July 28, 2009

Lakeside Neighborhood Plan

2009

Lakeside Neighborhood Plan
Committee

Photo of Lakeside taken from Bear Mountain by Kristy Feldhousen-Giles

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AN ADDENDUM TO THE FLATHEAD COUNTY GROWTH POLICY AND MASTER PLAN

ADOPTED BY THE FLATHEAD COUNTY, MONTANA BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

RESOLUTION NO.: _____

(INSERT DATE)

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Lakeside Neighborhood Plan 2009

Preface:

In the summer of 2007, the Lakeside Community Council, with a mandate from the County to revise and update the 1994 Lakeside Neighborhood Plan to comply with the new County Growth Policy, called for volunteers from the community to form the Lakeside Neighborhood Plan Committee (the Committee). Volunteers submitted resumes along with statements of their experience and skills. The resulting list of Committee Members was submitted by the Lakeside Community Council to the Board of Commissioners and accepted. The Committee began having working sessions in late October 2007, electing Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary/Project Manager and, later, Treasurer. The list of Committee members can be found in the Table of Contents of this document.

The goal of the Lakeside Neighborhood Plan Committee has been to seek out the current situation and conditions of the Lakeside community and to seek out inputs from the community and combine them all into a plan that works for the Lakeside neighborhood now and in the foreseeable future. The issues and opportunities the Committee faces are many and balancing them is a difficult process. Dozens of volunteers, hundreds of public comments, and scores of interviews with Lakeside residents, property owners and business professionals in the community have been combined, analyzed, argued and ultimately compiled into this document.

The Committee acknowledges that this plan is not regulatory, but it does represent the current status of various aspects of the community and the desires of a large cross section of our community. Once adopted, the plan is considered an addendum to the Flathead County Growth Policy. The Plan should be considered by all those who review and evaluate development applications. Developers are also strongly encouraged to consider the plan when creating and designing development projects. This Plan is meant to:

1. **Communicate:** It has been 15 years since the last community survey and Neighborhood Plan and there have been many changes within the Lakeside Community. There is significant information in this Plan regarding "existing conditions". The intent of this information is to provide an overall snapshot of our community for both current and potential residents and property owners, who may or may not be aware of all the changes that have occurred in the last 15 years and have certainly not seen a comprehensive overview of the community in that time.
2. **Plan:** Based on the existing conditions and on input from the Community, the Committee has developed future land use maps and land use descriptions, identified issues and opportunities, stated goals and policies, and proposed implementation strategies. This forward-looking, planning information is also for the community, but additionally will supplement the County Growth Policy and serve as benchmarks against which development applications can be compared by the Lakeside Community Council, the County Planning Board and the County Commissioners. To rule on developments, these officials need to understand the desires of the community.

This Neighborhood Plan document contains a lot of information. Some may chose not to read the document in its entirety. The Table of Contents can direct you to the areas that apply to your interests in the Neighborhood Plan.

Certainly the Committee would encourage everyone to read all the material for complete understanding of how the Future Land Use Map, Goals and Policies and Implementation Strategies were developed.

Chapter 1 Background, Authorization, and Revision Process

1.1 Background

The 1994 Lakeside Neighborhood Plan was developed locally by volunteers from Lakeside, who recognized that "*Change appears inevitable*" and represented the community desire that "*the community needs to have a voice in the change*". Efforts to develop the 1994 Plan were undertaken to "bridge the gap between the general County Plan and the specific neighborhood needs of Lakeside". The plan is recorded in County records as document 95341/6000 and copies can be obtained there, and, for convenience, a link to the plan appears in Appendix A of this Plan.

The 1994 Plan researched and reported various important considerations, describing existing conditions and identifying issues associated with each consideration:

- Land Use and Development Patterns, describing existing conditions and identifying issues in four (4) sub-areas:
  1) Business District of Lakeside
  2) Lakefront Development
  3) Highway Corridor
  4) Timbered Foothills back from Lake
- Lakeside Community Water Resources
- Lakeside County Sewer District
- Solid Waste / Green Boxes
- School District
- QRU and Fire Department
- Law Enforcement
- Roads & Highways
- Community Organizations

In the 1994 Plan, the Steering Committee concludes that the issues uncovered and input from the community point to *"a significant perceived need to develop a mechanism for expanded self-determination of this community. Of necessity, this needs to be some form of local organization responsive to community needs, be politically viable, and with the ability to influence decisions at higher governmental levels which impact Lakeside in some fashion."*

Of the four (4) options considered (Status Quo, Planning Advisory Committee, Community Council, and Incorporation), the recommended and implemented option was to establish the Lakeside Community Council to represent the community of Lakeside in matters of land use, development or other issues that would impact Lakeside. The Council would hold meetings open to the public to consider and gather community input on proposed development or other issues and efforts within the community and submit recommendations to County officials. The 1994 Plan identified issues that the Community Council or other organizations should address and called for implementation of a Land Use Development Code (this was implemented as the Lakeside Zoning District).

The 1994 Plan was approved by the Flathead County Planning Board and Board of Commissioners in late 1995 (Resolution # 1068A, November 22, 1995; filed as County Document 95341/6000 in the Flathead County Courthouse).

1.2 Authorization

Neighborhood Plans are authorized by 76-1-601(4) MCA. In March 2007 the Flathead County Growth Policy was adopted. In Chapter 10, the Growth Policy sets forth Goals and Policies regarding Neighborhood Plans. The Growth Policy recognizes existing Plans, including the 1994 Plan for Lakeside. The Growth Policy indicates that review of existing Neighborhood Plans could result in requests to update those Plans to be consistent with the Growth Policy and Flathead County Land Uses prescribed therein. Lakeside's 1994 Plan was identified by the Flathead County Planning and Zoning Office as needing update. Consent by the Flathead County Planning Board to update the plan was granted on September 12, 2007. The 1994 Plan remains in effect until a revised plan is approved and adopted by the County Commissioners.

1.3 Revision Process

To revise the Neighborhood Plan, the Lakeside Neighborhood Plan Committee followed the process for revising the plan established in the 1994 Neighborhood Plan and the process established in Chapter 10, Part 4: Existing Neighborhood Plans in the Flathead County Growth Policy.

The initial adoption process is outlined in Part II "*Plan Development Process*" on pages 2-11 of the 1994 Lakeside Neighborhood Plan. The 1994 Neighborhood Plan states:

It is also envisioned from time to time that the Neighborhood Plan will require amendments, review and updating. The amendment process is identical to the initial adoption process and requires local input, at least one public hearing before the Flathead County Planning Board, followed by County Commissioners' final consideration.

The 1994 Committee did the following in developing the 1994 Plan:

- A Steering Committee, initially with 12 members, was formed.
- The Steering Committee held community meetings, Steering Committee meetings, and sub-committee meetings.
- Steering committee members prepared, circulated and tabulated a community wide survey. The survey was mailed to all property owners identified in the mailing list obtained from the Flathead County Clerk and Recorder's office. The survey questions were drafted based on perceived problem areas identified in community meetings.
- The Committee prepared the draft Plan document.
- The Committee released the draft Plan document to the community in November 1994, received and reviewed community input and released a revised draft to the Flathead County Planning Board and Commissioners for adoption, which occurred in November 1995.
- Along the way, the Committee had several news articles published in local news media.
- The Committee involved the Flathead Regional Development Office (now the Department of Planning and Zoning)
- No professional consultant or consulting services were used.

Following the above 1994 process and the revision process recommended in the 2007 Growth Policy, Chapter 10 Part 4 as guidelines for revising Neighborhood Plans, the Committee used the approach described below, incorporating and complying with requirements from both sources.

- Lakeside Neighborhood Plan Committee (LNPC) was formed, initially with 14 members.
- Committee members made contacts with local, county, state and some commercial establishments to gather background and preliminary information regarding existing conditions and perceived issues. Organizations such as the Lakeside Quick Response Unit (QRU), Somers Volunteer Fire Department (VFD), school district, Montana Department of Transportation (MDT), Law Enforcement, Lakeside Sewer & Water District, County Parks Department, Lakeside-Somers Chamber of Commerce, and selected commercial enterprises who are Chamber members were asked for their views of current issues and future plans that impact Lakeside. These interviews provided the Committee with background information needed in order to form plans and schedules for the work to be done and contributed to the formulation of questions for the Community Survey conducted in 2008. Many of these enterprises or organizations have continued contact with the Committee to provide more in depth information for the plan throughout the revision process.
- Communications with the community were developed and established and maintained throughout the process:
    - Posters announcing the Committee and its purpose placed in many local establishments.
    - Posters announcing specific events, such as public meetings, surveys, local collection points for survey responses, public input, etc.
    - Posters and/or handouts at events such as the Christmas bazaar in 2007, the PTA sponsored Swap-o-Rama, and public meetings.
    - Booth at the 2008 annual Lakeside Fair, held at the elementary school.
    - News articles in the West Shore News and events announced in the Daily Inter Lake.
    - Committee members, speaking at local meetings of the Lakeside Community Club and the Chamber of Commerce, presenting the purpose, plans and schedules of the Committee's activities.
    - Creation and maintenance of a website (http://lakesideplan2008.com/index.html), creation of an Email address for the Committee (LakesidePlanCommittee@bresnan.net) and rental of Post Office Box 157, all of which were publicized in posters, news media, and handouts at meetings.
- The Committee worked with advisors from the Planning & Zoning Office, following their advice to set the geographic boundaries of the Lakeside community to be the same as the 1994 Plan.
- A Community Survey was created and distributed, and results were collected, captured and tallied electronically using electronic spreadsheet technology.

- Two mailings were made, reaching residents and property owners within the Lakeside Community boundaries, whether they owned or rented their residence or were absentee property owners:
    - With the cooperation of the U.S. Post Office in Lakeside, the 1st mailing was distributed to property owners or renters with P.O. Boxes in Lakeside (59922), property owners within Lakeside boundaries that were identified as having P.O. Boxes in Somers(59932), property owners on rural postal routes that did not have P.O. Boxes in either Lakeside or Somers, out of town property owners as were identified through Homeowners Associations in the Community and anyone who specifically requested a survey or who obtained a survey from selected local businesses (1267 surveys distributed with resulting 33.7% return)
    - The 2nd mailing was distributed to out of town property owners (815 surveys distributed with resulting 28.4% return), P.O. Box addresses for 59922, which had been covered in the first mailing, and any duplicate addresses were omitted from this mailing.
- Results were tabulated for each mailing separately and both mailings combined (overall 31.7% return). There was no significant difference in responses between the results from the two separate mailings. Links to PDF documents for the survey questionnaire and complete summarized results can be found in Appendix C or on the Committee's website. Specific survey results will be quoted and presented throughout this 2009 Plan as related to specific topics within the Plan.
- Two public meetings were held to release the survey results and included workshops to solicit input and comments from the community.
- Two additional public workshops were held and information booths at both the 2008 and 2009 Annual Lakeside Fairs were manned to solicit additional public input and comments.
- Numerous Committee working sessions and sub-committee working sessions open to the public were held starting in October 2007 and continuing throughout the entire process.
- Based on all information from initial interviews, the survey results, community input, and follow-up contacts with individuals, groups, and organizations, this 2009 Plan was drafted.
- The Lakeside Community Council received an advance draft of the plan prior to public release and Council approved release of the plan to the public in their April 28, 2009 meeting.
- At the point of public release, notice of the draft plan and a request for property owner input was sent by the Planning and Zoning Department to Lakeside property owners based on the County's GIS records obtained by the Planning and Zoning Department. Legal notices are published and news articles are submitted to local news media announcing the release of the draft plan and asking for community input.
- Several copies of the draft 2009 Plan are printed and available in the County Planning & Zoning Office and in the West Shore Community Library in Lakeside. The draft 2009

Plan is also available to everyone on the Committee's website: http://lakesideplan2008.com/index.html and on the Planning & Zoning Department website: planningweb@flathead.mt.gov . Those who cannot obtain the plan by any of the above means are invited to contact the Planning and Zoning office to obtain a copy (Andrew Hagemeier; 406-751-8200).

- A 30+ day open period for public comment ending on June 19, 2009, followed the release of the plan with property owners or residents submitting their comments in writing to the Committee's Lakeside P.O. Box or to the Committee's email address – lakesideplancommittee@bresnan.net – or dropping their written comments in Committee Collection Boxes placed at Flathead and Glacier Banks in Lakeside, the West Shore Community Library, and in the Blacktail Grocery.
    - Per procedures included with the notification to property owners, the Committee captures and considers all written comments received that are accompanied by the responder's name and a contact telephone number or email for further clarification if needed. Optionally, responders submitted the location of their property(ies) within the community. Since the GIS list of names and addresses does not include full time residents who rent in the area, efforts are made to reach resident renters via news media and posters left in the same locations as the collection boxes.

- The 1st draft Plan was revised, as needed, using comments received. The revised draft Plan was presented to the Lakeside Community Council in a regularly scheduled meeting open to the public on June 30, 2009. Input given in the Community Council meeting is considered by the Council. The revised draft Plan was accepted by the Council and Council unanimously approves:
    1. An additional comment period from July 1 through July 21, where the community can send written comments to email LakesideCommunityCouncil@bresnan.net or mail them to P.O. Box 157; Lakeside MT 59922
    2. A public meeting on Tuesday, July 14, 2009 to hear verbal comments from the community. Minutes from this meeting, which was audio taped, are available through request to LakesideCommunityCouncil@bresnan.net and a copy of the written minutes is available in the West Shore Library in Lakeside.
- Comments received (written and verbal) are considered in the July 28, 2009 meeting of the Community Council and the Council unanimously approves the draft Plan and its submission to the County for adoption.
- Thereafter follows the standard County process:
    - Review and recommendation by the planning and Zoning Department to the Planning Board.
    - Review, public comment and recommendation by the Planning Board
    - Review, public comment and adoption of resolution of intent by the County Commissioners
    - 30-day, protest period

- Adoption of the 2009 Lakeside Neighborhood Plan as an Addendum to the Flathead County Growth Policy

During the course of development of the 2009 Plan, the Committee requested several reviews of their revision process to assure adherence to Chapter 10 of the Growth Policy. The process was reviewed with no resulting issues by the Lakeside Community Council, the Planning Department Staff, and the Chief Deputy Attorney for Flathead County. The letter in Appendix B. from the Director of the Planning and Zoning Department summarizes the results of the process reviews. The Planning and Zoning Department has remained active in providing advice and assistance to the Lakeside Neighborhood Plan Committee throughout the revision process.

Chapter 2 Lakeside Community Boundaries

The planning boundaries in the 1994 Plan have not been altered in this revision (see Figure 2-1). These boundaries (Lake County line to Spring Creek Rd., lake front approximately to the USFS boundary), roughly correspond to the Postal ZIP code 59922. Some areas south of Spring Creek Road are actually in Somers Postal ZIP code, 59932. In addition, Lakeside Community boundaries roughly coincide with the US Census Bureau's Lakeside Census Demographic Profile (CDP) used in the 2000 Census.

Some parts of the planning area are zoned. Any zoning districts in effect at the time this plan is adopted by the county remains unaffected by this plan however; the plan does recommend re-evaluation of the downtown district zoning and other zoning efforts for the community. The map below depicts the community boundaries as well as areas of existing zoning within the planning boundaries.

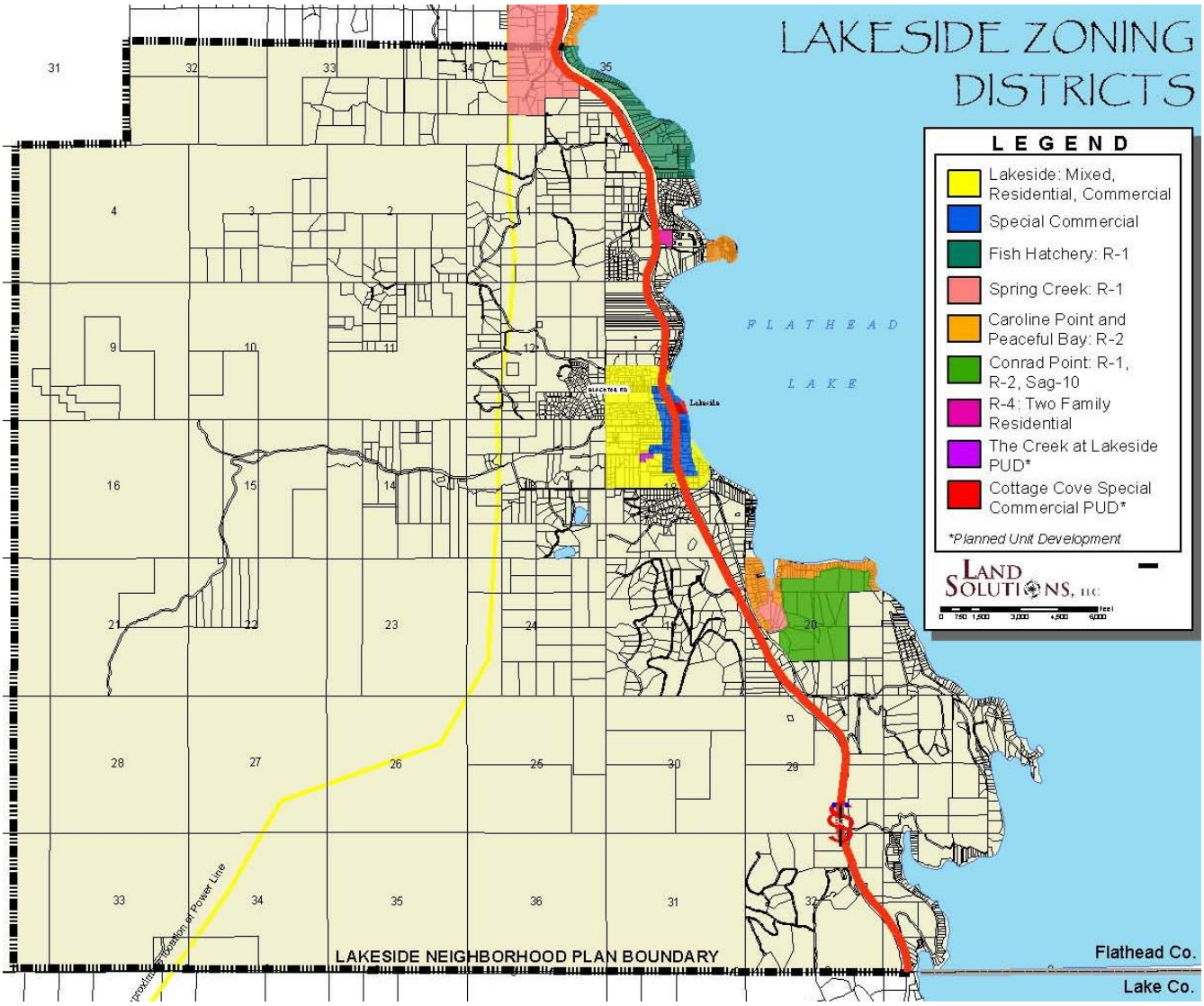

Figure 2-1: The Neighborhood Planning boundaries and existing zoned areas within the Community.

Chapter 3 Lakeside Community Vision

The 1994 Plan did not include a vision statement for the Lakeside Community. Chapter 10 of the Flathead County Growth Policy suggests, however, that such a statement be included in the Neighborhood Plan. Results from the Community Survey and input from Public workshops were used to form a Lakeside Community Vision.

3.1 Lakeside Community Vision

The Community of Lakeside seeks to be a safe, multi-generational, family-oriented community that has ample lake access and open spaces & parks, clean air and water, scenic views, attractive and well maintained homes and businesses, recreational opportunities, and an interconnected transportation network that provides for safe pedestrian, bicycle, and motorized travel as well as alternatives to Highway 93. Lakeside seeks to retain its small town atmosphere while allowing for inevitable growth and respecting property rights, and also seeks to have greater opportunities for community involvement and a greater role in decisions that affect its future.

The Lakeside Community Vision reflects the desired future state of the Community. It was derived from community input gathered throughout the scope of the planning process including survey results, public comments gathered at workshops, meetings with community organizations, and during the Lakeside Community Fair. To quote a comment received at the 2008 Lakeside Community Fair, "A community is more than just a collection of buildings – its greatest wealth and worth is its people. We have a wonderful community and I am pleased that we can all find a common goal of preserving the qualities that make Lakeside wonderful."

3.2 Community Survey Input

The 2008 Community Survey contained several questions related to features of Lakeside that were most important to respondents. One question listed 20 features and asked respondents to first rate how important the feature was to them (low, medium, high), and then rate how satisfied they were with the feature (low, medium, high). The second question asked respondents to pick their top three features of the 20 listed features (see Table 3-1).

A feature with an average importance rating of 2.5 or higher is considered to be of the highest importance to the Community. Features with large gaps between the importance rating and the satisfaction rating are considered to be of primary concern to the Community and should be viewed as possible action items for the Community.

