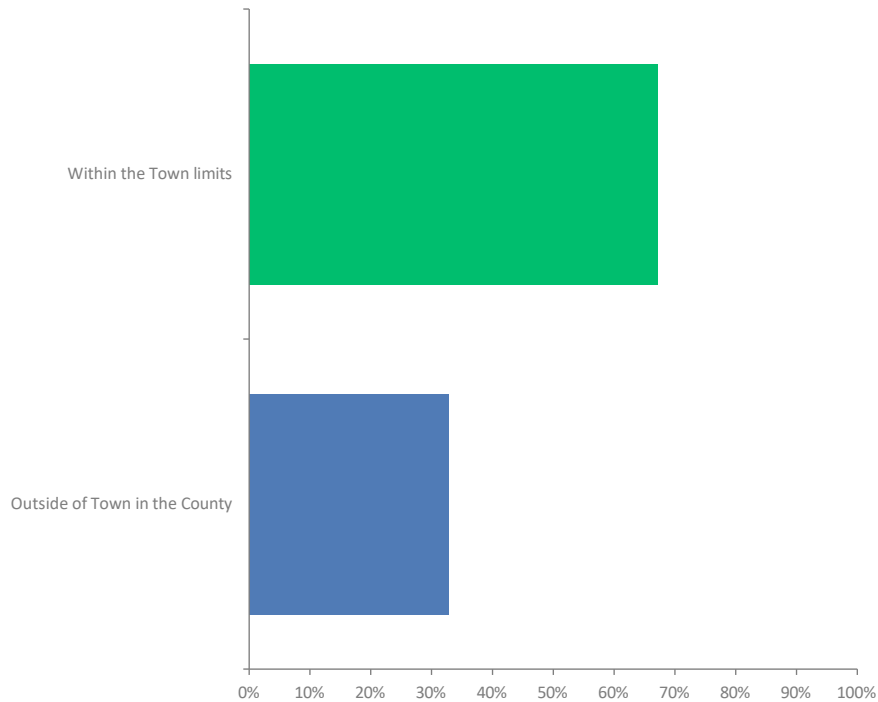
The Stevensville Town Council will hold a public meeting to review the Town-County Planning and Zoning Board's recommendation and render a decision for approval, conditional approval, or denial of the proposed subdivision.

# Appendix B: Survey Results

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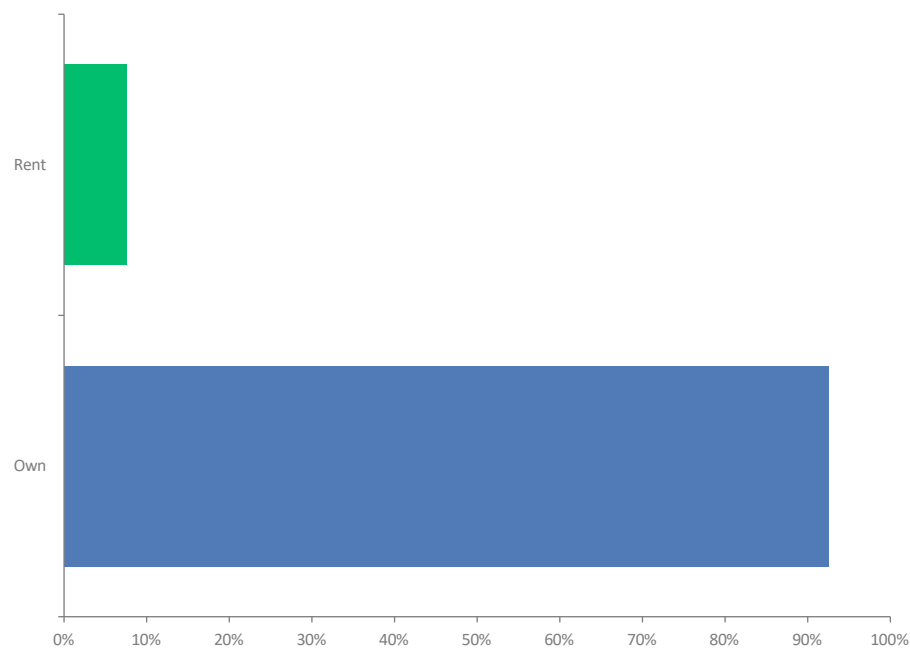
## Question 1: Where do you live?

Answered: 146 Skipped: 0



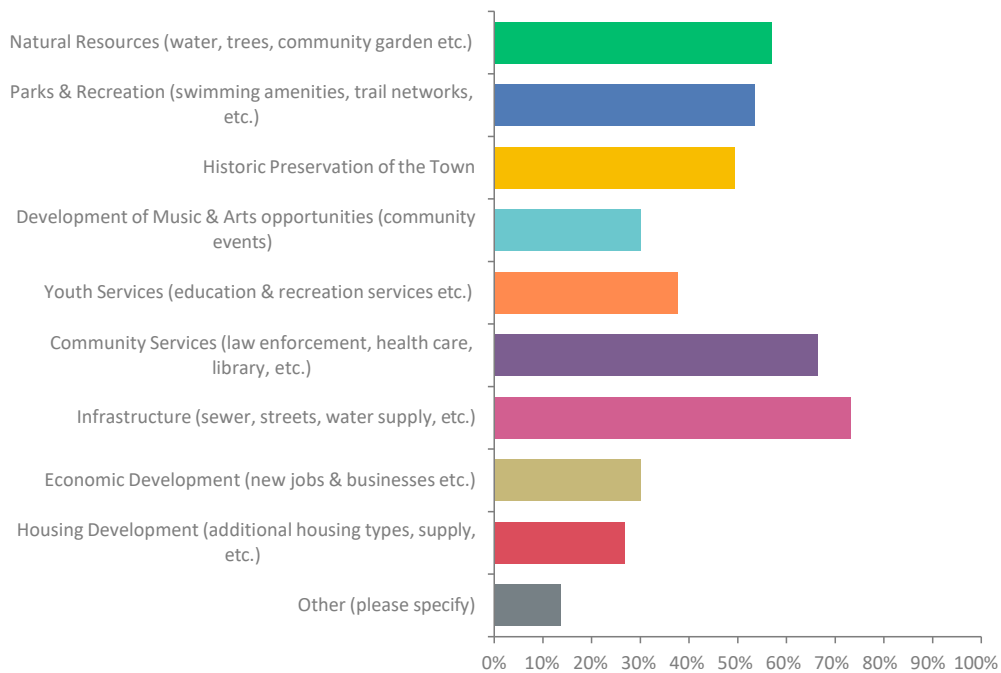
**Question 2: Do you rent or own your housing?**

Answered: 146 Skipped: 0



### Question 3: Which of the following community topics are of greatest importance to you? Please select all that apply.

Answered: 146 Skipped: 0





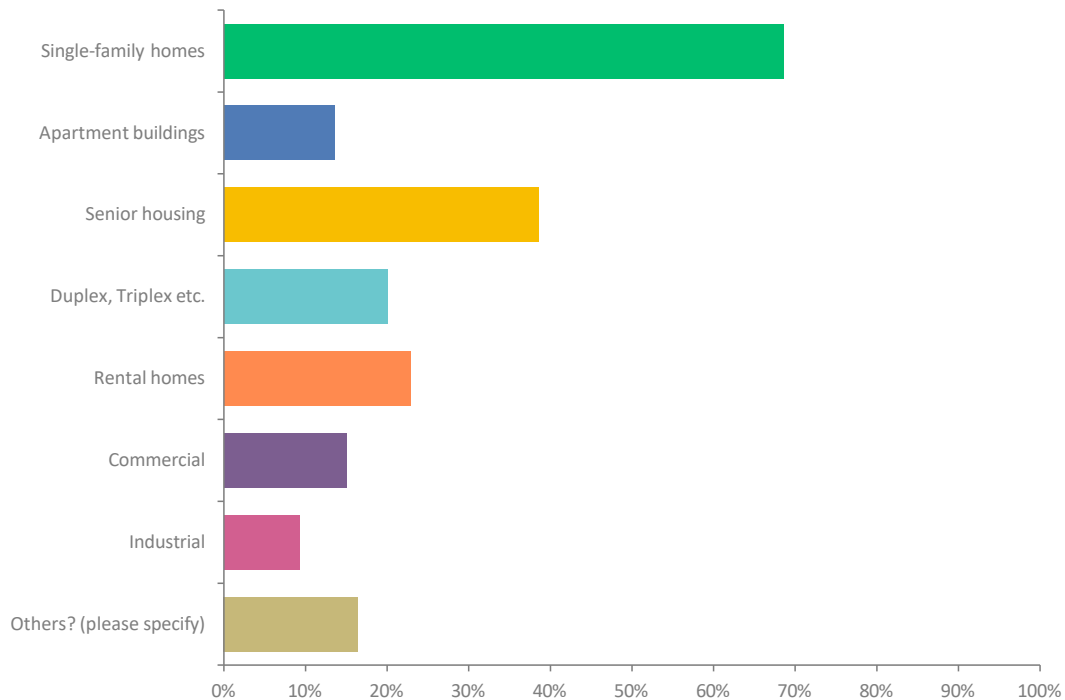
### Question 3: “Other” Responses

Answered: 146 Skipped: 0

- Affordable housing.
- Lower water bill. Code enforcement and property maintenance ordinance.
- The library.
- Good government open to the public.
- Protecting land against overbuilding.
- Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure
- No out of states to change.
- Better protection on Highway 203, particularly patrolling and radar. More revenue for the Town.
- No other
- Volunteer opportunities (i.e. elderly people needing help within our community
- Senior Housing no housing developments!
- A communal sense of pride
- Lowering our property taxes and our water, sewer bills so that people can afford to live in this great little town.
- Keeping the farmer's market downtown for the community and businesses.
- upate and ENFORCE planning and zoning regulations
- I want to help build a large outdoor pool with lap lanes, that can be used year round!
- Price of water and sewer. Make it a reasonable amount
- Building new affordable homes
- Businesses and helping small local businesses.
- Community Service - Fire