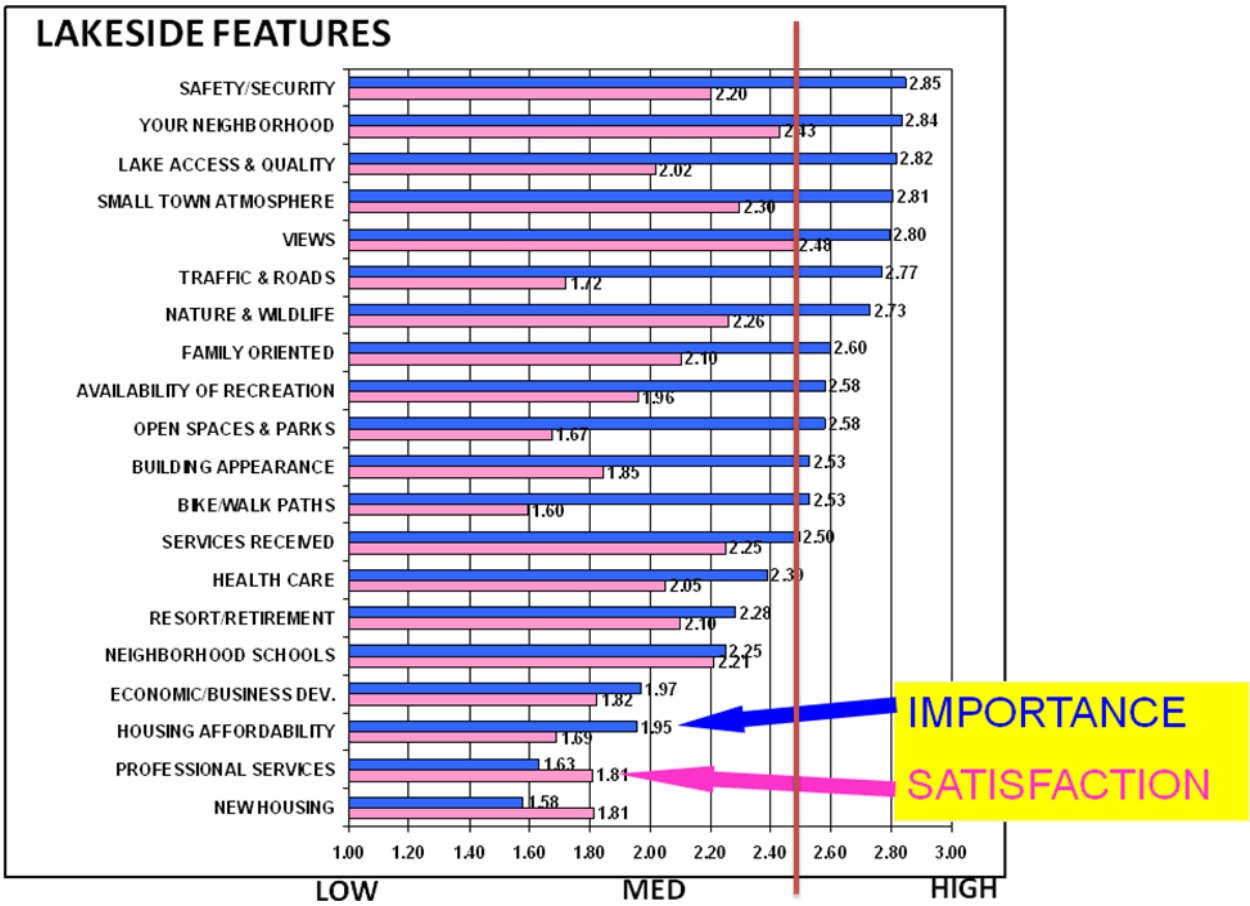

Table 3-1: 2008 Lakeside Community Survey: Importance/Satisfaction of 20 Lakeside Features

The above ranking list displays all features from highest to lowest importance to the respondents.

Of interest in the above ranking list, is to analyze the features' ratings from the perspective of the gap between the importance rating and the satisfaction rating; i.e., the feature is of high importance to the respondent but the respondent has a low satisfaction with the feature (see Table 3-2). These are potential action items to be considered in implementation strategies in the Neighborhood Plan, acknowledging that Lakeside Community or its Community Council may have limited or no control over some areas.

The ranking list below shows the features with the largest gaps between importance rating and satisfaction rating.

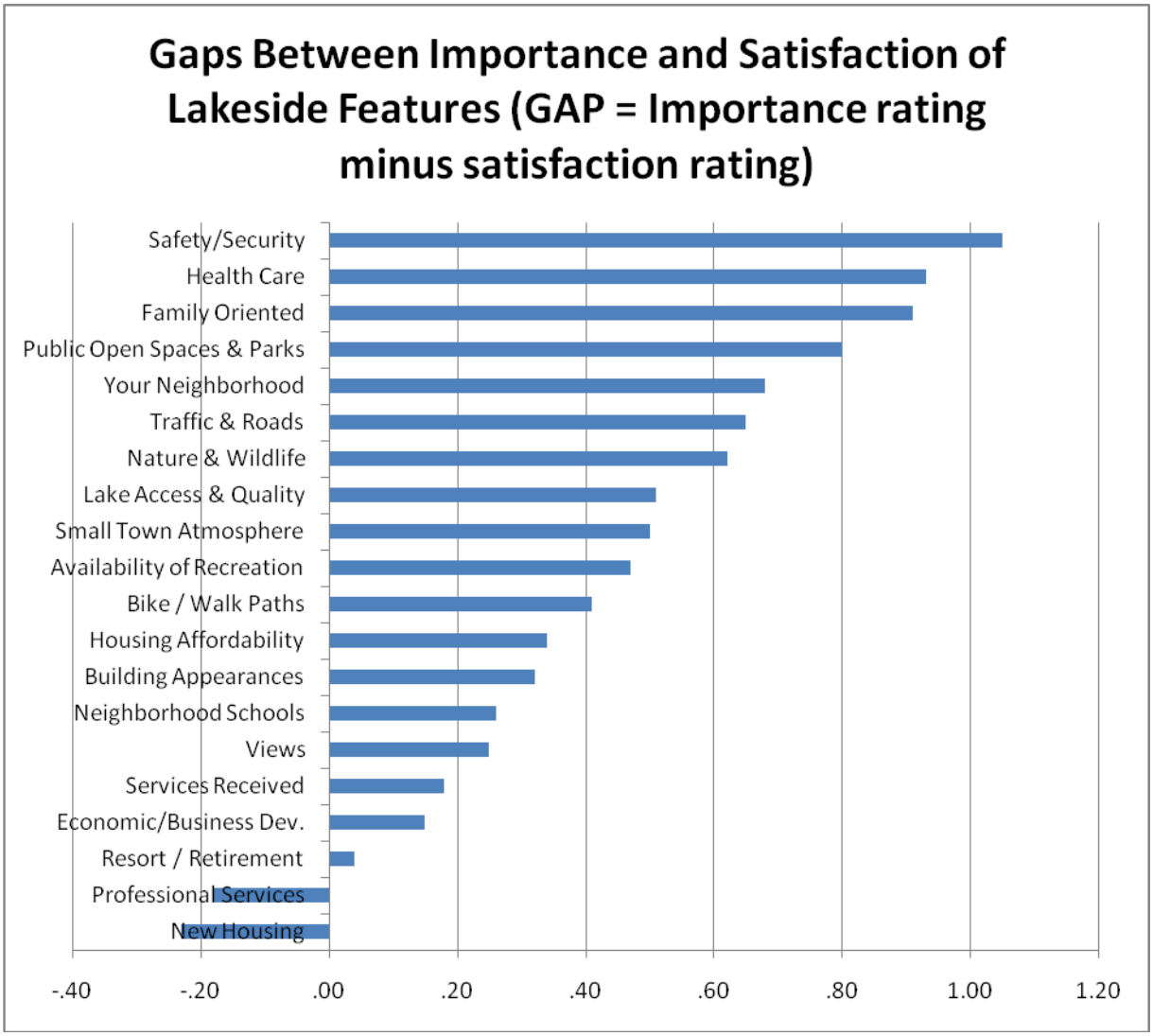

Table 3-2: 2008 Lakeside Community Survey: Features with Gaps Between Importance and Satisfaction Ratings

Respondents were also asked to identify the top 3 features most important to them of the 20 features listed. The chart below shows the percent of respondents listing the feature in their top three (see Table 3-3).

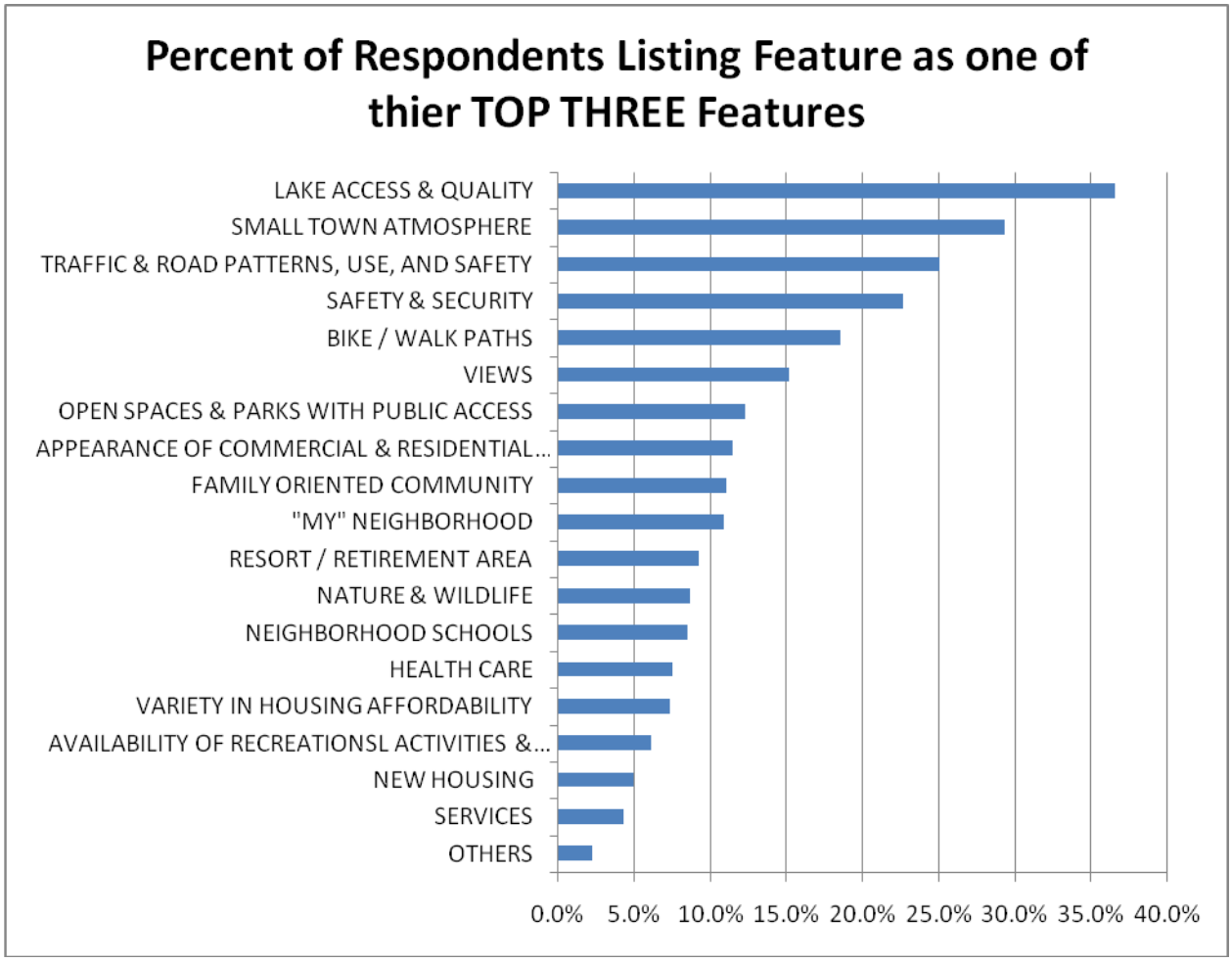

Table 3-3: 2008 Lakeside Community Survey: Top Three Features of Lakeside

3.3 Analysis

The survey contained three different questions from which to draw conclusions on what is most important to the Lakeside Community. The responses that recived the highest rankings where considered in the drafting of the vision statement.

- The imporance rating of the 20 features of Lakeside.
- The identification of respondents' top 3 most important features
- The size of the gap between the importance and satisfaction ratings for each feature

Features which rank medium to high on all three or on two of the three ranking charts were chosen to be part of the community vision statement. The following features rank within the top twelve (12) features on all three ranking lists:

- Safety & Security
- Lake Access and Quality
- Small Town Atmosphere
- Traffic & Road Patterns, Use & Safety
- Family Oriented Community
- Open Spaces and Parks

- “My” Neighborhood
- Bike / Walk Paths

The features below rank within the top twelve (12) features on two of the three ranking lists:

- Views
- Appearance of Commercial & Residential Buildings
- Nature & Wildlife
- Availabiltiy of Recreational Activity

Chapter 4 Lakeside Community Demographics & Characteristics

This chapter of the plan compares demographic data from the 2000 U.S. census to demographic data collected from the 2008 Community Survey, where possible, to draw observations and conclusions about how the community has changed during the past few years.

4.1 Demographics & Characteristics – 2000 U.S. Census

The latest United States Census was conducted in 2000. Lakeside (zip code 59922), is currently classified as a Census Designated Place (CDP) within Flathead County. CDPs are delineated by the U.S. Census Bureau to provide data for settled concentrations of population that are identifiable by name but are not incorporated. A map depicting the CDP and Census data from 2000 for the Lakeside CDP is below (see Figure 4.1 and table 4.1). Note that the CDP is geographically slightly smaller than the area within Lakeside planning boundaries; however the Census CDP covers the most concentrated areas and therefore most of the population within the Lakeside planning area.

Lakeside CDP, Montana - Reference Map - American FactFinder http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/MapItDrawServlet?geo_id=16000U...

Figure 4-1: Geographic area covered by the 2000 Census CDP: 7 miles across

Census 2000 Demographic Profile Highlights: CDP 59922			
General Characteristics	Number	Percent	U.S.
Total population	1,955		
Male	963	49.3	49.10%
Female	992	50.7	50.90%
Median age (years)	45.1	(X)	35.3
Under 5 years	119	6.1	6.80%
18 years and over	1,519	77.7	74.30%
65 years and over	363	18.6	12.40%
One race	1,944	99.4	97.60%
White	1,916	98	75.10%
Black or African American	1	0.1	12.30%
American Indian and Alaska Native	12	0.6	0.90%
Asian	7	0.4	3.60%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	3	0.2	0.10%
Some other race	5	0.3	5.50%
Two or more races	11	0.6	2.40%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	20	1	12.50%
Household population	1,954	99.9	97.20%
Group quarters population	1	0.1	2.80%
Average household size	2.37	(X)	2.59
Average family size	2.75	(X)	3.14
Total housing units	1,181		
Occupied housing units	826	69.9	91.00%
Owner-occupied housing units	655	79.3	66.20%
Renter-occupied housing units	171	20.7	33.80%
Vacant housing units	355	30.1	9.00%
Table continues on next page			

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Social Characteristics	**Number**	**Percent**	**U.S.**
Population 25 years and over	1,405		
High school graduate or higher	1,312	93.4	80.40%
Bachelor's degree or higher	438	31.2	24.40%
Civilian veterans (civilian population 18 years and over)	260	17.4	12.70%
Disability status (population 5 years and over)	220	12	19.30%
Foreign born	93	4.8	11.10%
Male, Now married, except separated (population 15 years and over)	506	68.2	56.70%
Female, Now married, except separated (population 15 years and over)	565	67.2	52.10%
Speak a language other than English at home (population 5 years and over)	65	3.6	17.90%
Economic Characteristics	**Number**	**Percent**	**U.S.**
In labor force (population 16 years and over)	821	52.1	63.90%
Mean travel time to work in minutes (workers 16 years and older)	29.6	(X)	25.5
Median household income in 1999 (dollars)	36,458	(X)	41,994
Median family income in 1999 (dollars)	43,462	(X)	50,046
Per capita income in 1999 (dollars)	20,401	(X)	21,587
Families below poverty level	69	11.8	9.20%
Individuals below poverty level	301	15.6	12.40%
Housing Characteristics	**Number**	**Percent**	**U.S.**
Single-family owner-occupied homes	471		
Median value (dollars)	161,700	(X)	119,600
Median of selected monthly owner costs	(X)	(X)	
With a mortgage (dollars)	868	(X)	1,088
Not mortgaged (dollars)	296	(X)	295
(X) Not applicable.			
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Summary File 1 (SF 1) and Summary File 3 (SF 3)			

Table 4-1: 2000 Census Data for Lakeside Census CDP

4.2 Demographics & Characteristics – 2008 Community Survey

The 2000 Census data is 8 over years old and many changes have occurred in the Community since that time. The 2008 Community Survey had a 31.7% return (very high for these types of surveys according to statistical standards). The Committee strongly feels that the survey responses are representative of the community. A total of 2053 surveys were distributed, 650 were returned representing 1494 people and 650 households. The survey return rate was 31.7%. This sub-chapter presents demographic and community characteristic data collected from the 2008 survey and compares it to the 2000 Census data, where possible.

Some statistics presented in this sub-chapter are broken down by "local," which refers to survey respondents who indicated they own or rent in the Lakeside community year-round; versus "non-local" which refers to property owners or respondents who indicated that they do not live in the Lakeside Community full time (see Figure 4-2). "Non-local" includes part-time residents, vacation property owners, absentee owners of rental or undeveloped property, or any other situation where owners reside in Lakeside less than12 months per year. The response between local and non-local was statistically insignificant in most circumstances.

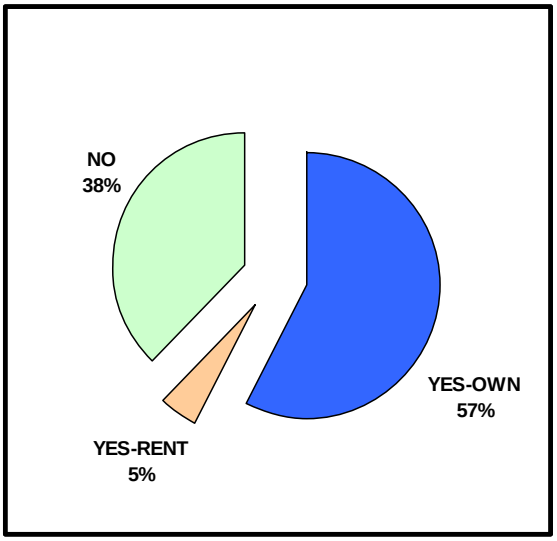


Figure 4-2 Year-round residence in Lakeside – Local versus Non-Local

Since the 2000 Census, age demographics may have changed. The median age from the 2000 census was 45.1; from the Community Survey, median age is 52. The chart below shows other aspects for "Local", "Non-local" and combined (see Table 4-2). The mandatory nature of the census and the voluntary nature of the survey may make comparisons difficult.

	Combined	Local	Non-local
Households	650	403	246
Adults 18 & over	1267	753	521
Children < 18	221	161	60
Adult Avg Age	54.09	54.22	53.88
Adults/household	1.97	1.87	2.13
Households with children	115 (18%)	83 (21%)	32 (13%)
Children/household	.34	.40	.25

Table 4-2: 2008 Lakeside Community Survey – Demographic Summary.

The survey revealed the following:

- Sixty-two percent (62%) of survey respondents are between the ages of 45 and 74.
- 13% are school age with 7% elementary school age and 6% middle or high school age (see Figure 4-3).
- Population under 5 years of age is 2% in the 2008 Community Survey, versus 6.1% in the 2000 Census.
- Population ages 18 and older is 86% in the 2008 Community Survey, versus 77.7% in the 2000 Census.
- Population 65 and older is 22% in the 2008 Community Survey, versus 18.6% in the 2000 Census.
- Additional comparison of age groupings between the 2000 Census and the 2008 Community Survey is included in Appendix E.

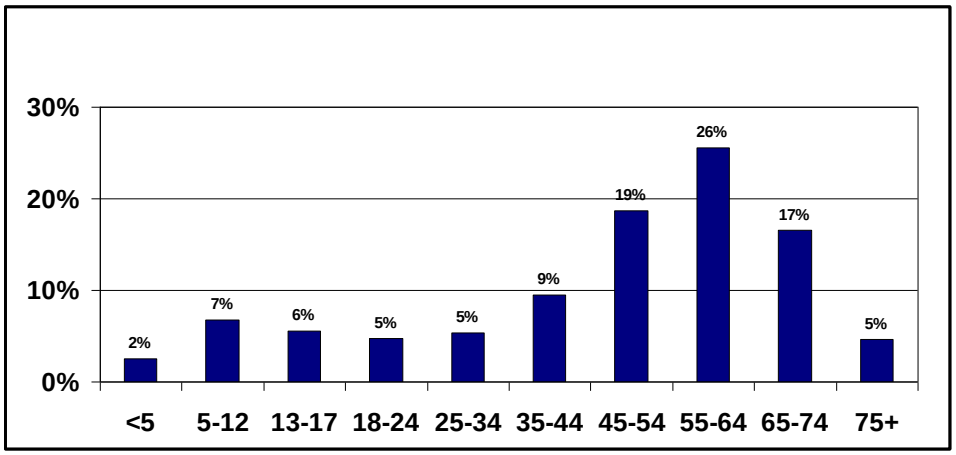


Figure 4-3: 2008 Lakeside Community Survey – Age Distribution

There is a distinct grouping in the older age categories. From the 2008 Community Survey, 47% of the population is represented by respondents who are over 54 years of age, while 38% are 18-54, and only 15% are under 18.

Housing in the community is heavily skewed to single family dwellings (see Figure 4-4).

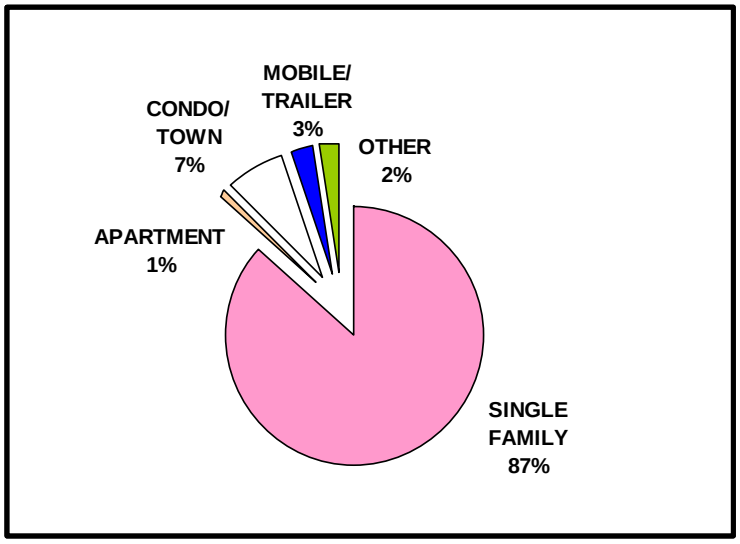


Figure 4-4: 2008 Lakeside Community Survey – Type of Residence

The following table shows that a large percentage of the responding adults are not working or did not respond to the question (see Table 4-3). This seems in line with the older age distribution.