## Question 4: What type of development do you think is most important for our community? Select all that apply.

Answered: 140 Skipped: 6



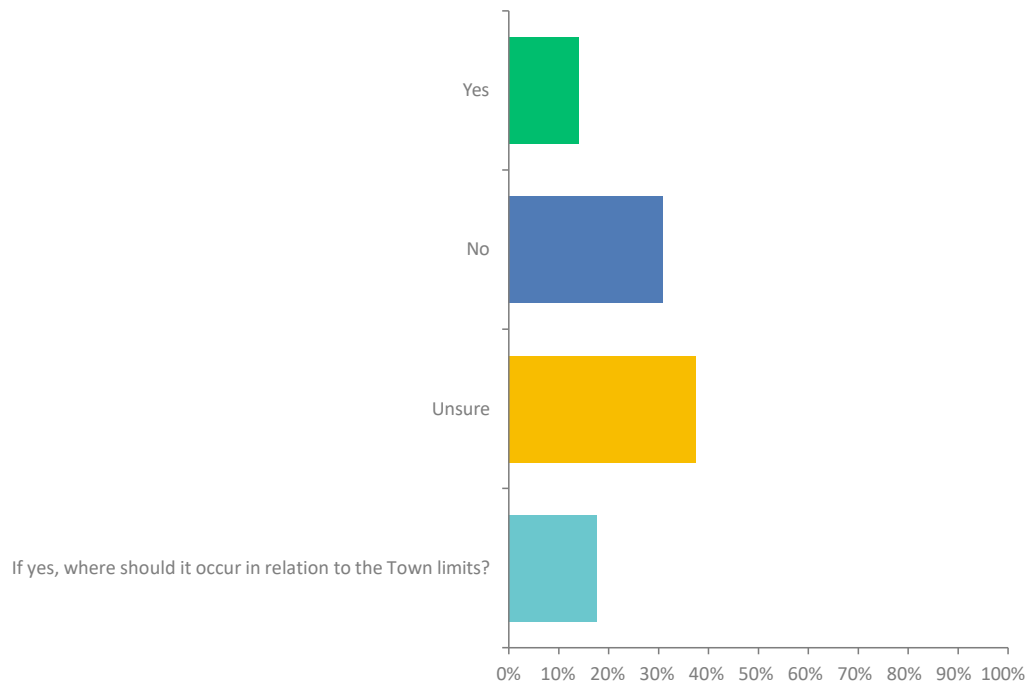
## Question 4: “Other” Responses

Answered: 140 Skipped: 6

- Affordable housing.
- Always take into account infrastructure before we build anything.
- Current single-family homes are out of young family's price range.
- Clean up the community.
- Agricultural
- Live-Work-Play Mixed Use Construction is critical to reducing costs for both businesses and residents. 3 story buildings with commercial space on the first floor
- Affordable housing.
- Homes for first time buyers.
- Library
- Limit the overbuilding. Protect the agricultural land.
- Young people can't afford houses.
- Low income apartments.
- Large apartment complex with sufficient parking.
- Streets are congested, its like they are one lane.
- None. We all live here because we love this small town. Growth changes everything
- Not many in this community can afford \$1,200 P/M
- Limited
- No development, taxes out of control
- no more developments
- A Community Center.
- Condos with large square footage.
- Affordable housing! Housing for single people that doesn't require them tk have to have 2-4 roommates to be able to afford to live there!
- Housing in general regardless of type

## Question 5: Do you support the annexation of land into the Town for residential and/or commercial development?

Answered: 136 Skipped: 10



## Question 5: If yes, where should it occur in relation to the Town limits?

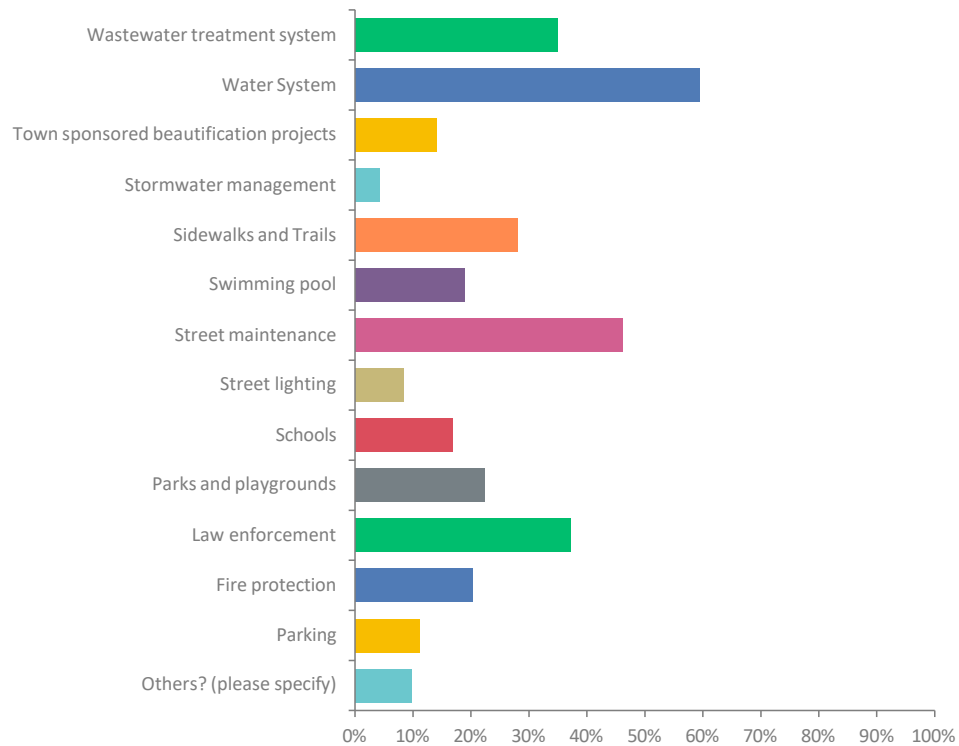
Answered: 136 Skipped: 10

- Only if there is the infrastructure to support this.
- South or east.
- Within a 5 mile radius to north, south and east of Stevi limits.
- North
- South and east of town.
- The Town is too small to maintain tax base to pay for services. More homes need to help with the tax base and contribute to services.
- Along Eastside Highway south.
- South
- North, South and East
- All areas next to Town boundary. Family developments being built without any consideration for future amenities.
- Within a 3 mile radius.
- West and south areas
- 93
- Burnt Fork Phase II
- North and east
- U.S. 93 corridor, so water/sewer is available for hotels, etc.
- South side of Steve i cutoff
- south
- South and east.
- Near the school
- In places where the border would be contiguous with property already in town.
- West side of 93
- Annex land/houses that make sense in terms of the Town limits
- Industrial annexation HWY 93 and also on Eastside HWY north of Stevensville



## Question 6: Please select the top 3 projects that you would like the Town to focus on.

Answered: 143 Skipped: 3



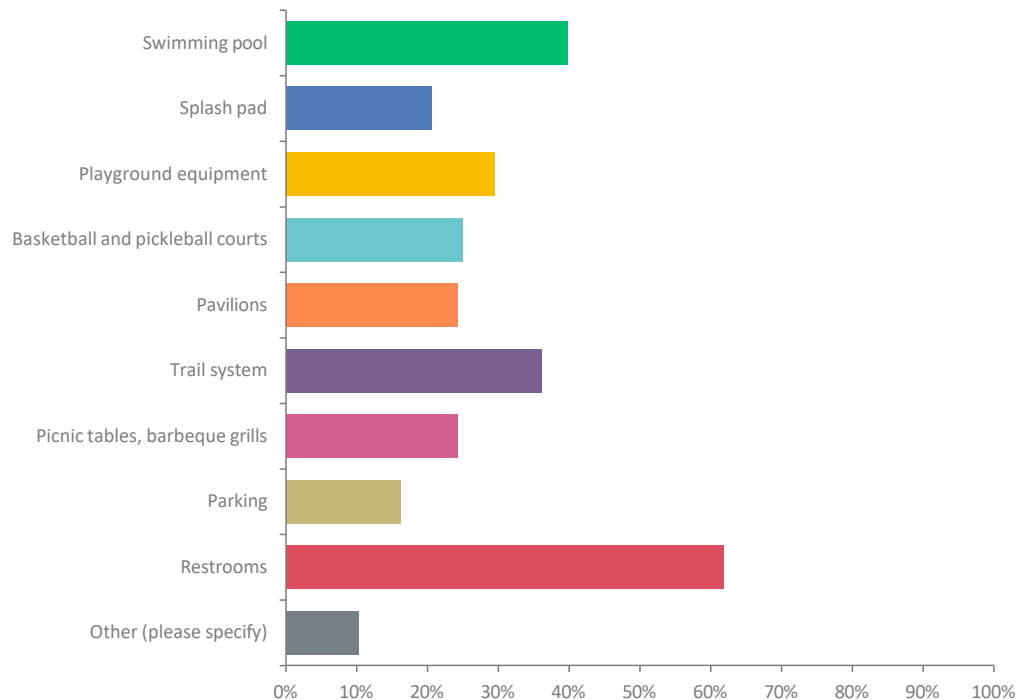
## Question 6: “Other” Responses

Answered: 143 Skipped: 3

- Enforce city codes.
- Improved methods for snow removal and ice treatments on streets and sidewalks so residents can walk year round.
- Code enforcement and property maintenance ordinance.
- The Town needs to lower water rates. Residents can't afford the high water bills. The average in the northwest is \$45 per month.
- Dog park
- Simply maintain what we already have. If we can't do that, we certainly should not be considering adding anything else.
- Get the mayor to tuck his dirty tee shirt in when the governor is in town.
- Discussed with the mayor getting a street sweeper. Thank you!
- Snow removal it does not help for the plow to go down center street only and push snow in driveways/sidealks
- Community service projects
- New library, and institute a strict fireworks policy that includes no explosives and projectiles
- Community center/Library
- Winter snow removal
- Community events