	Combined	Local	Non-local
Working in Lakeside	168 (13%)	163 (22%)	5 (1%)
Working Outside Lakeside	417 (33%)	273 (36%)	144 (28%)
Not working or No Response	682 (54%)	317 (42%)	363 (71%)

Table 4-3: 2008 Lakeside Neighborhood Survey – Working Adults

The following table show differences in the reasons why respondents have property in Lakeside. Quality of Life is high in all cases (see Table 4-4). Multiple responses were possible. "Other" responses mostly fell within "inherited" or "investment" reasons.

	Combined	Local	Non-local
Job or Work	19%	28%	4%
Quality of Life	63%	61%	66%
Personal	21%	21%	22%
Retired	25%	28%	20%
Other	19%	14%	27%

Table 4-4: 2008 Lakeside Neighborhood Survey – Why Property in Lakeside

The following charts from 2008 Community Survey results show differences between "local" and "non-local" property owners or residents regarding the number of years they have owned property in or lived in the Community (see Figures 4-5, 4-6). Both categories show a high percentage of ownership or residence of over 25 years in the area. Also of interest is the 1-3 year category of "non-local" is almost double the 1-3year of "local." This possibly indicates interest in Lakeside that parallels recent peaks in real estate for second homes or investment.

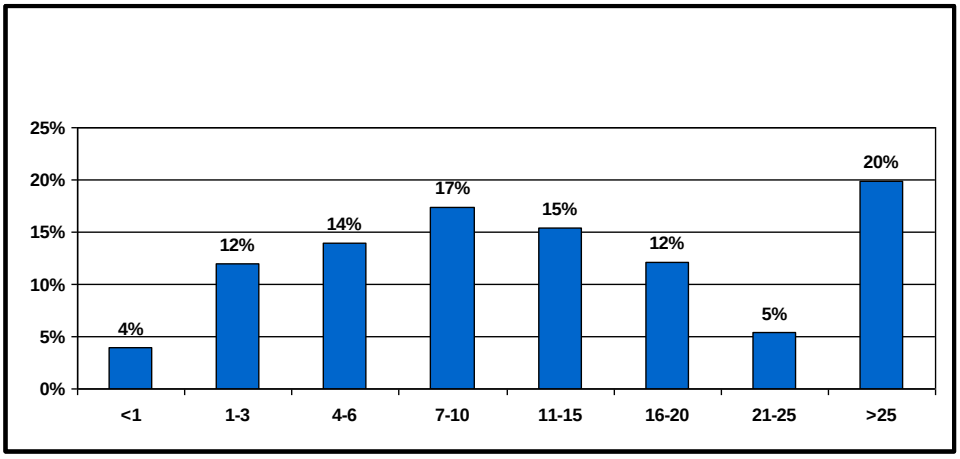


Figure 4-5: 2008 Lakeside Community Survey – Local – Number of years in Lakeside.

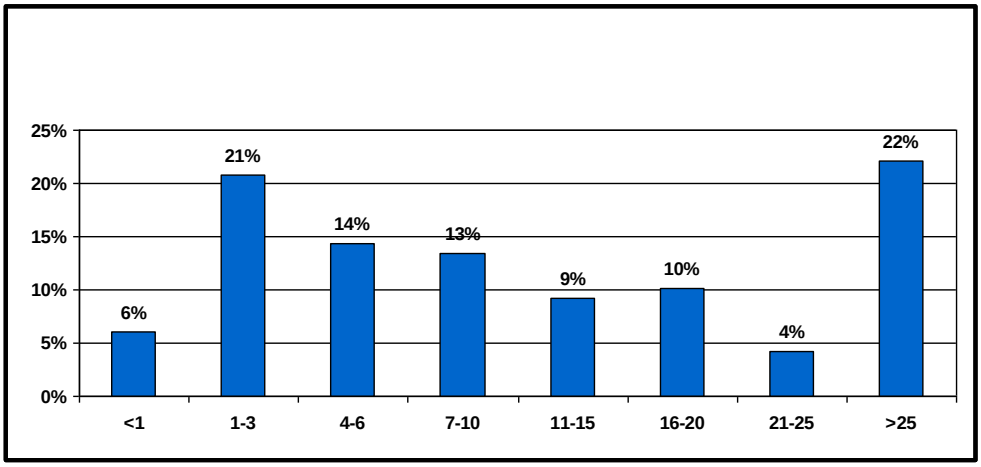


Figure 4-6: 2008 Lakeside Community Survey – Non-Local – Number of years in Lakeside.

The following chart shows where the survey respondent's property or residence is located within the Community boundaries (see Figure 4-7).

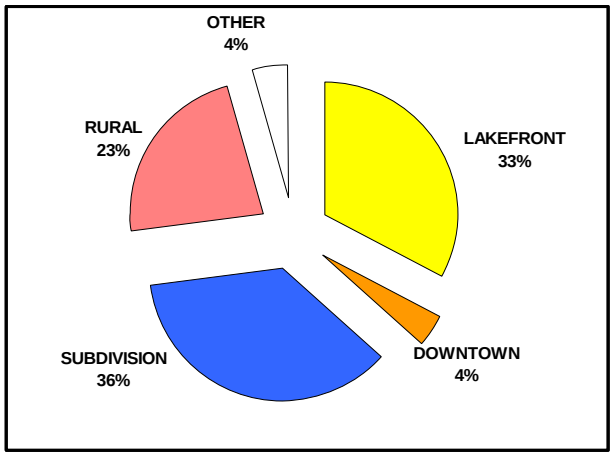


Figure 4-7: 2008 Lakeside Community Survey – Location of Property

The following chart identifies the prior residence of "locals" or the current other residence of "non-locals"(see Figure 4-8). The primary states identified for those marking "Other State" were California (30%), and Washington (13%); no other states were mentioned a significant number of times.

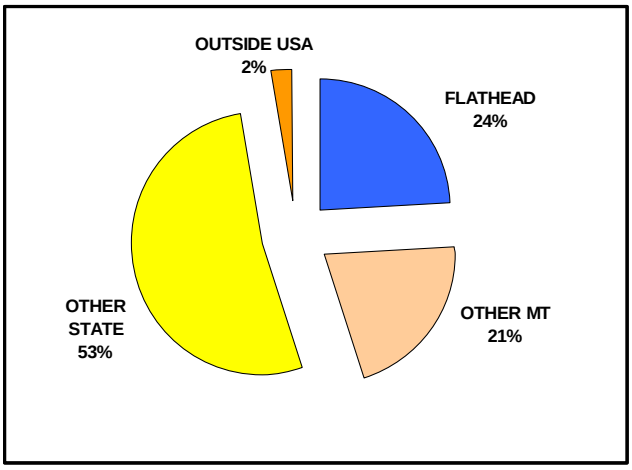


Figure 4-8: 2008 Lakeside Community Survey – Prior or Other Current Residence

When asked to identify their mode of transport while in the Community, "locals" and "non-locals" responded as shown in Figure 4-9 below. Note that respondents could mark more than one answer; instructions were to mark all that apply. Differences between responses of "local" versus "non-local" are insignificant. The results support the need for walk/bike paths, trails & sidewalks within the Community.

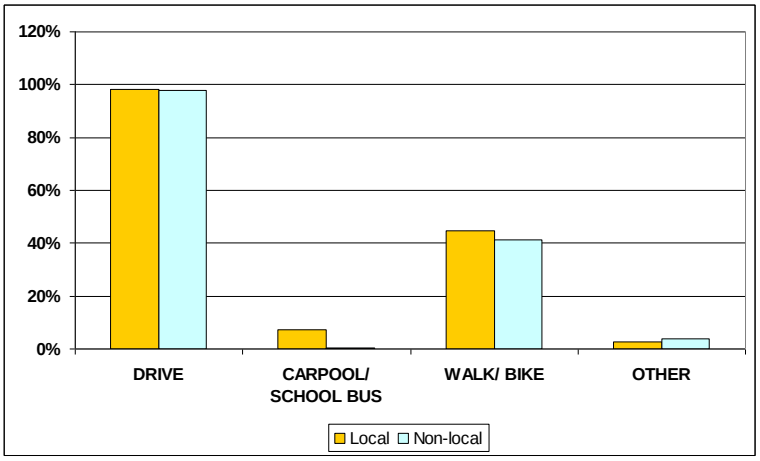


Figure 4-9: 2008 Lakeside Community Survey – Travel Mode in Lakeside

4.3 Observations & Conclusions

- Survey responses indicate that the majority of property owners or residents (62%) reside in the Community year-round. Therefore, it makes sense that local issues were important to survey respondents. These issues include traffic safety, lake access, protection of views, need for bike/walk paths, stronger representation on issues that affect the community, etc.
- Age distribution has changed since the 2000 survey. Striking in this comparison is that, even though the 2000 Census covered a smaller geographic area, younger population seems to have declined when comparing the 2000 Census and the 2008 Community Survey (see Table 4-5). Younger population up to age 44 has decreased while older

population between 45 and 74 has significantly increased. The median age has increased by 7 years from 45.1 in 2000 to 52 in 2008.

Age Group	2000 Census Percent of Population	2008 Lakeside Community Survey Percent of Population	Increase or Decrease
<5	6.1	2.0	-3.9
5-24	19.9	18.0	-1.9
25-34	9.3	5.0	-4.3
35-44	14.4	9.0	-3.6
45-54	17.2	19.0	+1.8
55-64	14.5	26.0	+11.5
65-74	10.8	17.0	+6.2
75+	7.8	5.0	-2.8

Table 4-5: Comparison of Age Distribution – 2000 Census versus 2008 Community Survey Results (See additional details in Appendix C & E)

- Almost half of the respondents to the 2008 Survey are 55 or older and 28% of "local" respondents indicated they are retired. Typical is the location being selected as a retirement location – the place to spend "the rest of our lives". Hence, the highest response to "why I moved/bought here" was "quality of life" (63% of respondents). And of great importance to respondents are views, nature and wildlife, lake access and quality, and availability of recreation.
- There are differences in the base audience for the 2000 Census and the 2008 Lakeside Community Survey. A more consistent comparison will be to compare the 2000 Census results to the 2010 Census results for the Lakeside CDP. This Neighborhood Plan is supposed to be reevaluated every 5 years. The next review of the plan will have a better base for comparison of demographics, growth, and other parameters using Census results from 2000 and 2010.
- Repetition of a Community Survey, if it is determined that a Plan revision is needed at some point in the future, would provide additional data to compare to Census data and to compare to the 2008 Lakeside Community Survey. This Plan recommends that both the 2010 Census results and a Community Survey be used in the next revision of the plan. The recent decline in the general economy and the uncertainty of the timing of recovery may yield some unexpected changes in the demographics of the Community. The comparison of Census data between 2000 and 2010, and between survey data from 2008 and comparable data collected in the future, may yield some changes in the community's demographics.

Chapter 5 Existing Conditions, Issues & Opportunities, Goals & Policies, Implementation Strategies

This chapter is intended to provide a current picture of the existing conditions within the community. Topics discussed were selected through the survey or through interviews. Each aspect or service is examined by describing the existing situation and conditions and identifying potential issues or opportunities related to that aspect or service. For each aspect or service, this chapter then states Goals & Policies and then proposes Implementation Strategies for achieving the Goals. Implementation Strategies are considered action items to implement the 2009 Neighborhood Plan.

Sources for the information presented in this chapter include extensive website research for statistics, results from the 2008 Community Survey conducted by the Committee, results from an extensive Housing Survey involving personal interviews with local developers, real estate organizations, and financial institutions or businesses, and extensive interviews and reviews with persons responsible for or involved with a particular aspect of or service to the Community.

5.1 Commerce

As of the end of 2008, the national economy had experienced a significant downturn that has impacted individuals, families and business across the entire country, including Lakeside Community. In addition to this situation, there is insufficient data available to accurately quantify any dollar related statistics for the specific Lakeside Community.

This sub-chapter focuses on commercial enterprises and on the desires of the community regarding accessibility, look and feel of business/commerce enterprises and the downtown area. Sources of information include:

1. 2008 Community Survey results
2. Lakeside – Somers Chamber of Commerce
3. Input from individuals and enterprises within the Lakeside community obtained via questionnaire or in-person interview.

For clarification, the term "commercial enterprise" in this sub-chapter refers to any business, organization, or private/individual enterprise within the boundaries of the Lakeside Community.

5.1.1 Existing Conditions

5.1.1.1 *Existing Commercial Enterprises in Lakeside*

The chart below depicts the various types of commercial, public, non-profit, professional or other enterprises located within the Lakeside Neighborhood boundaries (see Figure 5-1). The list of organizations or enterprises was obtained via the membership list of the Lakeside/Somers Chamber of Commerce and by identifying other businesses or organizations by "drive around" trips or from input by Committee members. This plan does not purport that every business or enterprise was identified and included, but those included are deemed representative of commercial enterprises in Lakeside.

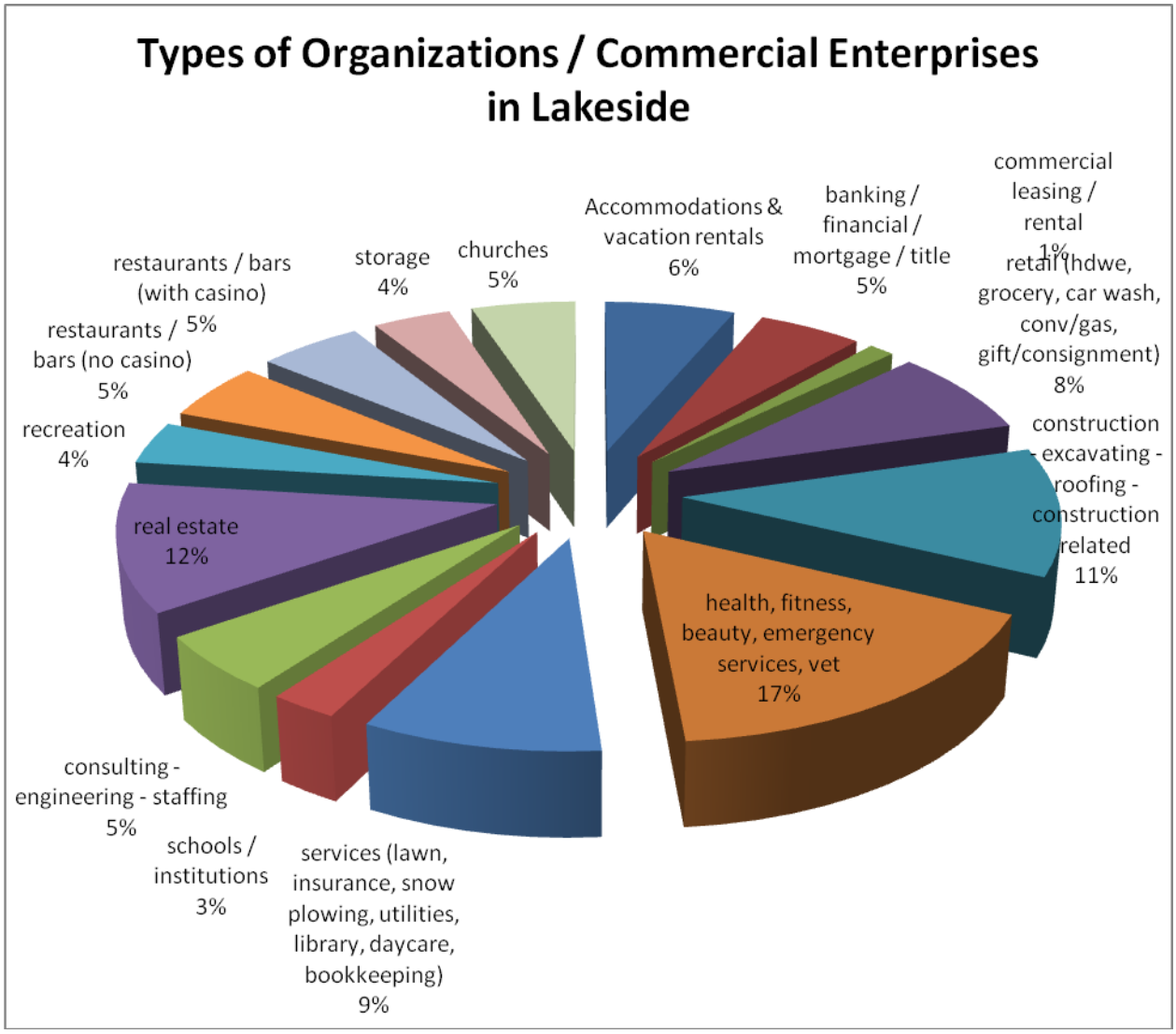


Figure 5-1: Commercial enterprises located within the Lakeside community boundaries - a "snapshot" as of the fall of 2008. In total 77 enterprises were identified.

With 17% of the total composition of enterprises, health related services is the largest component in the Lakeside community. Health related survicesincludedoctors, dentists, chiropractors, physical therapy, fitness centers, beauty services and veterinary services. These enterprises serve locals and visitors alike, with a fairly steady level of traffic in all seasons.

5.1.1.2 *Combination of Resort/Seasonal and Year-Round Community*

Lakeside is a seasonal resort destination. Some residences and lodging accomodations are second homes or properties rented to summer visitors. The RV/campground/motel enterprise, only open in the summer, is usually full. Of the 5 enterprises included in the accommodations/lodging category, two are only open for the busy summer season and a third indicated that 2/3's of the enterprise's income is realized during that season.

5.1.1.3 *Use of Commercial Space and Community Perception of Need for Commercial*

There is a significant amount of vacant commerical space in the Lakeside Community, some of which has been vacant for well over a year. A local real estate professional estimated 31,000 square feet of vacant space in the downtown district. Marco Heights II, a subdivision at the intersection of Highway 93 and Deer Creek Road, was recently approved for additional commercial/professional space. Close to this same intersection on Highway 93, another commercial use property is under development expected to be finished by summer's end in 2009..

Given the amount of vacant space in the downtown area, the Committee included a question in the 2008 Community Survey asking respondents to rate how much they would use or frequent various types of business if already located in or could be located in the Community. A list of 27 types of businesses were provided and respondents wereasked to rate how often they would frequent them if located in Lakeside:

- Never (0)
- Sometimes (1)
- Once every couple of months (2)
- As much as weekly (3)

The chart below shows the average of all responses for each type of business (see Figure 5-1). Any business that relies on local year-round customers with an average response lower than 2.0, might incur difficulty due to lack of support from the Community. Only grocery and hardware received ratings greater than 2.0. Pharmacy, Fast Food, and Sports Facility were the next three commercial enterprises of interest to survey respondents. Though "restaurants" were not included in the list, a significant number of respondents wrote "restaurants" in the "other" category.

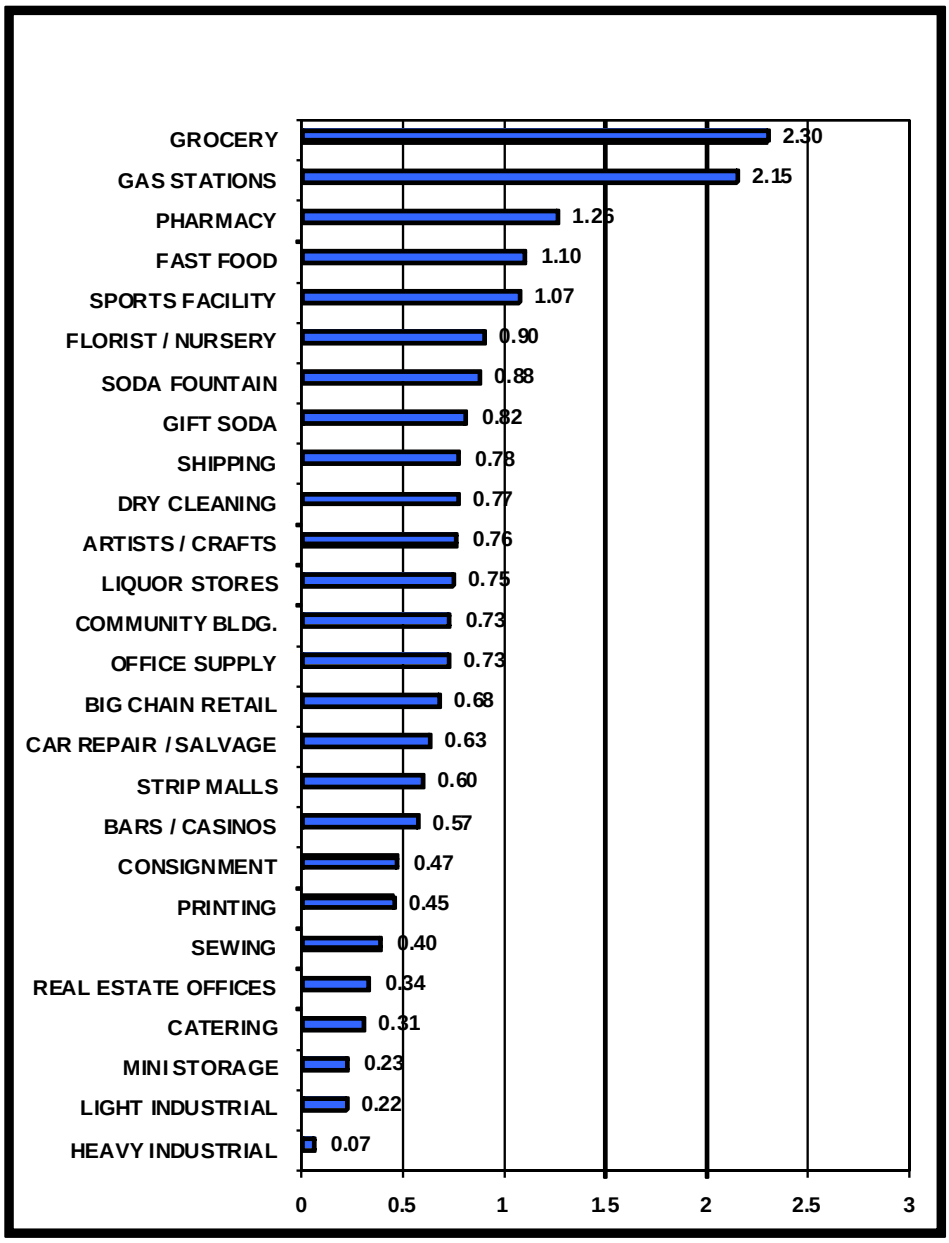


Figure 5-2: 2008 Lakeside Neighborhood Survey– Use of Lakeside Businesses

5.1.1.4 *Supporting the Community by Spending Dollars Locally*

In another part of the survey, respondents were asked to "agree" or "disagree" that community support should be demonstrated by spending locally in commercial businesses within the community. The following chart shows that 63% agree the community should support local Lakeside businesses and 23% disagree (see Figure 5-3). There appears to be conflict between the high support for spending locally shown below and the low show of support for various types of businesses above.