**Question 7: What improvements would you prioritize in our parks (e.g. Lewis & Clark Park, Father Ravalli Park, Legacy Park, Stevensville Bike Path, Veterans Park, River Park, River Park Trail, etc.) Select all that apply.**

Answered: 136 Skipped: 10



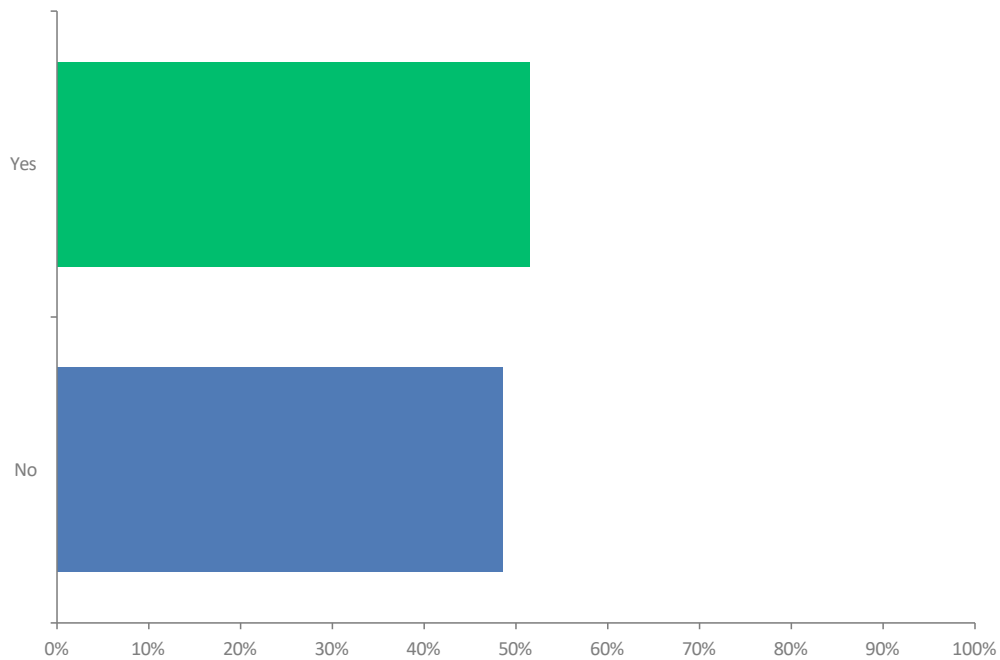
## Question 7: “Other” Responses

Answered: 136 Skipped: 10

- Garbage system
- Security
- Blacktop Charlo Street from Ravalli Street, past St. Mary's Mission to Lewis and Clark Park.
- Dog park
- Disc golf course by the river walk.
- Need additional trash cans and benches need maintenance.
- To old to care.
- Thank you to all the volunteers and first responders! 75% percent of the budget in fire, police etc.
- Dog Park
- A dog park
- Sidewalks on the south side of town, off East Side near the cemetery
- I don't use these. The pool is too small for actual lap swimming, and I have no opinions on the other items.
- Shade over playground equipment
- Skate park/ bmx track

## Question 8: Would you support the creation of a dedicated parks tax to help fund improvements and maintenance of our public parks and recreation facilities?

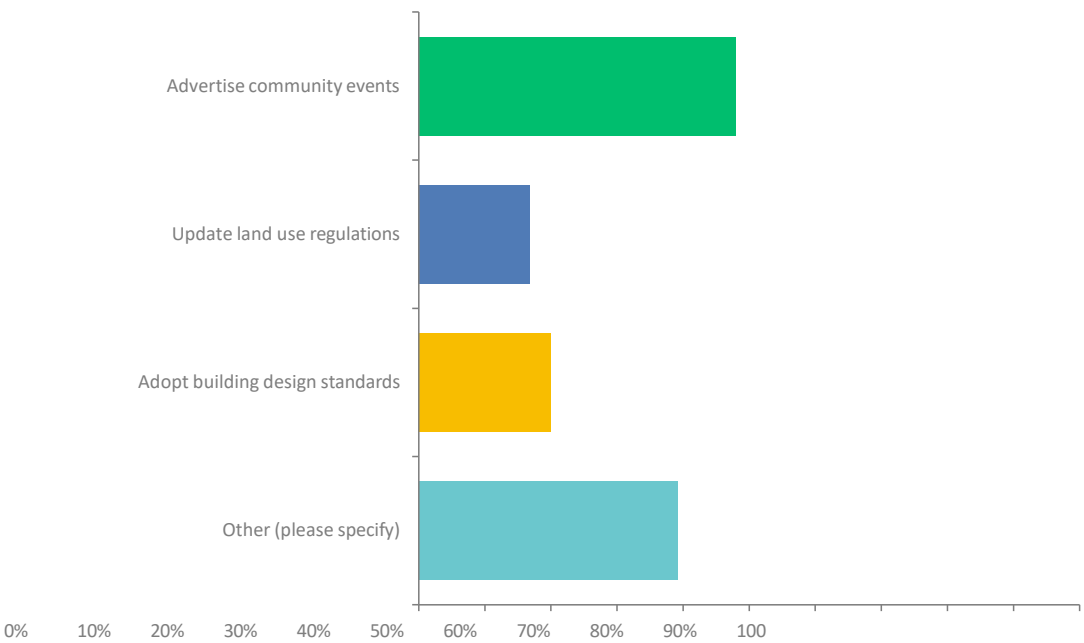
Answered: 136 Skipped: 10





**Question 9: What would be the most important thing the Town could do to improve Downtown Stevensville?**

Answered: 125 Skipped: 21



## Question 9: “Other” Responses

Answered: 125 Skipped: 21

- Partner with business community to keep storefronts full.
- Lower water bills
- Better support or services.
- Retail businesses.
- Attract and support local businesses.
- Only for the immediate area of main street.
- Improve Town website.
- Protect historic buildings.
- Get a new Mayor
- Get the mayor to tuck his dirty tee shirt in when the governor is in town.
- Clear the snow/ice from Main Street parking areas. And especially from the drains!! It gets clogged and ice melt leaves giant puddles and floods the sidewalk.
- Loosen housing regulations to build more affordable housing.
- None of the above.
- Lower water bills
- Work with businesses to keep all buildings occupied, improve and rehab existing buildings as able.
- Live into those regulations instead of rolling over and playing to those seeking a variance e.g. Hoffmans old residence on Main Street. Main Street is not zoned residential and yet these people live in a house on Main St.
- Library needs updating.
- Update the library.
- Fix streets and sidewalks.
- Encourage business to keep spaces filled.
- Keep small businesses here versus big franchises. The Valley does a great job at this.
- Keep downtown, invite businesses, oriental restaurant.
- At this time, our town is dirty and unkept. No flowers, no banners on the light poles, the pot holes are terrible, trees need trimming etc. etc. I begin to wonder what all the employees are doing
- Keep development along the 93 corridor.
- Leave it alone.
- Close off main street during events so more people can attend
- A community billboard to promote events and activities
- Add parking
- and easier to read

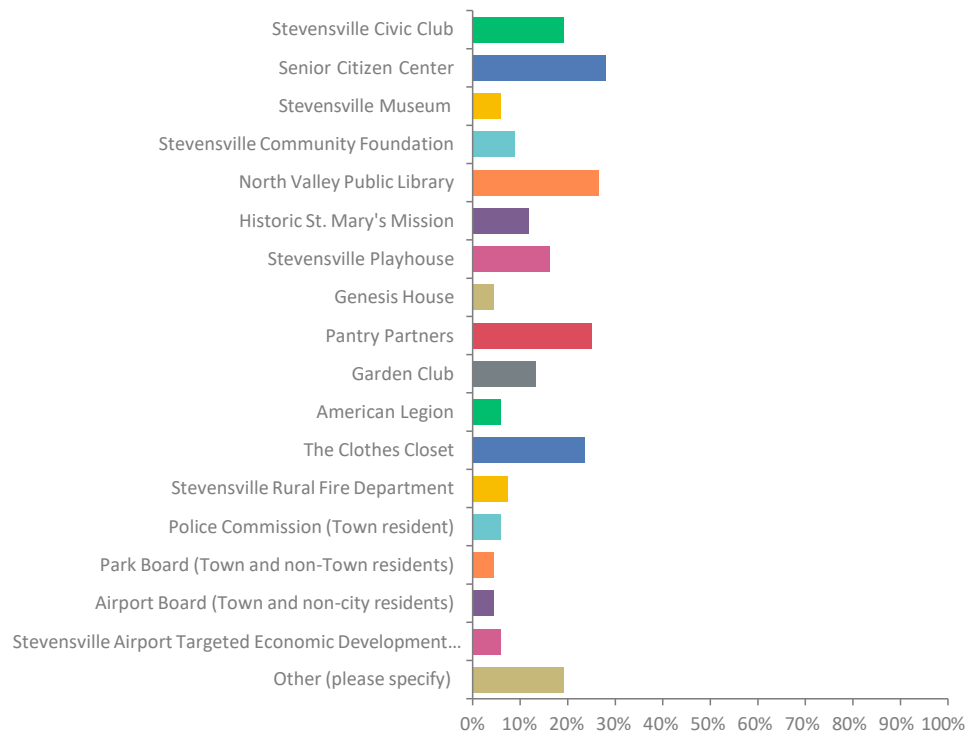
## Question 9: “Other” Responses

Answered: 125 Skipped: 21

- Put in 4 way stop at Main Street and 5th. Patrol and enforce speed limit
- Leave alone
- clean up the store fronts
- Maintain character
- Bring more businesses in. Make our historic town a must visit place
- Hotel and conference center near the intersection of Cutoff Road and US93; RV dump station (fee-based) for public use
- Unsure
- Continue (as per Main St, assn) downtown beautification, and correct tree root - sidewalk situation.
- One, single collective town council or group
- Keep historic buildings accessible to public
- Add and improve sidewalks
- I don't know
- Add parking
- Allow people outside of city limits on the town council
- Active Committee
- Seasonal decor - scarecrow and Christmas lights are fabulous. The rest of the year? Blah
- Water and sewer pricing
- Add more businesses that are open a little later and on weekends. It kills business for the other businesses trying to do so.
- Implement or improve commercial and residential density laws (reduce density)
- Supporting our local business through incentives and alleviating costs
- Better business signage. I don't know what our regulations are, but the signage needs to be more attractive and easier to read