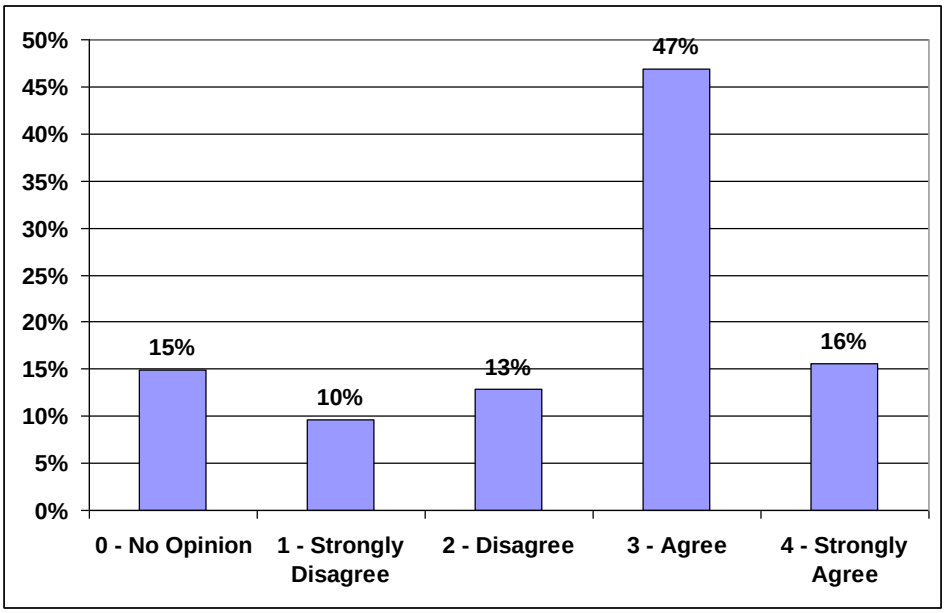


Figure 5-3: 2008 Lakeside Neighborhood Survey - Should the community support Lakeside business by spending dollars locally.

The top reasons given for not shopping locally in Lakeside were:

- Price or limited selection
- Shopping is more convenient in Kalispell (survey respondents work or go there often anyway; and it's only 12 miles away). Note that the survey was before the spike in gasoline. Future surveys may reveal different data.

5.1.1.5 *Community Views on Commercial Appearance and Development Guidelines*

Other questions in the 2008 Community Survey highlighted other desires of the community regarding how future commercial development should occour. Questions in the survey focused on infrastrcutre and appearance. In general, respondents ranked the importance of economic and business development as medium (avg. 2.0) and the satisfaction with economic and business development as medium (avg. 1.8). Respondents ranked the importance of the appearance of commercial and residential buildings as medium to high (avg. 2.5) and current satisfaction with this issue as medium (avg. 1.9). Other aspects of commercial enterprises that were rated by respondents are listed in the chart below (see Figure 5-4). Respondents were asked to choose from: 0 = no opinion; 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Agree; 4 = Strongly Agree

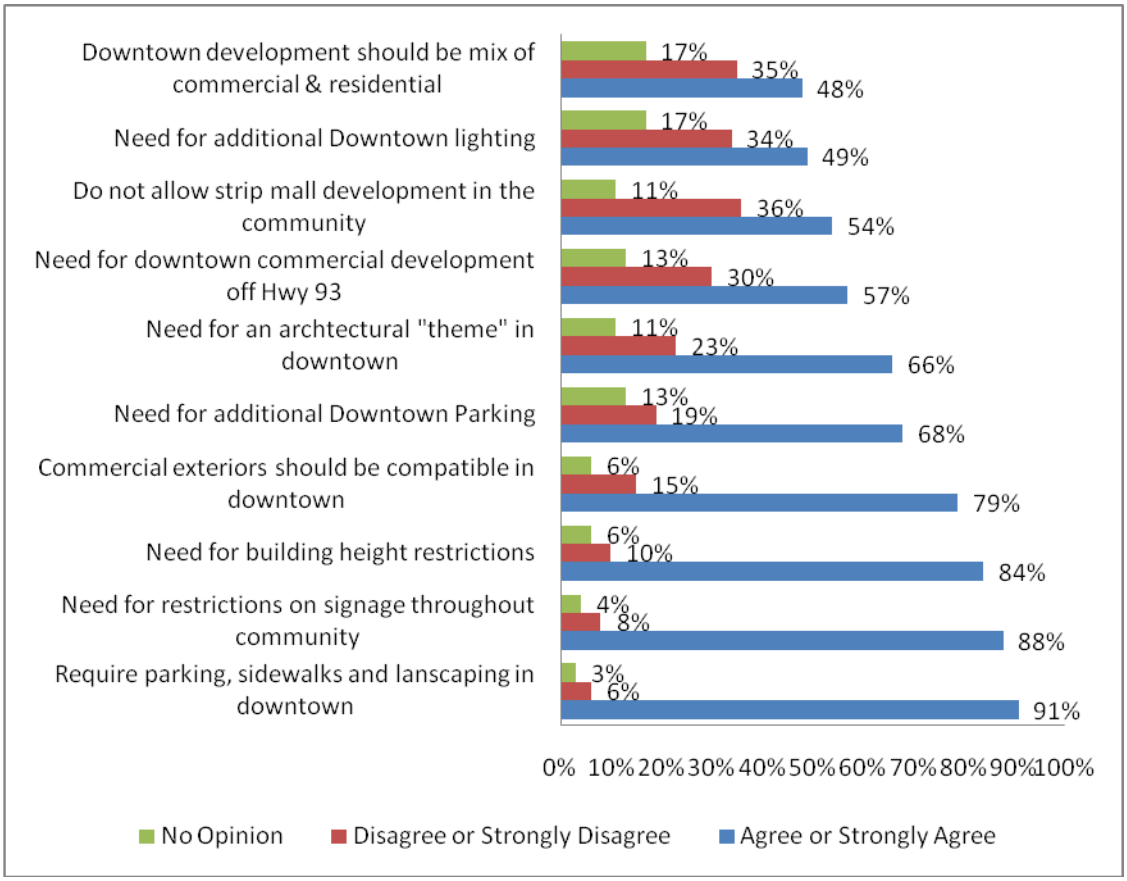


Figure 5-4: Types of businesses that may be supported locally.

Any of the above items registering over 50% agreement should be considered for follow-up action. Additional lighting in the downtown area received support from 49% of survey respondents and a significant number of free form comments from the survey mentioned additional lighting in the downtown area, but with the caveat that "dark skies principles" were important. "Dark skies" guidelines are discussed in more detail in chapter 6.5 under Community Actions.

In Chapter 2 Land Uses, the Growth Policy states:

> *Commercial land uses can be characterized by location and impact. If left to the business owner, location would be a function of the cheapest land with the best visibility and accessibility. Large signs, brightly colored aluminum buildings, pavement from lot line to lot line and direct highway access has been the trend along state highways. The downside to such commercial development is the impact on the surroundings. Large, bright signs are not only potentially out of character with the surrounding community but are also a potential safety risk as motorists are distracted from driving. Voluminous buildings lining a road can quickly change a pleasant rural commute into a journey through a commercial canyon. Large parking areas with no landscaped islands can prevent rain water from soaking into the ground, creating an environmental problem as well as a safety problem when waters collect and flood roads and buildings. Dozens of adjacent businesses with direct road access can create a safety issue as motorists are forced to contend with numerous merging and braking cars in high speed areas. Commercial development does not have to create this series of problems.*

Through the 2008 Community Survey, Lakeside residents and property owners have made clear their wish to preserve the small town atmosphere, rural scenic views, habitat for wildlife, and the scenic corridor along Highway 93; no "*journey through a commercial canyon*" north or south of downtown Lakeside. In addition, the survey clearly demonstrated the community does wish to have a say in their destiny and in development that may impact the nature and character of the community.

5.1.2 Issues & Opportunities

1. **ISSUE:** Even though there is plenty of vacant commercial space in downtown Lakeside or in areas immediately surrounding the downtown, commercial development can and is occurring outside downtown Lakeside in unzoned areas, especially at the intersection of Deer Creek Road and Highway 93.
2. **ISSUE AND OPPORTUNITY:** There is more commercial space in Lakeside than there is demand.
3. **ISSUE:** Lakeside is not a "self-sustaining" (all services available locally) Community. Currently, survey respondents are perfectly willing to drive to Kalispell for services or commercial enterprises not available in the Community.
4. **ISSUE AND OPPORTUNITY:** Lakeside is both a resort-seasonal destination and a year-round Community, attracting many visitors in the summer season, and to a lesser degree, in the winter season for winter sports.
5. **OPPORTUNITY:** The community identified areas for improvement in the downtown area and supported some development restrictions such as building height & signage, parking, sidewalks, landscaping, general appearance.
6. **OPPORTUNITY:** The community supports additional pedestrian-safe infrastructure in the town center.
7. **OPPORTUNITY:** The community supports actions to improve the appearance in downtown Lakeside.

5.1.3 Goals & Policies

GOAL 1. Preserve the rural nature of the community north and south of downtown Lakeside along the Highway 93 Scenic Corridor.

Policy 1.1. Discourage any further commercial development along Highway 93 north or south of the downtown Lakeside area.

GOAL 2. Create an attractive, safe, and vibrant town center for business, residents, property owners and visitors.

Policy 2.1. Encourage general commercial development inside the downtown district and off Highway 93.

Policy 2.2. Discourage general commercial development not supported by the Community.

Policy 2.3. Improve the appearance of the Town Center

Policy 2.4. Encourage general commercial development to include sufficient parking, sidewalks and landscaping.

Policy 2.5. Monitor conformance of signage to County standards for "scenic corridor" designation and report those in non-conformance

5.1.4 Implementation Strategies

5.1.4.1 *Community Council Actions*

1) In February 2009 this Plan Committee recommended that the Community Council establish a new committee to write a development plan for the Lakeside Town Center. The Council agreed and established the Lakeside Town Center Planning Committee headed by Brent Hall, a Councilman on the Community Council.

   This Town Center Planning Committee is charged with:

   A) Drafting a detailed land use plan for the Town Center that encourages a viable and vibrant community for Lakeside businesses, residents, property owners, and visitors. It should address at a minimum:

      I) Road connectivity: A logical network of roads should be defined as a goal to work toward. This will probably entail crossing private land, so creative approaches need to be identified to encourage landowner participation. Creative approaches are needed to encourage developers to contribute to achieving the road connectivity plan.

      II) Bike/Walk paths: A plan for sidewalks, crosswalks and paths within Lakeside should be developed to facilitate safe and enjoyable pedestrian traffic. This plan should be coordinated with the County Paths project.

      III) Expanding commercial focus off Highway 93: Major traffic draws such as the Post Office should be relocated. An alternative commercial center off Highway 93 should be developed.

      IV) Parking: More convenient parking is needed off Highway 93 to support community safety and business success. Due to the proximity of the lake, aggressive mitigation of runoff from parking areas is required.

      V) Appearance: The feasibility of a common architectural design theme should be explored. Landscaping using native vegetation and zeroscaping techniques should be encouraged to improve appearance and help control runoff. Lighting should be evaluated

      VI) Business promotion: Ideas are needed to make downtown businesses more successful. Empty business buildings need to be filled.

   B) Overseeing the adoption of the Town Center Plan as a part of the Lakeside Neighborhood Plan and the Flathead County Growth Policy

   C) Overseeing the implementation of the recommendations in the Town Center Plan

   D) The Neighborhood Plan Committee will make all data they have gathered available to the Town Center Planning Committee and support this committee in any way needed.

5.1.4.2 *Regulatory Recommendations*

1) This Neighborhood Plan strongly recommends that future "general commercial" development be focused in the downtown area." "Neighborhood commercial", (small in scale and compatible with the neighborhood in which it resides), is acceptable anywhere in the plan area except along Highway 93. The intent is:

   A) to provide safe access to commercial enterprises,

   B) to preserve the beauty, rural nature, and views along Highway 93 north and south of Lakeside Town Center, and

   C) to not create a "*journey through a commercial canyon*" along Highway 93.

2) Consider amending zoning regulations to include landscape and parking plans for new and retrofitted development which incorporate the following:

   A) Separation of pedestrian infrastructure from the roadway, especially Highway 93.

   B) Utilize boulevard trees as close to the Highway 93 rights of way as possible as a method to soften the roadway to encourage slower traffic speeds.

   C) Limit ingress and egress to Highway 93 as much as possible and define those points with curbs, gutters and landscaping.

   D) When possible, avoid placing parking at the front of a business to avoid a "strip" appearance. Parking is encouraged to be at the side of the structure with the structure placed close to the front setback when feasible.

   E) See Appendix H for some renderings of attractive town center design considerations.

3) The Community Council should include these criteria in its review of development applications and consider implementation of this plan through land use regulations.

5.1.4.3 *Community Organization*

1) Lakeside citizens and members of the community council should report possible violations of the County Zoning Regulations for signage in the Lakeside neighborhood in writing to the Flathead County Planning and Zoning Office.

5.2 Roads & Highways

This sub-chapter will examine the current situation and some future plans with regard to roads and highways. Sources of information for this sub-chapter are:

A. Flathead County Road Department
B. Montana Department of Transportation (MDOT) officials and their website
C. 2008 Community Survey
D. Local Newspaper Articles
E. Interviews and conversations with local residents and other sources.

The Lakeside Neighborhood Plan area has a mix of roads that include:

- A federal highway maintained by the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT).
- Arterial roads maintained by Flathead County Road and Bridge Department.
- Local roads and subdivision roads, some maintained by Flathead County Road and Bridge Departments, and some maintained by private groups such as homeowner associations.

Meeting minutes from a 1994 meeting of the Neighborhood Plan Committee with various road officials stated:

- *"Larry Brazda, State Department of Transportation, discussed the status of the State Highway Programs for the Lakeside area. He reported that no upgrades of lighting, signs, roadway, or frontage roads were planned for the foreseeable future unless the funds for such activity were generated locally. A speed study may be possible in order to address the speeding issue through the Lakeside business community, however, quite often such studies indicate the need to increase speed limits based on prevailing speeds.*
- *Mark Pitman, Flathead County Road Department, addressed County road issues. He stated that his department had no plans for major road construction, reconstruction, or new pavement in the Lakeside area. He was having enough trouble keeping up with potholes, maintenance, and emphasized needs for citizens reporting road problems."*

Today, many of these issues still exist. However, since 1994 some improvements have been made:

- A traffic study was conducted on Highway 93 in downtown Lakeside.
- Some county roads have been paved in the planning area.
- The county has adopted new regulations for new roads which include a 24 foot paved driving surface.
- A Highway 93 speed study was conducted in downtown Lakeside (additional information under the Existing Conditions sub-chapter below).
- A few county roads were paved, maintenance on major roads continues, and new subdivisions are following the guidelines of the Minimum Standards for Design and Construction for the Flathead County Road Department (adopted 2007), which includes a 24 foot paved driving surface.

5.2.1 Existing Conditions

5.2.1.1 *2008 Community Survey Results.*

Response in the Community Survey rated the importance of traffic and roads very high, putting an emphasis on safety and security.

- Traffic & roads rated sixth highest in importance on the list of 20 features (2.77 out of possible 3.00) and had the highest gap between importance and satisfaction. In other words, respondents put high importance on the feature, but are the least satisfied with it.
- Safety and security rated highest in importance of all features. Though safety and security also relates to crime, most of the respondents clarified that their concern was with road and highway safety as opposed to crime.
- 89% of respondents indicated a medium to high concern with Highway 93. Comments indicated the concern was for both pedestrian and motorized access to Highway 93.
- 62% felt that state and county road maintenance is adequate.
- Moderate support is given to placing additional flashing lights at intersections along Highway 93 in the downtown area.

Driving remains the prime mode of transportation at 98% but there is a significant interest in bike and walk trails (44% of respondents), both for safety and for recreational reasons.

- Bike/Walk Paths is the 4th highest rated feature in importance.
- Bike/Walk Paths have the second largest gap between importance and satisfaction.

The community is somewhat satisfied with the condition and maintenance of roads with a high level of support for continued maintenance and improvements. Several respondents commented on the need for better dust control. Although the community has no real control over funds allocated for roads, continued emphasis by the Community Council with County or State officials will keep our community needs in the forefront.
Special concern was expressed regarding the intersection of Adams St. and Highway 93 and the need for better traffic control (stoplight, "push to walk" light, etc.). This road and intersection has both foot and motorized traffic to and from the Lakeside Elementary School before, during and after school hours. (See Figure 5-5).

Figure 5-5: Traffic on Adams Street at the end of the school day.

Crosswalks at Blacktail and Bierney Creek Roads were also a concern, especially in the summer months at Bierney Creek when adults and children walk to the swim area and motorists try to launch their boats. Finally, sidewalks and bike & walking paths were requested in the downtown area. Just in recent years, car/pedestrian accidents along Highway 93 in town have resulted in one pedestrian death attributed to the pedestrian being hit by a car. This occurred in downtown Lakeside.

5.2.1.2 *Highway 93*

US Highway 93 is the major transportation link for seasonal, part-time, and full-time residents of Lakeside connecting Lakeside to employment and retail services in Kalispell and beyond. In addition, there is significant traffic passing through downtown Lakeside, including trucks carrying goods north or south and vacationers in the Flathead area. MDT crash data on US 93 for Lakeside during the time period from January 1, 2002 to December 31, 2006 recorded a total of 25 vehicle crashes with no fatalities (see Figure 5-6).

The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) manages Highway 93 in the Lakeside Neighborhood Plan area. Their Mission Statement is: "*... to serve the public by providing a transportation system and services that emphasize quality, safety, cost effectiveness, economic vitality and sensitivity to the environment.*"

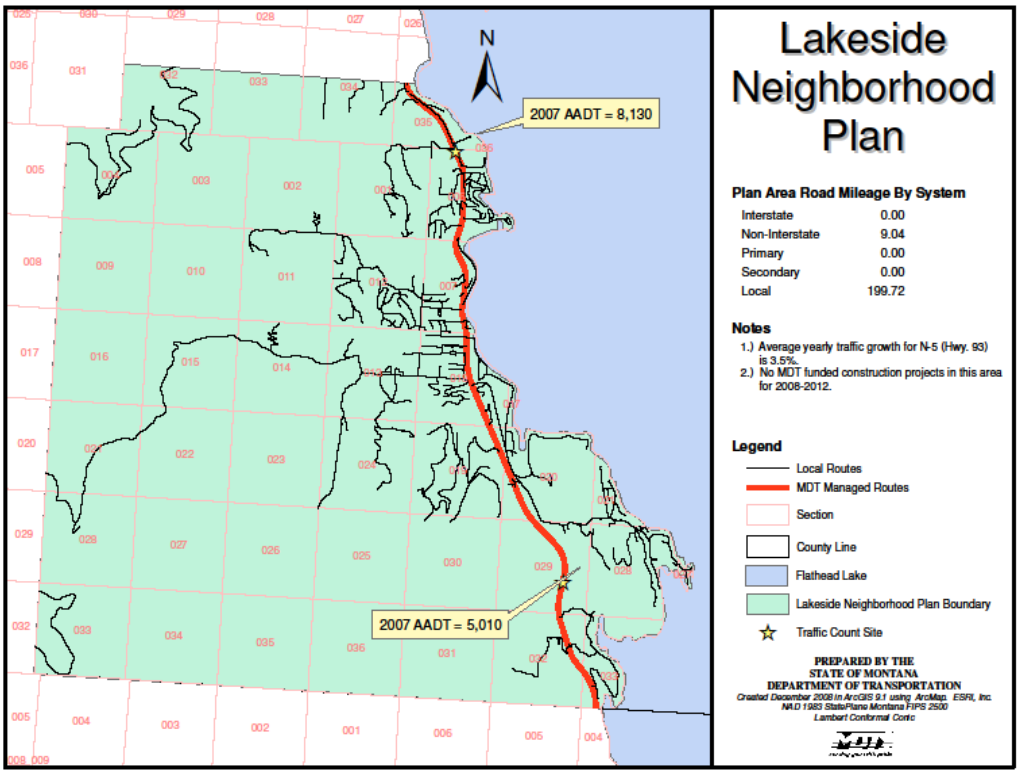


Figure 5-6: MDT map – Highway 93 is the only MDT managed route in the plan area, covering 9.04 miles from the Lake County boundary to Spring Creek Road.