## Question 10: Do you have an interest in volunteering for the Town, if so, which of the following volunteer opportunities interest you?

Answered: 68 Skipped: 78



## Question 10: “Other” Responses

Answered: 68 Skipped: 78

- Already volunteer at two sites.
- Foster Care/ Children Home
- Food pantry and food bank
- A board to beautify downtown
- Would like to know more about the Genesis House
- I should but no thank you
- Wish I could volunteer - not physically able to
- General economic development committee
- Not sure at this point.
- Trying to get ahold of the contacts list, available online to volunteer is unbearable. Nobody answers or returned calls. So volunteering opportunities are limited
- Stevensville Fire Department
- Town council if it allowed “outsiders” hahaha
- If this is for the Town why does it say Stevensville Rural Fire Department? Where is the button for the City Fire Department?



## Question 11: Please provide any other comments you have

Answered: 48 Skipped: 98

- New subdividing needs to be limited/scaled back until the water system leaks are removed. Pressure is already falling and expense is crippling to your existing customer base.
- The water bill is outrageous. Better management and less monthly cost. Hard for families.
- Love this town. Let's be conservative with growth.
- We need affordable housing for young families. Advertise community events on local news channels. No new taxes until we get the water rates adjusted to a more affordable level.
- Hire qualified personnel and use funds for their intended use.
- The Town must find a way to repair, improve and update the water system and not at the expense of property owners. So many people are on fixed incomes and cannot afford this costly endeavor. Grants? Federal/state assistance?
- I prefer slow controlled growth of the community to insure that infrastructure can keep pace with growth.
- I have live in Town for 26 years. What use to be a beautiful place has turned into a dump. You charge outrageous water bill like we live in some beautiful town. Properties are allow
- The water issue needs to be addressed. Adding more homes and apartments is the wrong thing to do.
- I used to be an active volunteer in town at the fire department, school and many others. After the way the town treated Mayor Dewey I am done. If you want to tear people down and complain about people trying to make a difference you can do it yourself.
- Open communication from the Town to residents.
- Look into a class action lawsuit over water pressure. California just burned to the ground with not ??? water pressure.
- Please keep in mind that we are a rural small town. Do what is possible to safeguard that.
- Get the mayor to tuck his dirty tee shirt in when the governor is in town.
- Parking in Downtown Stevi is a problem. Ice/snow should be cleared from parking areas (as mentioned above). Also, it is ridiculous that the police/fire took over an entire wall of parking spaces that are HARDLY EVER utilized - even during an emergency. (I park back there every single day so please don't try and claim they are used. They are NOT!) during an emergency, 1st responders could always park across the street in front of the houses. Even more insulting is when these parking spaces remain empty and the police cars are parked across the street in the shade. In the meantime employees and patrons are driving around trying to find a place to park 🙄
- It would be great to have more affordable housing in the area. (e.g. apartments) for gas station workers, grocery store clerks and small business workers. We need to establish a Level 3 EV charging station (that can be paid through the Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act) so that Stevensville can be more energy independent.
- Water/sewer rates are high. From Town meeting a year ago on water rates, the City indicated a lot of leaking pipes. Water supply is getting scarcer with climate change. Must ensure we have adequate water supply for any future development.
- Improve town by making us a safe, walkable community with sidewalks. No sidewalks? Install speedbumps or stop signs in those residential neighborhoods. It isn't a matter of if someone will be hurt or killed while walking our streets its a matter of when.
- No new subdivisions.

## Question 11: Please provide any other comments you have

Answered: 48 Skipped: 98

- We love the Bitterroot. We moved from W Washington to get away from growth and crime. The series Yellowstone change things in a negative way. Real estate prices have become insane.
- We've been in the Stevi area for 30 years now. Great little small town America that has been lost in so many places. The best government is that governs the least.
- "Improvements can be good as long as the Town's culture is maintained I would get involved with a new pool complex."
- Protect the Town's integrity by trying to stay inside what the tax base can afford. Continue to repair and maintain the basics.
- Town council needs to be on the same page. Discussion during town-hall meetings have a lot of fancy language, which could be made into more plain language (Easier for town folk to understand).
- I believe that the city hall should be the heart of the town and it certainly isn't. It's secretive and they are extremely rude
- Get as many large parcels of land into the land trust, to keep housing development in town, and not in the open spaces.
- Downtown is embarrassing. Its rundown. The corner flower beds hold weeds not flowers. The beautiful seasonal banners that lined the streets seem to have vanished as did hanging pots...other towns have all of this. Stevensville looks lazy and uninterested in attracting visitors. The survey asks about business development. I found when you start a business here you're on your own. No one from the city welcomes you and explains things. There should at least be a welcome packet delivered by someone working for the town, without businesses a town dies.
- We all choose to live here because of the small town environment. You need to leave it alone and limit the growth or in a few years we will be Missoula!!!
- The town needs a down home restaurant where the final bill will not exceed \$45 for 2 meals for adults. Alcohol is not a necessary choice.
- Watering - People water 7 days a week at all time yet water bill says otherwise - so, what is it? (For years) Speeding tickets would produce income for speed bumps and or portable speed lights and not just for main street!
- You guys do a great job. All towns have their challenges. Thank you for all the work you do for our town. That includes, police, town workers, office workers, fire and especially the town council. Thank you!
- Mayor Bob Rocks!!!!
- Please stop the fighting and conflicts in our town government.
- Lower the water rates!
- Lack of city water/sewer along US93 in area surrounding the stoplight prevents development of a decent hotel and conference facility, which is one of the biggest roadblocks to tourism and economic development revenue. The Forge Best Western Premier along SH1 in Anaconda has been transformational. The same Montana-based investor group may be willing to look at Stevi if water/sewer services were available to the area along US93.
- I will keep my options open. That's all I'm saying at this point.
- water rates are outrages, need to be lowered, last increase was not necessary, town has plenty of money in reserves. we are one of the highest in the state,
- We will be facing a major water meter issue in near future. Our meters are running out of time regarding battery life and the amount of usage threshold.

## Question 11: Please provide any other comments you have

Answered: 48 Skipped: 98

- An accident is waiting to happen with pedestrians/kids/bike and traffic on the south side of town past where the sidewalks stop. The narrow bridge by the Stihl dealer is so small for semis with round bales and trailers.
- Am concerned about the water/ sewer increases. I understand that there was a water/ sewer increase instituted about 12-15 years ago. I am at a loss about why that did not cover the upgrades to the systems and why the two recent increases were necessary. Perhaps the council should make these increases a ballot issue instead of just going forward with them. Mark Harris mharris487@gmail.com
- I volunteered to help build a larger pool but kept getting shut down bc a pool already exists. I know a lot of work went into the original pool, but I have not given up hope for a possibility of a year round outdoor option!
- "There should seriously be a firework ordinance. Our neighbors light an obscene amount of fireworks. We have to leave town with our dogs while our adult kids stay home to make sure our house doesn't burn down. One neighbor brings around flyers the day of..."
- No new taxes
- It would be great to see animal control in the Bitterroot and sidewalk maintenance.
- I sold my house to move into town! Guess what? There is no where to go. We are stuck in an apartment because the houses are tear downs or in-between. inbetween. We are forced to find another town.
- The town serves more than just the residents in the geographical limits. It would be great to see a seat on town council for those residing outside the limits.
- For what we pay in water bills the water system is a joke. Gravel is washing away down my street due to insufficient sewer drainage points. Getting around town is very hard with a stroller/walker due to inconsistent sidewalks. Walking in the street is often a must.
- Looks good

## Appendix C: List of Sources

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- Town of Stevensville
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- Creamery Picnic
- Harvest Valley Farmers Market
- Stevensville High School
- Headwater Economics
- Montana Department of Administration
- Montana Department of Commerce
- Montana Department of Environmental Quality
- Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
- Montana Department of Revenue
- Montana Department of Transportation
- Montana Labor Market Information
- MontanaPictures.net

- Montana State Library
- National Archives
- National Register of Historic Places
- NOAA Regional Climate Centers, AgACIS
- On the Map (Census.gov)
- Ravalli County
- United States Census Bureau's Longitudinal-Employer Household Dynamics
- United States Department of Agriculture
- United States Geological Survey

# Appendix D: Acronyms

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CEIC – Census and Economic Information Center  
CDBG – Community Development Block Grant  
CIP – Capital Improvements Plan  
DOR – Department of Revenue  
EDA – Economic Development Administration  
EMR – Emergency Medical Responder  
EMS – Emergency Medical Services  
EMT – Emergency Medical Technician  
FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Agency  
FWP – Fish, Wildlife, and Parks  
GIS – Geographic Information Systems  
LLC – Limited Liability Company  
MCEP – Montana Coal Endowment Program  
MDEQ – Montana Department of Environmental Quality  
MDOC – Montana Department of Commerce  
MDT – Montana Department of Transportation  
MOU – Memorandum of Understanding  
PASER – Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating  
PER – Preliminary Engineering Report  
RV – Recreational Vehicles  
SHPO – State Historic Preservation Office  
SRF – State Revolving Fund  
USDA – United States Department of Agriculture  
USGS – United States Geological Survey  
WIC – Women, Infants, and Children  
WTP – Water Treatment Plant  
WUI – Wildland Urban Interface  
WWTP – Wastewater Treatment Plant