MDT conducted a traffic count at 2 locations in the plan area in 2007. North of Lakeside, the daily count average was 8,130. South of Lakeside, the daily count average was 5,010. The difference of3,120 would be the number of daily trips to and from Lakeside. The map does not

specify what time of the year that count was conducted, but it is well known that traffic in the summer dramatically increases over traffic in other seasons. Average yearly growth rate on Highway 93 is 3.5 %. MDT has no funded construction projects for this section of highway from 2008-2012. According to their website, a project is scheduled for 2013 to install a left turn lane at Political Hill Road.

Additional information gathered shows that access roads onto Highway 93 are numerous.

- There are 19 access points to Highway 93 between Political Hill Road and the Lake County Line and the speed limit is 70 mph starting just north of Political Hill Road.
- There are 34 access points to Highway 93 between Blacktail Road and Bierney Creek Road (a distance of .4 miles in the Town Center) and the speed limit is 35 mph.
- There are 34 access points between Bierney Creek Road and Spring Creek Road (a distance of 2.7 miles), and the speed limit is 55 mph.

Some improvements on Highway 93 have been completed since 1994:

- A traffic study was completed in 1999 which resulted in extending the 45 mph speed limit both north and south of downtown Lakeside.
- South of town at the intersection of Highway 93 and Political Hill Road the no passing zone was extended and T-intersection warning signs for Political Hill Road were installed.
- Pedestrian crossing signs and striping were installed at Bierney Creek Road and fluorescent yellow-green school crossing signs were installed at Adams Street.
- A left-turn lane was installed at the entrance to Mission View Estates.
- Two light poles were placed at the north end of town and three were placed at the south end.
- The speed limit between Lakeside and Somers was reduced to 55 mph.
- White cross lines for bike/walk path were added on the west side of Highway 93 around Bierney Creek intersection and up the hill. However, walking or riding is still required directly on the highway.
- The speed limit south of Political Hill Rd and Highway 93 was changed from 65 to 70 in 2008.

In 2008, a “dummy” police car, complete with a light bar, gold star decal with the words “Lakeside Decoy” and a dummy police officer was donated by Sheriff Lucky Larsen of Lake County to a local resident couple, with the goal that the decoy would slow traffic and make drivers more aware of their speed. The "decoy" is funded by volunteer community donations and is strategically parked at various locations in the greater Lakeside-Somers area each day, not always in the Lakeside Neighborhood. The “decoy” was sanctioned by the Flathead County Sheriff’s department and appears to be accomplishing its mission in slowing traffic in the downtown area, especially those just driving through the area.

According to the MDT website, a 2013 project is scheduled for Lakeside, which is a left-turn lane at the Junction of Highway 93 and Political Hill Road. 2008 daily traffic count (see Table 5.4), has the number of vehicles using that intersection at 463 per day, which is substantial.

Daily traffic counts at Spring Creek Road in 2007 were charted at 416, which puts that intersection close to the same level as Political Hill. Deer Creek Road, with a daily traffic count of 176, is probably years away from being considered for a left turn lane. However, if commercial growth at that intersection continues, the traffic count will likely increase. Note that this Plan discourages further general commercial growth outside the downtown area (See sub-chapter 5.1 Commerce).

5.2.1.3 *County and Local Roads*

Flathead County Road and Bridge Department is under the direct control of the Flathead County Board of County Commissioners. The Road and Bridge Department is divided into three sections, with the Lakeside Neighborhood Plan area falling in the Southern section. Maintenance operations consist of snow plowing in the winter months, general road maintenance and major construction projects in the non-winter months. Monitoring traffic safety is a major concern. Some of the other areas of responsibility are encroachments for utility installations, approach encroachments, and road reviews for subdivisions.

The County Road Department is currently working on a process to determine which roads in Flathead County are of highest need for paving projects. Some of the information gathered for determination is connectivity, access to parks, lake and fishing access and traffic count. Generally speaking, if the daily traffic count falls between 400 and 500, then that road may be considered for paving. Table 5-1 below shows traffic counts for the last several years.

2008						
ROAD NAME	**COUNTER LOCATION**	**START DATE**	**END DATE**	**WKLY TOTAL**	**DAILY AVG**	**PVD/ OIL**
Adams St	W of Hwy 93	5/8/2008	5/14/2008	1,582	264	yes
Angel Point Rd	E of US 93	5/8/2008	5/14/2008	2,481	414	yes
Bierney Creek Rd	E of Grayling Rd	5/8/2008	5/14/2008	5,727	955	yes
Bierney Creek Rd	W of US 93	5/8/2008	5/14/2008	6,821	1,137	yes
Bills Rd	W of Brass Rd	5/8/2008	5/14/2008	339	57	yes
Bills Rd	W of US 93	5/8/2008	5/14/2008	838	140	yes
Blacktail Rd	W of Stoner Loop Rd	5/8/2008	5/14/2008	9,983	1,664	yes
Deer Creek Rd	W of US 93	5/8/2008	5/14/2008	1,054	176	no
Lakeside Blvd	N of Political Hill Rd	5/8/2008	5/14/2008	660	110	yes
Lakeside Blvd N	at US 93 n end	5/8/2008	5/14/2008	479	80	yes
Lakeside Blvd N	at US 93 s end	5/8/2008	5/14/2008	677	113	yes
N Juniper Bay Rd	E of US 93	5/8/2008	5/14/2008	882	147	yes
Political Hill	E of US 93	5/8/2008	5/14/2008	2,776	463	yes
Spring Creek Rd	end of oil	5/15/2008	5/21/2008	1,470	254	no
Table continues on next page.						
Table continued from previous page.						
Spring Creek Rd	W of US 93	5/15/2008	5/21/2008	2,496	416	yes

2007						
Bierney Cr Rd	end of oil	8/10/2007	8/16/2007	1,956	326	no
2006						
Grayling Rd	At Bierney Creek Rd	6/9/2006	6/15/2006	2,456	409	no
Spring Creek Rd	end of oil	6/9/2006	6/15/2006	1,691	282	no
2005						
Bierney Cr Rd	end of oil	7/8/2005	7/14/2005	2,276	379	no
Bierney Cr Rd	W of US 93	7/8/2005	7/14/2005	8,562	1,427	yes
Blacktail Rd	end of oil	7/8/2005	7/14/2005	1,724	287	no
Blacktail Rd	W of Stoner Loop Rd	7/8/2005	7/14/2005	13,431	2,239	yes
Deer Creek Rd	at US 93	7/8/2005	7/14/2005	1,139	190	no
Grayling Rd	At Bierney Creek Rd	7/8/2005	7/14/2005	2,616	435	no
Lakeside Ave	at Lakeside Blvd	7/15/2005	7/21/2005	884	141	yes
Lakeside Blvd	at Political Hill Rd	7/15/2005	7/21/2005	1,575	263	yes
Lakeside Blvd N	at US 93 n end	7/15/2005	7/21/2005	969	162	yes
Lakeside Blvd N	at US 93 s end	7/15/2005	7/21/2005	1,499	250	yes
Lakeview Dr	at US 93	7/8/2005	7/14/2005	1,597	266	yes
Lutheran Camp Rd	E of Hughes Bay	7/15/2005	7/21/2005	1,448	241	no
Lutheran Camp Rd	E of US 93	7/15/2005	7/21/2005	2,324	387	no
N Juniper Bay Rd	at Old 93	7/15/2005	7/21/2005	1,455	243	yes
N Juniper Bay Rd	at US 93	7/15/2005	7/21/2005	957	160	yes
Peaceful Ln	at Lakeside Blvd	7/15/2005	7/21/2005	1,003	167	yes
Political Hill Rd	at US 93	7/15/2005	7/21/2005	3,747	625	yes
Spring Creek Rd	at end of oil	7/8/2005	7/14/2005	1,426	238	no
Spring Creek Rd	at US 93	7/8/2005	7/14/2005	2,550	425	yes
Spring Creek Rd	E of Cramer Cr Rd	7/8/2005	7/14/2005	1,005	168	no
Stoner Creek Rd	N of Blacktail Rd	7/8/2005	7/14/2005	823	137	no
Stoner Creek Rd	W of US 93	7/8/2005	7/14/2005	3,237	540	yes
Tamarack Terrace	at Angel Pt Rd	7/15/2005	7/21/2005	754	126	yes

Table 5-1: This chart showing some of the major county roads in the plan area and their traffic count statistics:

The traffic counts are lower for 2008 than in 2005, however this is most likely due to the time of year the counts were taken (May vs. July). July would be the height of tourism season. New subdivisions are following the guidelines of the Minimum Standards for Design and Construction for the Flathead County Road Department, adopted in July 2007, which includes a 24 foot paved driving surface, 2 foot gravel shoulders, and 4 to 1 (gently) sloping ditches. Most county roads in the plan area are sub-standard, less than the 24 foot width (see Table 5-5).

Spring Creek Road	20 feet	Pavement extends apx. .4 mile from Hwy 93
Bierney Creek Road	23 feet	Pavement extends apx. 1.3 miles from Hwy 93
Blacktail Road	23 feet	Pavement extends apx 1.6 miles from Hwy 93
Lakeside Blvd	18 feet	Completely paved
Caroline Point Road	8-12 feet	Completely paved

Table 5-2: Road Pavement and approximate width.

The only county road improvement scheduled for 2009 is Grayling Hill Road. This will connect pavement from Bierney Creek Road, over Grayling Hill, to Adams Street and Spurwing Road. The funds for this project are being split between the county, Spurwing Development, and Troutbeck Rise Home Owners' Association. At this time, the County has no other future plans for paving roads in the Lakeside Plan area.

Spurwing Developer, Charles Lapp, reported to the Committee his plans to upgrade Bower Road to county standards in the future. Currently, Bower Road is an unimproved county road that connects the top of Grayling Hill to Blacktail Road going directly west. Bower Road will have a name change to Grayling Road. When this project is complete, it will give an east/west through route using Adams Street and ending at Blacktail Road. Mr. Lapp has not set a date for this improvement.

A big challenge is that many of the roads in the area are not up to the quality they should be. Even the county paved roads are substandard, but these roads were built long before new regulations were approved (2007). Many of these roads (such as Lakeside Blvd and Caroline Point) were paved years ago. Some of the roads the County now maintains are called subdivision roads, and these roads were built many years ago with no standard. Lakeside also has roads that at one time were nothing more than a deer trail or logging road and eventually evolved to provide property access to homeowners.

The county has discussed that no county road within a subdivision will be upgraded without an RSID (Rural Special Improvement District) or another kind of financial input from the subdivision. County Roads that are grossly sub-standard, along with private roads within subdivisions and "forest type" roads, will not be repaired but could be rebuilt. Again, an RSID is another option for travelers along these road types.

The community supports more connectivity between east/west roads in the Lakeside Town Center area, giving travelers an alternative to Highway 93 for traveling around Lakeside. Currently, the only option to move between the Post Office and any other location in Lakeside is to use Highway 93, already noted as a safety issue. Connectivity between Blacktail Road and Troutbeck Rise was improved with the addition of the Spurwing Development. You can now connect to all roads between Blacktail Road and Troutbeck without accessing Highway 93. However, this route is not a straight through street and does not have easy access to the businesses along Highway 93.

A better scenario might be a north/south road running from Stoner Loop Road to Bierney Creek Road, sitting directly behind the businesses and homes facing Highway 93. This would involve easements, but a possible benefit to those landowners might be another access to their properties on a less congested, safer route. Additional parking might be available and it would give a more

downtown feeling to the community. This option and others will be considered by the newly formed Lakeside Town Center Committee (see sub-chapter 5.1.4).

5.2.2 Issues & Opportunities

10. ISSUE: Other options are needed for pedestrian and bicycle traffic. Currently, they use the area roadways.

11. ISSUE: There is no available land for building a north/south road and or bike/walking trail parallel to Highway 93. Land would have to be purchased, donated, or easements acquired.

12. ISSUE: Crosswalks at Adams Street and Bierney Creek Road need additional control, as safety is a high concern.

13. ISSUE: The speed limit through Lakeside is ignored too often. Survey respondents requested additional enforcement.

14. ISSUE: There is a high number of access roads onto Highway 93 between Bierney Creek Road and Spring Creek Road. More left turn lanes or a center lane is needed in this area.

6. OPPORTUNITY: The community strongly supports additional sidewalks and walk/bike paths. Fund raising may be a possibility as well as linking to the County's Master Plan for paths and trails being developed by the PATHS committee (see section 5.3 on Parks).

7. OPPORTUNITY: Placing signage announcing Lakeside as a bicycle and pedestrian friendly community might encourage motorists to respect and share the road with those forms of transportation. There may be conditions or requirements the community must meet to make this declaration. The opportunity should be further investigated.

5.2.3 Goals & Policies

GOAL 3. Provide safe, efficient, enjoyable travel for motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians by developing alternate routes off US 93 and by improving road conditions, connectivity and traffic controls.

Policy 3.1. Promote the connectivity of the road network.

Policy 3.2. Encourage the Flathead County Roads Dept to include sidewalks and walk/bike paths in any future construction plans.

Policy 3.3. Sidewalks and bike/walk paths should be included in development plans.

Policy 3.4. Encourage a bike path network throughout the Lakeside Community

Policy 3.5. Soften the Highway 93 corridor in downtown Lakeside with corridor landscaping adjacent to highways and in parking areas. The rendering below (Figure 5-7) depicts one example of a landscaped town street with safe pedestrian/bike access. See other renderings of attractive downtown areas in Appendix H. It is acknowledged that existing structures make achieving this type of design difficult. These principles can be applied to new development or replacement and remodeling efforts.

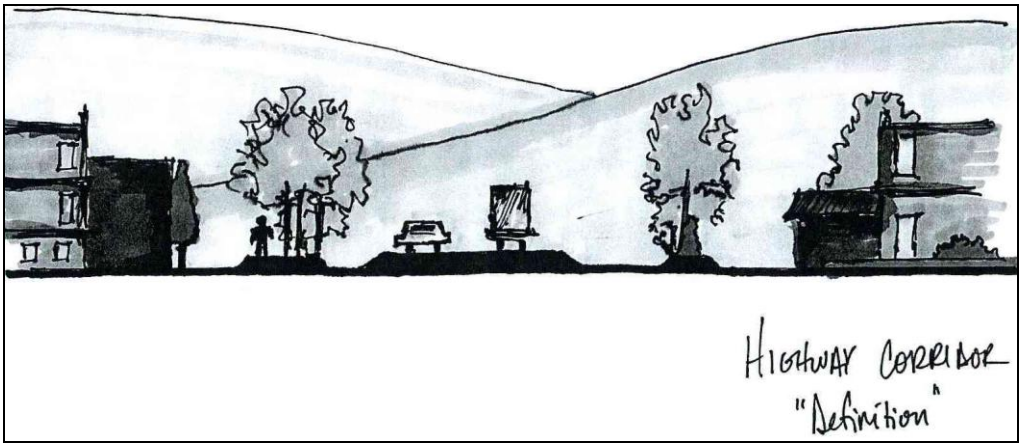


Figure 5-7: Rendering of safe, attractive pedestrian walkways along a highway.

Policy 3.6. Maintain contact with MDT, regarding road and traffic issues in the plan area and conveying the communities desires for:

- left turn lanes at Spring Creek Road and Deer Creek Road.
- turn lanes at all new and growing developments north and south of Lakeside
- a crosswalk painted at Blacktail Road intersection with Highway 93 and improve warning signage for all crosswalks along Highway 93
- installation of a flashing light at Bierney Creek Road intersection. This intersection averages 1,137 traffic turns daily (May, 2008 tally) thereby supporting additional control.
- more lighting in the downtown area, respecting "dark skies" principles

Policy 3.7. Work with the school to encourage parents and staff to use alternate routes west of Lakeside Elementary instead of trying to access busy Highway 93.

Policy 3.8. Support the education of land owners in the use of a Rural Special Improvement District. Using an RSID could give land owners in specific areas options for improving their roads.

5.2.4 Implementation Strategies

5.2.4.1 *Community Council Actions*

1) This sub-chapter reflects the desires of the community and the obvious safety issues that abound the Lakeside Neighborhood. It is understood that Flathead County Commissioners and Montana Department of Transportation will ultimately make the decisions as to what and when improvement happens. The Community Council is charged with maintaining contact with these offices and promoting the needs, issues and desires of Lakeside.

2) This Neighborhood Plan recommends support of the Town Center Sub-Committee as they develop a new downtown plan and that they will seriously consider the connectivity of roads, sidewalks and walk/bike paths within that plan.

3) The plan recommends that the Lakeside Community Council take on the responsibility of monitoring upcoming issues and opportunities in regard to our roads. This plan also recommends they work with developers, construction companies, businesses, MDT, Flathead County Roads Department and any other pertinent party to obtain the connectivity, safety and overall good condition of our area roads.

4) Work with the school to explore volunteer options to have Crossing Guards on duty at Adams Street intersection during opening and closing times of Lakeside Elementary

5) The Community Council should identify priorities for bike paths along Highway 93 and work with the PATHS committee and other entities to incorporate those priorities into county wide plans and work to secure funding for those priorities.

6) Pedestrian safety is critical along Highway 93. Though the community currently has yellow signs warning of pedestrian crossings, there is room for improvement. The Community Council should convey to MDOT the community's desire for better crosswalk signage. Suggested are:

   A) Advance warning that there are "3 Crossings Ahead" could be placed (see Figure 5-8):

      I) North of Bierney Creek Rd. facing the southbound lane, half way up the hill and

      II) South of Blacktail Rd. facing the northbound lane, halfway up on the hill.

Figure 5-8: Example of signage.

   B) Overhead cross walk signs could be hung on either side of the flashing light at Adams – one sign facing the north bound lane and one facing the south bound lane (see Figure 5-9).

Figure 5-9: Example of overhead sign.

C) All cross walk signs should be the bright neon yellow instead of the dull yellow Lakeside has now (see Figure 5-10). These signs should be easily visible, one facing north and one facing south, at each of 3 intersections: Bierney Creek, Adams and Blacktail Roads.

Figure 5-10: Improved signage at pedestrian crosswalks

5.2.4.2 *Regulatory Recommendations*

1) New subdivisions on County Roads should consider bike and pedestrian easements as part of their subdivision design.

5.3 Parks, Lake, Recreation

One of the most popular attractions to Lakeside, to Flathead Valley and the surrounding mountains is the availability of and opportunities for water-based and land-based settings and activities. For the Lakeside community the primary attractions are Flathead Lake, Blacktail Mountain, and nearby forested lands for hiking or motorized vehicle driving and wildlife observation, including Forest Service Lands called the "Island District".

This sub-chapter will examine what is currently available and what proposals are pending to maintain and improve or increase parks, lake access and recreation opportunities for the Lakeside Community. In addition, the sub-chapter presents results from the Community Survey related to open space, parks, lake access and recreation.

The primary sources of information for this sub-chapter are the 2008 Lakeside Community Survey and the Lakeside Parks Advisory Committee, which was initially established as a subcommittee to the Lakeside Community Council in 2006, and has operated since 2007 as an advisory committee to the Flathead County Parks & Recreation Department. In addition, County documents, such as Parks Board minutes were researched using the Internet.

5.3.1 Existing conditions

5.3.1.1 *Support for Open Space, Parks, Lake Access and Recreation*

The Community Survey responses show very strong support for the availability parks and open space, availability of bike trails and walking paths, more and better public access to the Lake, and the availability of recreational opportunities in the Community.

One of the questions on the Community Survey asked respondents to rate each of 20 different features in terms of Importance (1 = low, 2 = medium, 3 = high). They were also asked to rate their Satisfaction (1 = low, 2 = medium, 3 = high), for these same 20 features (See Chapter 4.0 Lakeside Community Vision, figure 3-1)).

Out of the 20 features of Lakeside listed:

- Lake Access and Quality: High importance, medium to low satisfaction with significant gap between importance and satisfaction (i.e., need for more access or need for improved access)
    - Ranked 3rd highest of 20 in importance – high importance
    - Ranked 11th of 20 in satisfaction – medium satisfaction
    - Had the 8th largest gap between importance and satisfaction – moderate room for improvement
    - Note that a significant number of free form comments on the survey support the need for public docks on the lake. Note also that comments indicate dissatisfaction is with lake access, not with lake water quality.
- Open Space & Parks: Medium importance and very low satisfaction with significant gap between importance and satisfaction (i.e., need for more or need for improvement)
    - Ranked 9th highest of 20 in importance – medium importance
    - Ranked 19th of 20 in satisfaction – very low satisfaction

    - Had the 4th largest gap between importance and satisfaction – significant room for improvement
- Bike / Walk Paths: Medium importance and very low satisfaction with significant gap between importance and satisfaction (i.e., need for more or need for improvement)
    - Ranked 11th highest of 20 in importance – medium importance
    - Ranked 20th of 20 in satisfaction – the lowest satisfaction of all features
    - Had the 11th largest gap between importance and satisfaction – moderate room for improvement.
    - A conversation with YWAM representatives revealed that a bike and walking trail was needed along Blacktail Road between YWAM and downtown Lakeside. If such a path or safe walkway existed, YWAM felt their students would frequent Lakeside businesses much more often.
- Availability of Recreation: Medium importance and high satisfaction with some gap between importance and satisfaction (i.e., need for more or need for improvement)
    - Ranked 10th highest of 20 in importance – medium importance
    - Ranked 12th highest of 20 in satisfaction – medium satisfaction
    - Had the 10th largest gap between importance and satisfaction – moderate room for improvement
    - Note that survey free form comments supported the need and desire for indoor/outdoor sports facility for adults and children within the Community.

There is very high dissatisfaction with parking facilities at places with public lake access (see Figure 5-11).

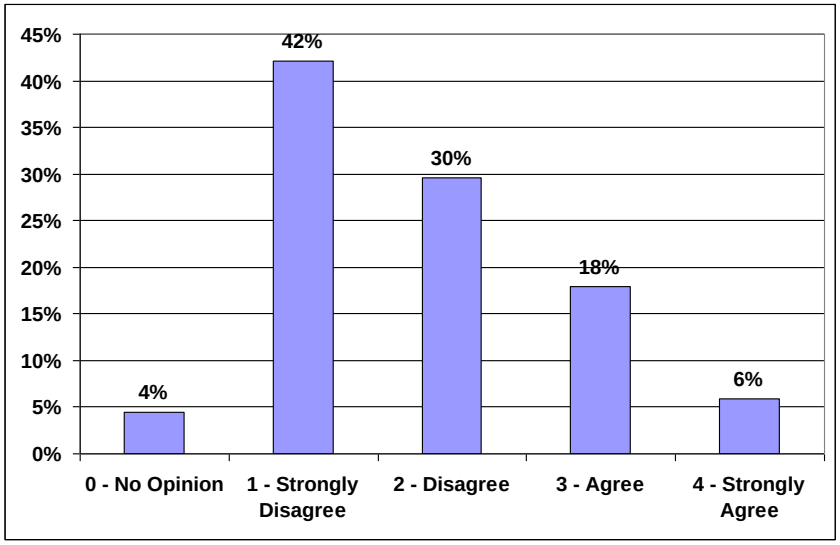


Figure 5-11: Lakeside Community Survey – Is Public Access / Parking to the Lake Adequate or Better? 72% disagreed while only 16% agreed.

There is a very strong desire for more parks and open space for public access and use (see Figure 5-12).

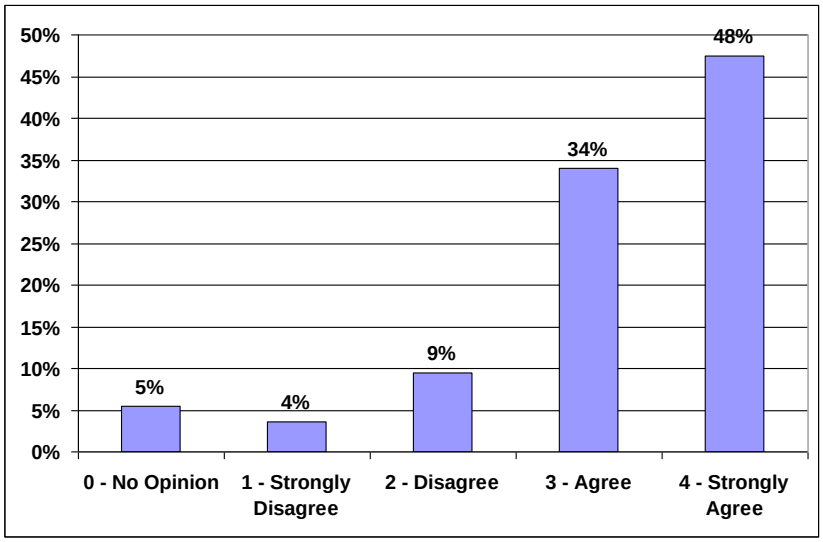


Figure 5-12: Lakeside Community Survey – Are Additional Parks / Open Space Needed? 82% agreed and 13% disagreed

5.3.1.2 *Existing Public Access*

Historically, parks and lake access in the Lakeside Planning area have consisted of the following facilities:

- Ben Williams Park, located 1 mile southwest of Lakeside on Blacktail Road and comprising 5 acres, which includes restrooms (recently removed), picnic shelter, and playground equipment. The condition of this space and equipment is poor at best. The Parks Committee is actively pursuing improvements to this park, including landscaping, new equipment and two tennis courts.
- Lakeside Docks #1: Includes a swim area and a separate concrete ramp for launching boats on the east side of Highway 93 at Bierney Creek Road. The 2008 Community Survey expressed concern for the safety of this facility (no parking, a dangerous pedestrian crossing at Bierney Creek, and the danger of vehicles with trailers lined up on the shoulder of Highway 93 waiting to launch or retrieve their boats). Poor maintenance of the restrooms was also cited as an issue.
- Lakeside Docks #2: The public dock and concrete boat launch at the end of Adams Street at Lakeside Blvd. Again, there is no parking available anywhere around this facility.

The 1994 Plan called for a bike and walking trail. The proposed path was along Lakeside Blvd. north from the public swim area. Though funds were raised, objections from some property owners stopped the project. In spite of this attitude, as indicated in the 2008 survey, the demand for safe bike & walking trails or sidewalks is still very high. A “not in my back yard” attitude can undermine and be a deterrent or roadblock for parks, open space, bike/walk trails, and recreation availability in Lakeside.

5.3.1.3 *County Sponsored Committees*

The Lakeside Parks Advisory Committee pursues opportunities for additional parks and is focused on Lakeside. Another Committee, also sponsored by the County Parks Department, is the PATHS Committee (People, Athletics, Travel, Health, and Safety). This Committee is currently developing a Master Plan for the County regarding bike and walk paths in the County with a high priority on connectivity between paths/trails. Their focus is County-wide. This Plan is early in the process, though, and adoption may be a long way off. These committees need input and support from the community. The committees can also provide information on sources for funding or other resources to implement desired parks or paths.

5.3.2 Issues & Opportunities

1. OPPORTUNITY: The Parks Committee continues to pursue other opportunities, including:

- 62 acres by Deep Bay, south of Lakeside and off Highway. 93 almost to the Lake County border. The Parks Committee and property owners are sponsoring and promoting that this property be made into a State Park. This proposal is going to the State Legislature.
- What is known as the Matson property, on the lakefront in downtown Lakeside, is being donated and pursued as a possible day park for the Community. Planning for this area is nearing completion.
- Efforts are also starting to make a trail system from Lakeside to the connection point to the trail leading up to the top of Blacktail Mountain. Already there are groomed cross country ski trails, accessed from the road leading to the Blacktail Ski area.
- The Fish Hatchery property off Highway 93 across from Spring Creek Road (at the north end of Lakeside Community boundary): There is a possibility that the State may abandon this facility and the Lakeside Parks Committee and County Parks Department are interested in the property as a County or State park.

2. OPPORTUNITY: Other opportunities exist nearby. YWAM has property on both sides of Blacktail Road. On the land where old ponds existed but are now dried up, YWAM is considering development of sports activity field(s) that could potentially be available for public use.

3. OPPORTUNITY: The Forest Service is considering plans for connecting trails and opening some trails to motorized use on Blacktail Mountain in the Island Unit. In a recent article in the West Shore News: "The Flathead National Forest's Swan Lake Ranger District may soon release a proposed action to create a motorized trail system on Blacktail Mountain." Andrew Johnson, project leader, states in the West Shore News, "*Right now, it's just an idea. But we will probably carry it forward in the next six months more formally. We've gotten a lot of comments expressing interest in expanding motorized vehicle activity in the Flathead National Forest, in general, and we've seen a resurgence of interest in it in the last few years*." For more details on this proposal, see Appendix G.

4. ISSUE AND OPPORTUNITY: The County has a topic in Chapter 4 of the Subdivision Regulations regarding "Parkland Dedication". This regulation requires a subdivider to "*either dedicate a cash donation or land for parkland dedication*" for most subdivisions. One issue that has arisen is that, when cash is donated instead of land, not all of the cash donated actually comes back to be used in Lakeside. The County Parks Department uses these cash donations where they believe the most benefit to the County exists and that may or may not be Lakeside.

5. **OPPORTUNITY:** There is high support for parks, open space, paths, and recreation in the community as well as two County Committees focusing on these needs.

6. **OPPORTUNTIY:** Continued efforts of the Lakeside Parks Advisory Committee is a big plus to the Community along with their active pursuit of Deep Bay, Fish Hatchery properties, and Matson and other properties as potential open space or park property.

7. **OPPORTUNITY:** Bear Meadows' development proposal includes a proposed sports facility on Bierney Creek Road. The lack of a bike path or trail could be an issue in accessing the facility.

8. **OPPORTUNITY:** The Forest Service is developing recreation plans for their land in the planning area. Connecting proposed and existing trails in the national forest to proposed facilities within the community and to the downtown area will improve recreational access for everyone, and potentially increase business opportunities in downtown.

9. **ISSUE:** Limited availability of lakefront property to allocate to public use.

10. **ISSUE:** "Not in my back yard" attitude of residents & property owners, when parklands are proposed nearby. To help mitigate potential adverse impact, Parks should be developed and designed to include both parking and on-going maintenance.

11. **ISSUE:** Volunteers from Lakeside could begin work on identifying possible bike or trail routes within the community by designating some existing roadways off Highway 93 as bike and hike friendly.

12. **OPPORTUNITY:** It may be possible to expand Ben Williams Park, if the County abandons the green box site on Blacktail Road.

13. **OPPORTUNITY:** Optimizing existing county rights-of way may be a future option to improve public access to the lake even if it just facilitates on-street parking with shoulders.

5.3.3 Goals & Policies

GOAL 4. Maintain and increase open space, parks, and bike/walk paths within the Community

Policy 4.1. Encourage public access to parkland.

Policy 4.2. Create a Lakeside trails network – a cohesive network of trails is desired.

Policy 4.3. Maintain awareness of how County initiatives, such as PATHS, affect Lakeside and support efforts to improve or add to parks, open space, and bike/walk paths. Seek out and take advantage of possible funding opportunities.

5.3.4 Implementation Strategies

5.3.4.1 *Community Council Actions*

1. Investigate how cash in lieu collected from subdivisions in Lakeside can be returned to Lakeside (consider establishment of Land Trust to manage the funding.).
2. Community Council should continue to support the efforts of the Lakeside Parks Advisory Committee with frequent communication between the Committee and the Lakeside Community Council. In addition, Community Council should initiate contact with the PATHS.

3. Lakeside Parks Advisory Committee should continue to explore opportunities for open space and parks in the Community and support existing efforts, such as Deep Bay and the Matson property.
4. Parking and lake access should be primary considerations for park selection and design.
5. The Lakeside Parks Advisory Committee should consider designating some existing roads as bike and walking trails. There are enough existing roads to almost connect Lakeside to Somers with few interruptions. They should also investigate possible ways and costs to connect the roads where there are gaps.

5.4 Emergency Services (fire, rescue)

The Lakeside Neighborhood is served by two main volunteer emergency service organizations. The Somers/Lakeside Volunteer Fire Department provides emergency response for both wildland and structure fires. They also respond to assist with medical emergencies and motor vehicle accidents. The Lakeside Quick Response Unit provides emergency medical service and under certain conditions provides ambulance transportation to advanced medical care. A third volunteer agency, Flathead County Search and Rescue provides emergency response for incidents requiring specialized equipment or skills in isolated locations or unusual conditions.
These volunteer organizations are supported by professional emergency service providers including the Flathead County Sheriff, Kalispell Fire Department, ~~and~~ ALERT Air Ambulance Program through Kalispell Regional Medical Center, and the Montana State Department of Natural Resources and Conservation to fight wildland fires.

In the event of a wildland fire the Sheriff's office will notify the DNRC and immediately dispatch the Somers/Lakeside VFD because their response time is much shorter. As the DNRC moves equipment and resources to the scene they will assume command. As the fire attack continues and managers balance equipment and manpower needs with availability the Somers/Lakeside VFD may stand down. The Somers/Lakeside VFD is pre-qualified to fight wildland fires with their volunteers and equipment for the DNRC and may continue on the fire under a paid contract with the DNRC. The Somers/Lakeside VFD will respond immediately to their first priority, structure fires, if a wildland fire grows to threaten the community.

Communities that rely on volunteers to provide emergency services typically find they have very dedicated providers but often inconsistent response time and levels of service. Lakeside is very fortunate to have two top tier organizations with very good charitable financial support from the community. They both, however, find it difficult to recruit and retain members. Lakeside draws a large number of visitors which increases the demands on the emergency services that are supported by the property owners and residents. In the long term, Lakeside may require transitioning to a professional organization that provides emergency services.

Information for this sub-chapter was gathered:

1. From the Community Survey
2. From a survey and interview with the Chief of the SVFD
3. From a survey and interview with the President of the Lakeside QRU

5.4.1 Existing conditions

5.4.1.1 *Somers/Lakeside Volunteer Fire Department*

The Somers Rural Fire District includes portions of the lower valley south of the South Kalispell Fire District, Somers and Lakeside south to the county line. Somers is centrally located and is where the main fire hall is located (see Figure 5-13). A smaller, satellite fire hall is located at 125 Bills Road in the Lakeside Town Center. There is one large fire truck, one fire tender and one small fire truck kept at the Lakeside Fire Hall. Several other fire trucks and a well equipped rescue truck are located in Somers. Currently, there are 22 firemen, 15 live in the Somers area and 7 live in the Lakeside area. In case of an emergency in the Lakeside area the fire department

will respond with staff and equipment from both halls as needed. The department responded to approximately 50 fire calls and 150 motor vehicle accidents and medical calls throughout the district during 2007, only a portion of which were in the Lakeside Neighborhood.

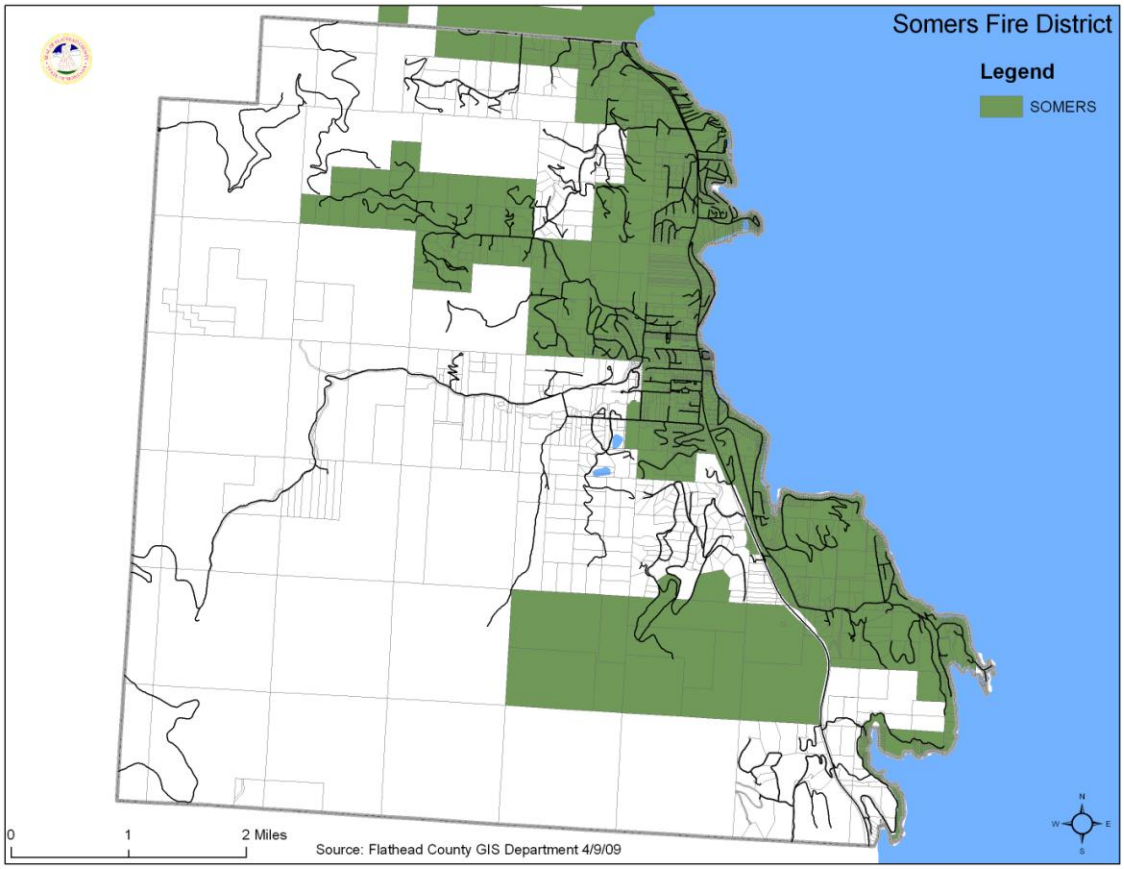


Figure 5-13: Boundaries of the Somers Fire District.

The district boundary through the Lakeside area currently includes much of the developed, residential part of the Lakeside Neighborhood. It does not include some of the western extents of the Spring Creek Road and Deer Creek Road areas. It also does not include YWAM and areas west along Blacktail Road; Phases I, II, and III of The Lakeside Club; the Timber Rock development; and all of the Remote Government and Rural Forest Land Use Designation areas. This leaves thousands of acres of moderate to low density, residential areas technically without fire protection. The Chief did confirm that the fire department would respond to fires out of the district without hesitation; however, because those property owners are not taxed to support the fire department, they would be charged for services provided in case of a fire emergency.

The Somers/Lakeside VFD is funded and managed through the Somers Rural Fire District Board, who allocated funding through Flathead County property taxes. The Trustees on the Board are elected from the district and operate independently from the fire department. Funding is allocated to the Somers/Lakeside VFD based on the size of the geographic district covered. Unfortunately, the geographic boundaries are smaller than the geographic area actually covered by the VFD because they will respond to calls outside the actual district boundaries. If the district boundaries would be expanded to include the actual areas covered, more funds could be allocated. To expand the boundaries, areas not currently within the district boundaries would

need to be annexed. The fire department also achieves some financial support through local fund raising and charitable donations.

5.4.1.2 *Lakeside Quick Response Unit*

The Lakeside QRU is a private non-profit corporation that is managed by the volunteer members. Some financial support is provided by Flathead County through a tax levy for emergency medical services. Charitable donations currently account for the largest portion of revenue. Generally the QRU volunteers don't provide patient transportation to the hospital. Kalispell Fire Department provides ground transport and ALERT Air Ambulance provides helicopter transport. When the QRU responds with adequate staff under the right conditions they will provide transport to the hospital. Ambulance transportation to the hospital can be an additional source of revenue.

The QRU service district includes all of the Somers Fire District and the Rollins Fire District in Lake County. Because this district extends much farther south than the district served by Somers' VFD, Lakeside is a more central location for the QRU. The office is located in the fire hall at 125 Bill's Road in Lakeside where the ambulance and other medical equipment and supplies are kept. There also is an aid car for quick response stationed near the north edge of the service district. The aid car cannot be used for patient transport. Currently there are 21 total responders that live and work throughout the district from South Kalispell to Rollins. There are 10 responders that live within the boundaries of the Lakeside Neighborhood. The QRU responded to approximately 250 calls in 2007, only a portion of which were in the Lakeside Neighborhood.

Flathead County has designated the Somers Fire District as the service district for Lakeside QRU. However, because the Lakeside QRU is a private corporation without government affiliation, they respond without regard to those technical boundaries. Funding through Flathead County for both the fire department and the QRU is based on the tax revenue from properties within the Somers Fire District boundaries only. The QRU does not charge for any services rendered on the scene, only for services associated with patient transportation to a hospital.

5.4.1.3 *Survey Results*

Eighty eight percent (88%) of survey respondents had an opinion on the level of emergency services in Lakeside. Of those responses, 87% felt service is adequate or better. Emergency services received the highest satisfaction rating of all the services surveyed.

It is interesting to note that, of the various services provided to Lakeside that were covered in the 2008 Community Survey, those provided locally (QRU, Fire, Water) received the highest satisfaction ratings (see Figure 5-14).

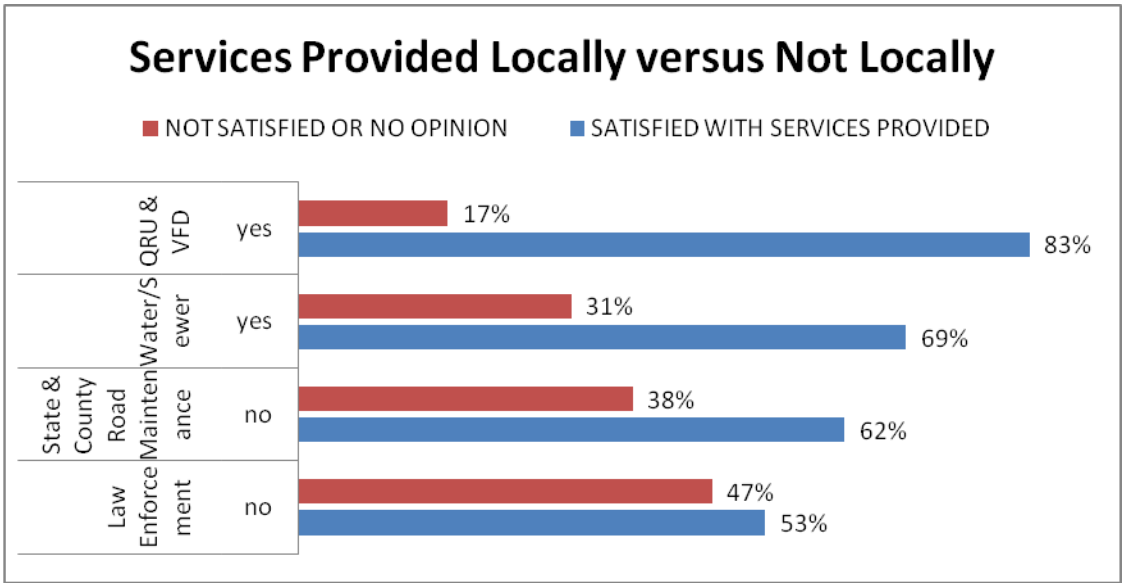


Figure 5-14 Satisfaction with Services provided to Lakeside: "yes" means the service is supplied locally within Lakeside; "no" means services are supplied by County or State.

Amongst the freeform comments from the survey, some mentioned the importance of emergency services to the community and several complimented the departments on their excellent service. Other freeform comments expressed are:

- Concerns that the services could not keep up with community growth
- Lakeside needs its own fire department
- Departments staffed with paid, fulltime responders.
- A concern for inadequate funding.
- A concern that services might have difficulty finding the right location in an emergency because of poor signage.

5.4.2 Issues & Opportunities

1. OPPORTUNITY: Public safety and emergency response time would be enhanced by better street naming and sequential, posted house numbers.

2. ISSUE: Lakeside may need to take more responsibility for EMS.

Flathead County relies on volunteer first response units backed up by the professional and semi-professional departments from Kalispell, Whitefish, Columbia Falls and Bigfork to provide emergency services for the unincorporated county. Flathead County has no county fire department or ambulance service. This system has worked well here and across much of rural America. However, as government budgets become tight, the service departments sponsored by tax payers in the incorporated cities are cutting back on the services they provide to the county outside their city boundaries. Early in 2009 Kalispell Fire Department reduced the level of ambulance support to the Lakeside area. Because the Lakeside QRU can't always transport

patients to the hospital and only provides Basic Life Support, not Advanced Life Support, providing emergency medical service to the Lakeside area has become more challenging. Other EMS agencies are currently covering the transport and ALS needs in Lakeside; however, Flathead County is under the same budget pressures as the cities and will continue to rely on volunteer agencies like the Lakeside QRU to provide EMS to its citizens. In the future, Lakeside will have to accept more responsibility for its own EMS needs.

3. ISSUE: Somers VFD must advance it capability as Lakeside grows.

Somers Volunteer Fire Department continues to provide excellent fire protection under the small town, rural conditions that exist in Lakeside. As Lakeside grows the frequency of emergencies will increase, road networks will become more dense increasing response time and buildings will become larger and more sophisticated requiring specialized firefighting equipment and training. Somers Fire Department currently must fight structure fires in the new tall condominiums in Lakeside using limited techniques without a Ladder Truck. A new Ladder Truck may be necessary in the future to provide adequate fire protection for tall structures.

4. ISSUE: Lakeside needs a new emergency services facility.

The fire hall at 125 Bill's Road in Lakeside is owned by the Somers Rural Fire District. They have generously allowed the QRU to use one garage bay and share the meeting and storage facilities since the QRU was formed 28 years ago. While the building is considered currently adequate as a satellite station for the fire department's needs, the QRU has outgrown their portion of the facility. Through the tremendous generosity of the Lakeside community, the Lakeside QRU will soon be able to build a new building in the Lakeside Town Center. Tentative plans include all the future needs of the QRU for many years, a meeting place for community functions, and possibly garage space to meet future needs for the fire department.

5. ISSUE: Somers Rural Fire District must include all of the area served.

As Lakeside grows the financial needs of the fire department and QRU will of course grow. Because a significant part of this support comes from property tax assessment based on the Somers Fire District boundaries it is important that those boundaries keep up with the expansion of the developed residential land. Currently the boundary does not include all of the developed area. As a result, the current tax revenue is less than the revenue would be if the Somers Fire District included the entire QRU service area in Flathead County. While the VFD makes up for that loss of revenue by charging for calls outside the district, the QRU does not. The property owners within the district boundaries pay property taxes that support the QRU, but the property owners outside the boundaries pay no property taxes to support the QRU while receiving the same level of service. Fair treatment and full financial support for the QRU requires existing developed areas be annexed into the district and that annexation needs to be kept up to date as the residential area grows.

6. ISSUE: More volunteers are needed.

Finally, the most important need and the most difficult need to meet for both the fire department and QRU is recruiting and retaining volunteers. Twenty years ago both the fire department and the QRU had more volunteers than they have now and served a much lower population. The QRU was founded in 1981 with 20 members and grew to 22 members by the second year. This was a period when the population of the upper west shore area has been estimated at about 25% of the current population. Although the number of members is not drastically smaller, the population being served is much larger. There is a smaller and smaller percentage of the

population volunteering to serve as fire fighters and emergency medical technicians. It might be easy to blame this situation on some apathetic condition of our society or generation; however it is more likely that there are several factors involved:

- Economic conditions and societal expectations drive many young families to work more resulting in less time to volunteer in the community.
- Much of the Lakeside population is retired or semi-retired residing here only part time and feeling unable or uncommitted to volunteer.
- Many of these people have a desire to support our emergency services but would rather donate money than commit their free time as a volunteer. Every year the requirements to serve have grown. Today many hours of technical training and testing is required to become an EMT and many hours of continuing education is required to maintain an EMT license.

The level of commitment required from volunteers to both the fire department and QRU continues to grow and makes volunteering very difficult for many members of the community. There may be an opportunity to recruit young volunteers if joining the fire department or QRU can be shown to be a possible career path. If a stable funding source is established volunteers could be paid for being on-call and for responding to emergencies. This may improve recruiting and may provide a transition to a fulltime professional staff in the future.

5.4.3 Goals & Policies

GOAL 5. Maintain fire protection, emergency medical service, and ambulance transportation to accommodate growth and meet the needs of populated areas. These services are critical to economic development and the quality of life in Lakeside.

Policy 5.1. Encourage communication regarding the status of emergency services between the Community Council and the County Commissioners.

Policy 5.2. Raise public awareness of the status of emergency services.

5.4.4 Implementation Strategies

5.4.4.1 *Community Council Actions*

1) The Community Council must raise the emergency service issues with the County Commissioners.
2) The Somers Fire District Board of Trustees must be considered important to the voters so candidates for trustees are carefully evaluated and the elections get a high level of participation. The Community Council, with the help of the Somers VFD, needs to educate the Lakeside public on why these posts are important and encourage election participation.
3) The annexation of property into the Somers Fire District must be brought up to date and a program started to keep it up to date. Somers Fire District, with the support of the Community Council, needs to push this issue with the County.

5.4.4.2 *Community Organization*

1) Support from the community for the fire department and QRU must be more than just financial. Volunteers are needed too. It is recommended to combine a publicity effort between the Somers VFD and Lakeside QRU to inform the public about the current situation and criticality of the need, to describe the requirements for volunteers, and to solicit more volunteers.

5.5 Water, Sewer, and Solid Waste

Water supply and sewer systems are provided either by private wells and/or septic systems for individuals or communities or are provided locally by the Lakeside County Water and Sewer District (LCWSD). Various combinations exist, for example properties may receive services from:

- Individual private well and individual private septic system
- Individual private well and connection to LCWSD sewer system
- Community supplied water system and individual private septic system
- LCWSD supplied water and connection to LCWSD sewer system

Solid waste collection, pick-up and disposal at the Green Box site off Blacktail Road are provided by Flathead County.

Sources of information for this sub-chapter are:

- Jim Heim, General Manager of the Lakeside County Water & Sewer District
- The 2007 Preliminary Engineering Report for the Lakeside County Water & Sewer District
- Interviews with well drillers and septic engineers
- State web sites
- Daily Inter Lake news articles on the County's plans to consolidate Green Box sites within the County
- Public Works Director David Prunty

5.5.1 Water & Sewer supplied by the Lakeside County Water & Sewer District (LCWSD)

5.5.1.1 *Existing Conditions – water / sewer supplied by LCWSD.*

The Lakeside County Water and Sewer District (LCWSD) was formed in 1997 by combining existing water and sewer districts into one organization which is administered and operated locally (see Figure 5-15). The Board for the District is elected. The District has an excellent track record of operation and maintenance, according to the Robert Peccia & Associates firm, which conducted a 2007 Preliminary Engineering Report of the District's Wastewater System and according to the recent Annual Water Quality Report on drinking water.

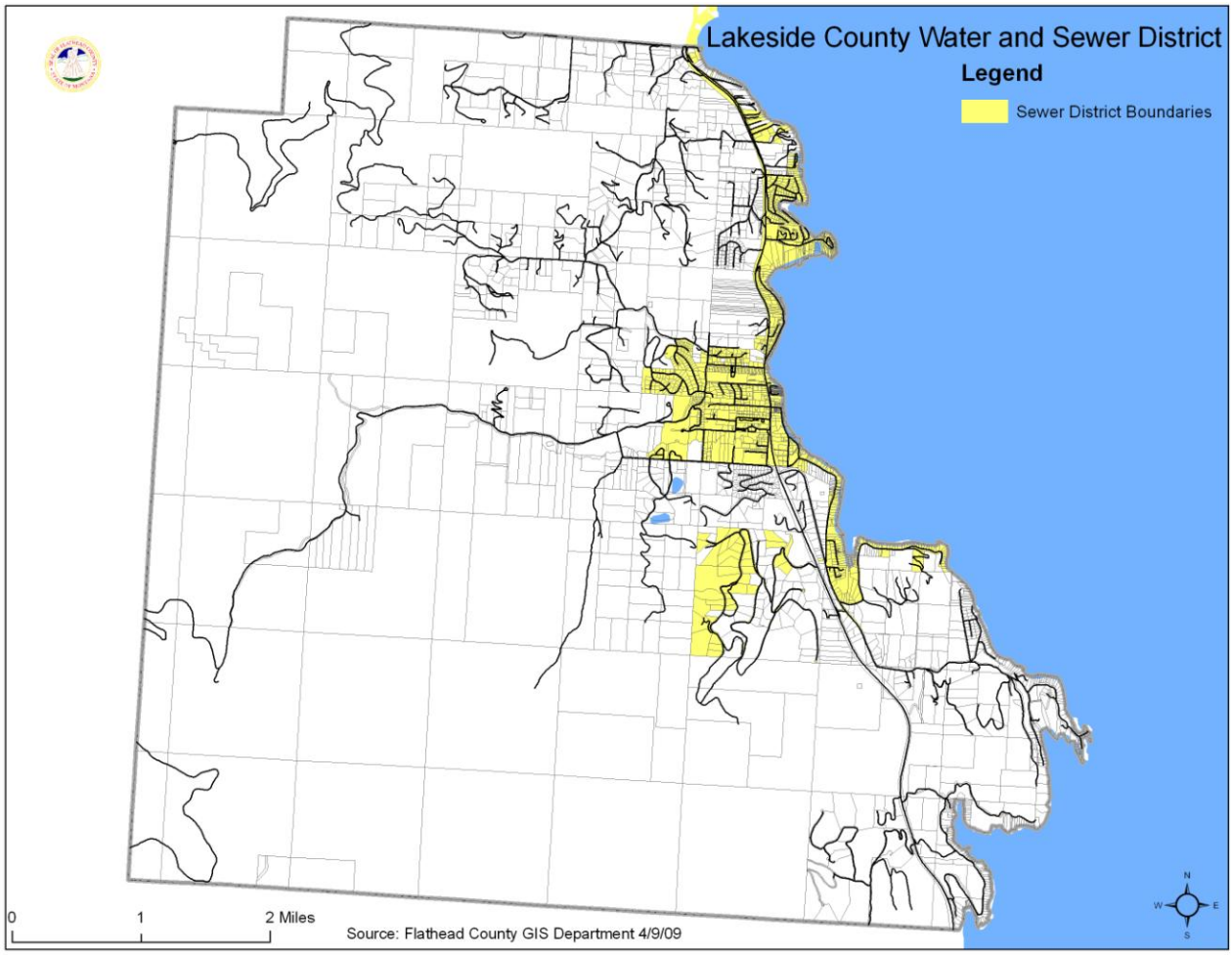


Figure 5-15: The Boundaries of the Lakeside County Water and Sewer District. This map represents the extents of sewer service. Not all areas served by sewer are served by water.

For waste water treatment, the covered area includes parts of both Lakeside and Somers CDP's (Census Designated Places), as well as developable lands between Somers and Lakeside and in the vicinity of the existing wastewater treatment facility. The Lakeside CDP includes the community of Lakeside and surrounding areas and is generally bordered on the north by Deer Creek Road, on the east by Flathead Lake, on the South by Blacktail Heights and Angel Point Road, and on the West by Tacklin Creek Road and an existing power line (see Figure 4-1 in sub-chapter 4.1).

As of June 2008, the LCWSD provides sewer collection service to 978 Equivalent Dwelling Units (EDU's) and provides water supply to 471 EDU's in the community of Lakeside. An EDU is not necessarily the same as a service connection. For example, an apartment building may have one connection to LCWSD, but contains multiple dwelling units.

The existing sewer collection system consists of a network of PVC lines and lift stations. The existing treatment facility is located approximately one mile north of Highway 82 and one mile east of Highway 93. The facility is a "non-discharging" facility, meaning there is no discharge into the valley's rivers and lakes. Sewage is held in two (2) aerated lagoons and is used during warm seasons in spray irrigation systems for agricultural crops and non-human usage.

The LCWSD's Preliminary Engineering Report, which is referenced in this sub-chapter, recommended increasing treatment capacity so the district will be able to accommodate growth. Recommendations in the report estimate an additional 3,500 Equivalent Dwelling Units (EDU's) could be added to the District's treatment facility. No long-term adverse environmental impacts are anticipated with the recommended improvements. In addition, LCWSD has indicated treatment site expansion can occur on land that LCWSD already owns, so no additional land purchases are necessary. The District Board has adopted a policy that "growth pays for growth", meaning that expansion will be paid for by development without rate increases to existing customers. Flathead County regulations mandate that any new construction within 500 feet of the LCWSD sewer system must connect to that system.

The three graphs below portray three forecasts of wastewater delivered to the LCWSD wastewater site located north of Somers.

- The "Accelerated Growth" chart estimates three large subdivisions fully developed, plus normal growth from now through the year 2020 and estimates normal growth beyond 2020 to 2026 (see Figure 5-16).
- The "10% -> 5% Growth" chart estimates 10% growth from now through the year 2015 and 5% growth beyond 2015 to 2026 (see Figure 5-17).
- The last chart ("4% Growth"), shows that system capacity is sufficient from now through 2026 if a steady 4% growth rate is realized (see Figure 5-18).

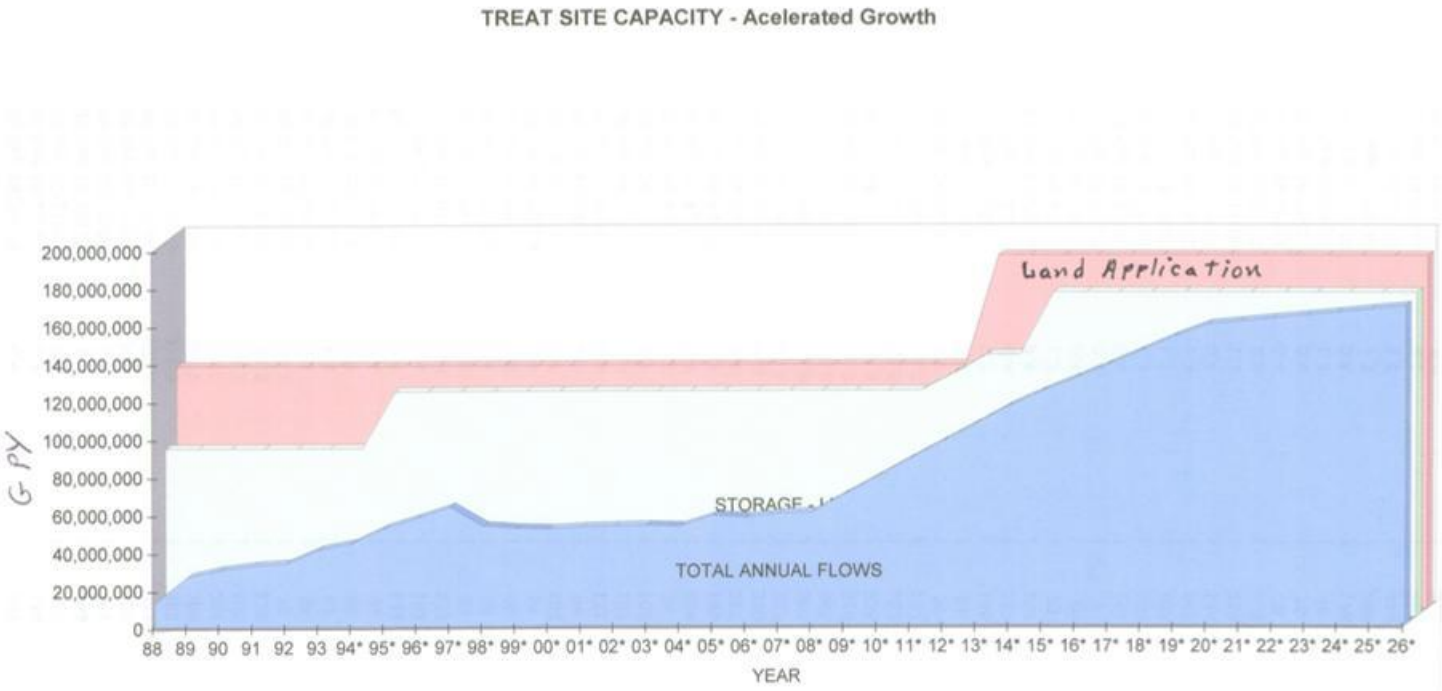


Figure 5-16: LCWSD Projected Capacity based on Accelerated Growth

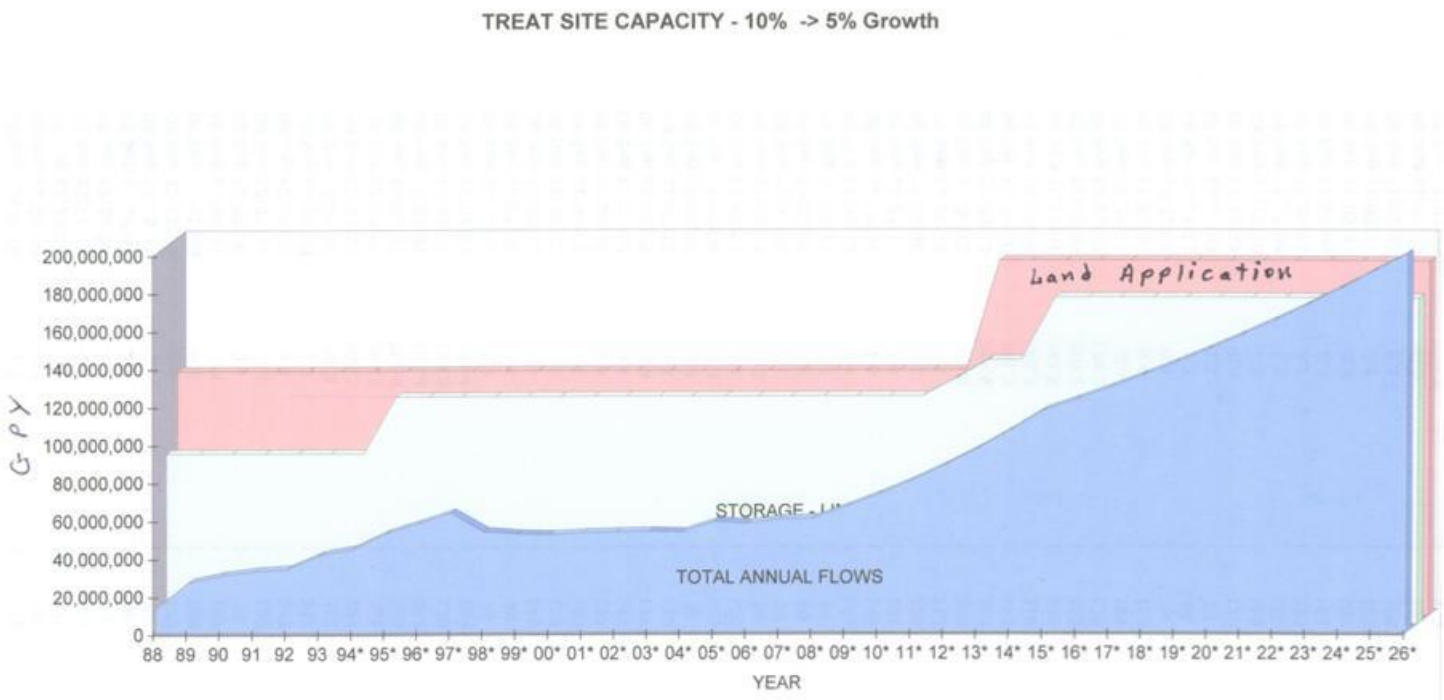


Figure 5-17: LCWSD Projected Capacity based on 10% Growth through 2015 and 5% through 2026.

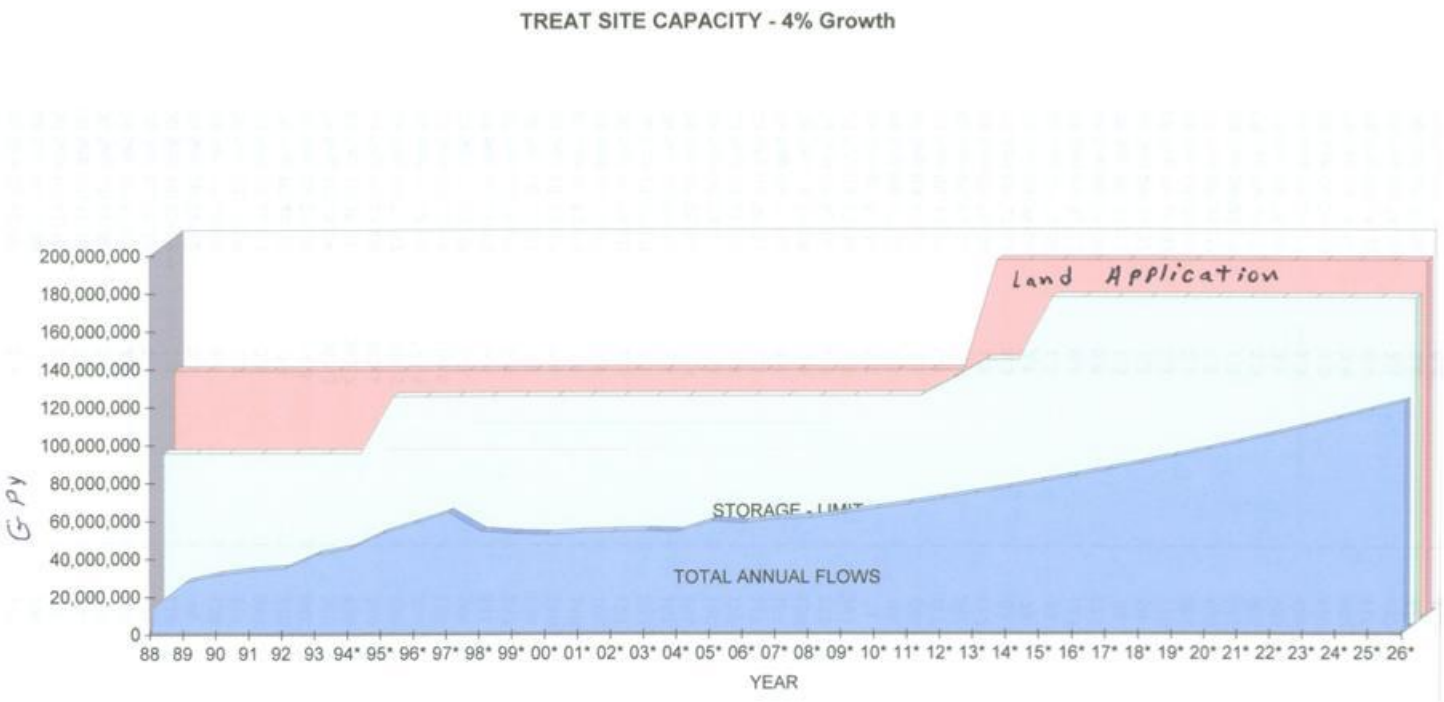


Figure 5-18: LCWSD Projected Capacity based on a steady 4% Growth rate now through 2026

Jim Heim, Manager of LCWSD, notes that:

> "*There are huge variables when forecasting future wastewater flows so one could run a thousand iterations of the variables. These three graphs are very oversimplified portrayals of the effect of just three scenarios. I like them for discussion purposes because they are visually more easily understood than the graphs prepared by engineers that take into account everything from size of households, to evaporation, to annual precipitation, etc."*
>
> *"The main point to make about monitoring wastewater treatment capacity is that District employees constantly monitor wastewater flows throughout the various segments of the wastewater system. Therefore, we have excellent flow data that will alert us when any segment is reaching an augmentation point. If growth occurs at a reasonable pace, we will never be surprised about a capacity shortfall. At this point in the life of the Somers-Lakeside wastewater disposal facility, we have a long lead time to react to the impact of growth. Actually even accelerated growth effects will not be a surprise."*
>
> *"Our statement of ultimate wastewater disposal capacity is based upon the land that the District already owns, so there are no land acquisition issues blocking the expansion of the various system elements. Our current capacity forecast that is portrayed in the Preliminary Engineering Report on our website assumes current technology (aerated lagoons and land application). There is new technology available now for wastewater disposal, and, when the time arrives for system expansion to accommodate the growth, new techniques may provide capacities much greater than heretofore expressed.*"

The LCWSD owns and operates two public water supply systems for its customers within the community of Lakeside. The sewer service described above is provided to a much larger area, and many of the District's sewer customers are not connected to the public water supply system. The public water supply system includes five active groundwater wells and two storage reservoirs. All connections to the water supply are metered and charges are based on usage. There are 471 Equivalent Dwelling Units on the two systems.

The LCWSD routinely monitors for constituents in drinking water according to Federal and State laws. Water samples are taken to Montana Environmental Lab, LLC in Kalispell, and a private laboratory that is certified by the State of Montana and the EPA to analyze drinking water. LCWSD sampling frequency complies with EPA and state drinking water regulations. Water supply for Lakeside meets or exceeds all established state and federal standards.

The District needs a 2 to 3 year lead time to add capacity, once alerted that growth may approach or exceed capacity. Their current method of tracking actual to capacity provides this information and will provide sufficient lead time to add capacity if needed.

The 2008 Community Survey asked respondents to agree or disagree that "water / sewer district services are adequate or better". 69% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed, and only 16% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

5.5.1.2 *Issues & Opportunities – water / sewer supplied by LCWSD*

1. **ISSUE:** New development needs to connect to existing District sewer, if feasible.

The survey indicated strong support (3.4 out of possible 4.0) for advocating that new development connect to central water supply or sewer systems. When asked if "connection to central sewer and water should be required", 84% agreed or strongly agreed and only 9% disagreed or strongly disagreed. It must be noted, however, that, given physical constraints and locations of system parts, connections may not always be feasible. Connection if feasible, however, should be strongly encouraged. An appropriate way to approach this is for developers to be strongly encouraged duplicating what Lakeside Club (aka Eagle's Crest), has done. The Lakeside Club is completing and funding implementation of the sewer system components to LCWSD specifications and then annexing the system to LCWSD for ongoing operations. This approach is preferred by the LCWSD.

5.5.1.3 *Goals & Policies – water / sewer supplied by LCWSD*

GOAL 6. Maintain the quality of product and quality of service for water / sewer services

Policy 6.1. Discourage private septic systems where sewer is available.

Policy 6.2. Encourage the expansion of the sewer services along Flathead Lake

Policy 6.3. Support local administration and operation of water / sewer systems.

Policy 6.4. Encourage new development connections to Lakeside Water/Sewer systems where feasible.

Policy 6.5. Continue "growth pays for growth" philosophy and encourage developers to fund and implement systems that can be annexed to LCWSD for ongoing operation

5.5.1.4 *Implementation Strategies – water / sewer supplied by LCWSD*

Community Council Actions:

1) Community Council to maintain regular contact with LCWSD and invite LCWSD at least annually to present an update on existing conditions, growth projections for the water and sewer systems, and any important issues.

Community Organization

1) LCWSD to continue to monitor actual growth rate and usage against projected capacity and support continued assessment of potential impacts from growth and development.
2) LCWSD to continue applying their operating philosophy that "growth pays for growth" and encourages developers to develop systems to LCWSD specifications and then annex the system to LCWSD for ongoing operations.

5.5.2 Water / Sewer not supplied by LCWSD (private wells & septic systems)

Information in this sub-chapter came from interviews with well drillers and septic field engineers active in the Lakeside Area, and from State web sites

5.5.2.1 *Existing Conditions – Water/sewer not Supplied by LCWSD*

As in most of the rural areas of Flathead County, the public water and sewer system is not reasonably accessible to large areas of the Lakeside Neighborhood. Private wells and septic systems are common for both older homes and new construction. However, rules and regulations applicable to both existing and new wells and septic systems are changing. As growth continues, the problems with wells and septic systems are also increasing. Septic systems are managed by the County Health Department and wells are managed by the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation.

The key issue with wells and septic systems for the Lakeside Neighborhood area is the underlying terrain and the associate hydrologic cycle (see Figure 5-19). The Neighborhood lies on a hillside rising from the Flathead Lake shoreline to the ridgelines of mountains to the west. There are reasonably flat areas with substantial soil depths along the shoreline and the Highway 93 corridor. However, moving uphill from the Highway, the terrain becomes more rugged with steep ridges, valleys, and rock outcrops.

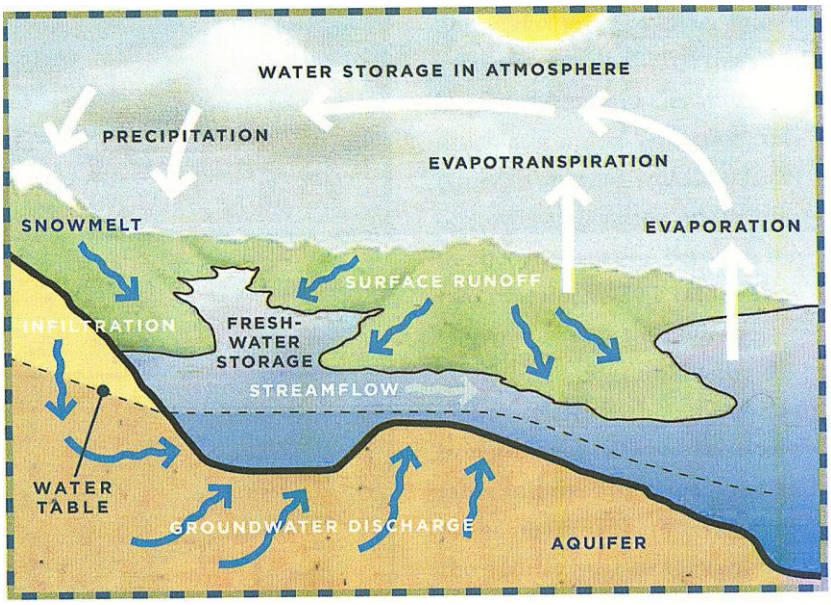


Figure 5-19: Hydrologic Cycle

This terrain makes it challenging to meet County requirements for location of septic systems. The process for development of new septic systems and maintenance of existing systems is becoming more technical and rigorous. It is more common now that higher level treatment is required. This would include the use of pressure distribution to reduce drainage field plugging and the use of level 2 processing to reduce the nitrogen levels. It is also becoming more common that ongoing professional system monitoring is required.

Of primary concern is the aquifer that supplies source water to both the private and public water systems. The aquifer under the Lakeside area is contained in fractured bedrock. Water collects in cracks and layers of solid bedrock. The depth at which sufficient flow is found to support a well varies and is unpredictable. The water flow through the system of cracks and rock layers can be disrupted. During the drought that occurred 2 to 3 years ago, several wells in the area required re-drilling to restore adequate water flow.

The use of water in Montana is governed by a Water Rights system which administers and records legal claims for the use of water. Water rights are separate from land ownership and

must be established through the Montana Water Rights system. Water rights in Montana are guided by the prior appropriation doctrine, that is, first in time is first in right. A person's right to use a specific quantity of water depends on when the use of water began. The first person to use water from a source established the first right; the second person could establish a right to the water that was left, and so on.

During dry years, the person with the first right has the first chance to use the available water to fulfill that right. The holder of the second right has the next chance. Water users are limited to the amount of water that can be beneficially used. In Montana, the term "beneficial use" means, generally, a use of water for the benefit of the appropriator, other persons, or the public, including but not limited to agricultural (including stock water), domestic, fish and wildlife, industrial, irrigation, mining, municipal, power, and recreational uses. It is becoming more difficult to obtain water rights for the use of surface water.

5.5.2.2 *Issues and Opportunities – Water/sewer not Supplied by LCWSD*

1. ISSUE: Geology of the area away from the public sewer system can make it challenging to meet County requirements for location of septic systems.

2. ISSUE: Pollutants can enter the aquifer. Fertilization and treatment of landscaping or agriculture, stock pens, or uncontrolled storm runoff could infiltrate the aquifer. Control of the introduced nitrogen load is critical both to the wells that provide drinking water and to the health of Flathead Lake. Facilities that rely heavily on fertilization and landscape treatment, may add significantly to nitrogen levels. Mitigation and monitoring should be required with such facilities.

3. ISSUE: Septic systems require ongoing maintenance to perform at acceptable levels or else they become a point of pollution and there are a lot of old septic systems on the lake. Many landowners in the neighborhood have never been responsible for septic systems and are not aware of the required maintenance. Septic systems require pumping of accumulated sludge from the holding tanks. That sludge has to go somewhere. Up to now, that sludge has been spread on fields in the valley. Recently problems have developed in finding acceptable areas to dump the sludge. This is a recognized problem for the entire valley that needs a new approach. Some properties with old septic systems may now be connected to the public system, but the old system may still be in use or has not been removed.

4. ISSUE: Water rights are another issue. As more land is subdivided for homes, there will be more demand on surface water and the aquifer, resulting in conflicts over the use of water. Facilities with high water consumption that rely on surface or aquifer water, may create water rights conflicts. It is very important for every land owner to verify their water rights on an ongoing basis, so that they can defend their right to the use of water.

5.5.2.3 *Goals and Policies – Water/sewer not Supplied by LCWSD*

GOAL 7. Protect the water quality of the aquifer underlying the Lakeside Neighborhood and the water quality of the Lake.

Policy 7.1. Increase public awareness of the nature of the aquifer and issues that affect it.

Policy 7.2. Encourage strict enforcement of State and County regulations concerning septic system development and maintenance.

Policy 7.3. Encourage rigorous and scientifically valid environmental impact analysis of well, sewer, and runoff impacts of new development, before preliminary approvals granted. Encourage mitigation techniques for any facility or land use requiring high use of fertilizers.

5.5.2.4 *Implementation Strategies*

Community Council Actions:

1) Undertake an ongoing process to increase public awareness of the nature of the aquifer and lake quality and issues that affect them.
2) Develop Council understanding of well, septic, and water rights issues.
3) When making recommendations for land use decisions, the Council should review all information and advocate that valid and acceptable environmental impact analysis of well, sewer, and runoff impacts of new development be required before preliminary approval of new development.

5.5.3 Solid Waste

5.5.3.1 *Existing Conditions – Solid Waste*

Section III.D. of the 1994 Plan addressed a concern for "green box sites":

> "*The future of the Green boxes, which we all visit on a regular basis, is under review and their future is uncertain at best.*"

The green box system for solid waste in the County has survived over the years, but is in danger once again of being eliminated in certain locations, including Lakeside.

On August 21, 2008, the Daily Inter Lake reported: "The proposal to consolidate the Kila and Marion dump sites into an Ashley Lake Road facility is the first suggested piece of a major overhaul of the county's "green box" system." And later in the same article: "The county government and Solid Waste Board are looking at consolidating some sites, plus upgrading them so all are fenced, lighted and staffed. There is no timetable to overhaul the county system. However, County Public Works Director David Prunty speculated the effort might take one or two years."

An August 28, 2008 article the Daily Inter Lake reported again on the Kila – Marion consolidation into a dump site near Ashley Lake Road. "County officials say that the numbers just don't work to keep service running to Marion, and that the Kila location is too small and an eyesore. The cost of servicing both sites is becoming a greater financial burden on the county. Property owners pay an average of $80.73 per year in taxes to support the landfill and green-box sites." "Tax revenue from Marion is about one fifth of what it costs to maintain service to the area west of Kalispell. 'Consolidation is the smartest, most economic thing we could do for all who live in Flathead County,' board Chairman Hank Olson said."

The cost of gasoline was stated as a significant pressure, as well as pressure from the insurance company for the county to staff the green-box sites. Public Works Director David Prunty said the county needs to either go down the path of staffing the dump sites or get out of the container business all together. Prunty said that no other large county in Montana services the entire population like Flathead County does. Green-box sites in Bigfork, Lakeside, Essex and along U.S. 2 east of West Glacier are all proposed for elimination. The County's consolidation efforts

would leave seven main sites that would be open 363 days a year for 13 hours per day." Manning the sites would "double the size of the current staff."

Prunty said that although the container program is running efficiently right now, population growth will eventually make it unmanageable. "Is the container site system functional for us with all of this expense?' Prunty said, 'At some point, I see this system going away. "

The Lakeside Neighborhood Plan Committee interviewed Jim Chilton, Operations Manager for Solid Waste in September 2008. Chilton indicated that the green box site for Lakeside and Bigfork will be consolidated into the Somers' site on Route 82 between Somers and Bigfork. According to Chilton, the Montana Department of Transportation currently owns the land where the Lakeside dump facility is located and has stated that they are not interested in selling the land.

Chilton stated that few people use the Lakeside site and that it is a health hazard and a huge liability. He also indicated that increased population would make the site dysfunctional. He confirmed that the first consolidation (Kila and Marion to Ashley Lake), would cut costs to the County and is the first consolidation to be implemented. Others will follow.

He confirmed that all Flathead County property owners pay the $80.73 tax, whether they use the green-box system or not. There are other options available to property owners, according to Chilton – for example, Allied Waste will provide trash pick-up to your household location.

In closing, Chilton indicated that the County will keep the green-box systems as long as possible through the proposed consolidations of current sites. The County will install fences and specify hours of operation at the consolidated sites so they can control them.

5.5.3.2 *Issues & Opportunities – Solid Waste*

1. ISSUE: The Lakeside Green Box Dump site may be closed as early as 2009.

Those who use the Lakeside site will have to contract curb side service OR travel to the Somers site – about 19 miles round trip from downtown Lakeside – to dispose of household waste. This, of course, will mean that property owners, who already pay the $80.73 per year tax for solid waste disposal, may have additional cost for local solid waste pick up or for gas to travel to county solid waste disposal sites.

2. ISSUE AND OPPORTUNITY: Staffed sites at the consolidated locations will likely mean that stricter enforcement will be put in place regulating the types of solid waste allowed at consolidated sites. This may mean the consolidated sites will only accept household waste and will likely ban construction waste or landscaping waste, both of which are currently dumped at the Lakeside site even though the site is intended only for household waste.

3. OPPORTUNITY: In the community survey, many respondents noted that recycling services are limited at Lakeside's existing green-box site. Recycling might be more economical and feasible at consolidated sites.

5.5.3.3 *Goals & Policies – Solid Waste*

GOAL 8. Maintain convenient and efficient solid waste services.

Policy 8.1. Maintain options for solid waste disposal

Policy 8.2. Increase opportunities for recycling.

5.5.3.4 *Implementation Strategies – Solid Waste*

Community Council Actions:

1) Recognizing that neither Lakeside property owners nor the Lakeside Community Council have control over County actions regarding green-box dump sites, the Community Council should help educate the Lakeside Community on this issue and on County regulations and encourage property owners to attend meetings to present their views. The Council should monitor the Kila-Marion consolidation as a benchmark for what may happen in Lakeside and provide the public with information on possible alternatives available in Lakeside for solid waste disposal.

2) The Community Council should work with the solid waste department to increase recycling facilities at green box sites.

5.6 Law Enforcement

While Lakeside enjoys a relatively low crime rate, improving safety and security is a high priority for the people of Lakeside. In the Community Survey, when respondents were asked to rate the importance of 20 features of the Community, "Safety and Security" was ranked the most important of the 20 features (2.85 out of a possible 3.0) with only a medium level of satisfaction (2.2 out of a possible 3.0). It has the 6th largest gap out of 20 between the importance rating and the satisfaction rating. See Table 3.1 in Chapter 3 for the chart of importance and satisfaction for these 20 features.

Because law enforcement is provided by the county and state, Lakeside citizens have little control or additional resources to increase law enforcement service. However, it is possible to reduce criminal behavior and opportunities to commit crime through a community wide effort that can improve safety and security at the existing level of law enforcement.

Information for this sub-chapter was gathered:

- From the Community Survey
- Montana Board of Crime Control
- Federal Bureau of Investigation
- An interview with the Patrol Lieutenant for the Flathead County Sheriff's Department.
- An interview with a spokesperson from the Kalispell office of the Montana Highway Patrol.

5.6.1 Existing conditions

5.6.1.1 *Law Enforcement Service to Lakeside*

Lakeside law enforcement needs are currently served by the Flathead County Sheriff's Department and the Montana Highway Patrol. Sheriff patrols are divided into the north half and south half of the county. There are always one, and sometimes two or three, deputies patrolling the south half of the county. Response times for a deputy to the Lakeside Neighborhood vary greatly but are typically 20 to 30 minutes.

The Lakeside area is served by the Montana Highway Patrol from the Kalispell office that covers all of Flathead, Lake and Lincoln Counties. The number of officers on patrol from the Kalispell office at any one time varies greatly. From 3:00 am to 6:00 am there is an officer on standby but there are no officers actively patrolling in that time period. The rest of the time, every day, there could typically be from one to five officers on patrol in the three county area. There is no regular schedule for MHP patrols through the Lakeside area.

The Sheriff's Department is dispatched and responds for all crime, traffic, and other law enforcement emergencies; however, the Highway Patrol is dispatched for only traffic and law enforcement emergencies associated with our highways. The MHP does monitor the Sheriff's Department dispatch and will respond to other crime and law enforcement emergencies if they are in close proximity or are needed as backup.

In addition to these two professional law enforcement organizations a private citizen of Lakeside has arranged, with the approval of the Flathead County Sheriff, to provide a decoy patrol car.

The car is parked conspicuously along Highway 93 in a variety of different locations to affect voluntary speed and traffic law conformance.

5.6.1.2 *Crime Statistics*

There is no crime statistics maintained specifically for the Lakeside area. The Montana Board of Crime Control collects and tabulates crime data for the cities and counties throughout the state. The Federal Bureau of Investigation compiles and tabulates crime data covering each state, county, and many major cities. Crime statistics for Flathead County are collected for the cities of Kalispell, Whitefish and Columbia Falls; and for the unincorporated part of the county. There are 26 specific crimes categorized. For many crime studies seven of the most serious crimes are totaled to quantify a parameter called Crime Index (Homicide, Rape, Robbery, Aggravated Assault, Larceny, and Motor Vehicle Theft (MVT)). The Crime Rate parameter is the Crime Index per 100,000 population for comparisons to other locations and to judge changes in crime frequency as population size changes in a single location (see Table 5-3) . The parameters Total Crime and Total Rate are similar but include all crime categories.

	1997	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Aggravated Assault	44	196	184	234	191	224
Burglary	586	249	305	241	200	250
Homicide	1	6	1	5	1	2
Larceny	1784	1567	1540	1256	897	985
MVT	140	140	165	94	66	69
Rape	32	31	25	32	32	33
Robbery	3	2	4	9	10	11
Other	3308	3343	3290	2547	2365	1924
Population	47295	52933	52933	53885	54014	54574
Crime Index	2590	2191	2235	1871	1397	1574
Crime Rate	5476	4139	4222	3472	2586	2884
Total Crime	5898	5534	5514	4418	3762	3498
Total Rate	12471	10455	10417	8199	6965	6410

Table 5-3: Crime in unincorporated Flathead County (#'s are incidences)

Crime in the unincorporated part of Flathead County has decreased since 1997, but most of the decrease has occurred since 2004 (see Figures 5-20 and 5-21). From 2004 to 2007 the Crime Index (seven of the most serious crimes) has decreased 30%. The Crime Rate, that considers the growth in the population, shows a drop of 32%. The increase in Crime Index from 2006 to 2007 may be an indication of a change in enforcement or prosecution priorities. By looking at all crime categories, Total Crime, the decrease from 2004 to 2007 was 37% and, considering population growth, the Total Rate dropped by 38%.

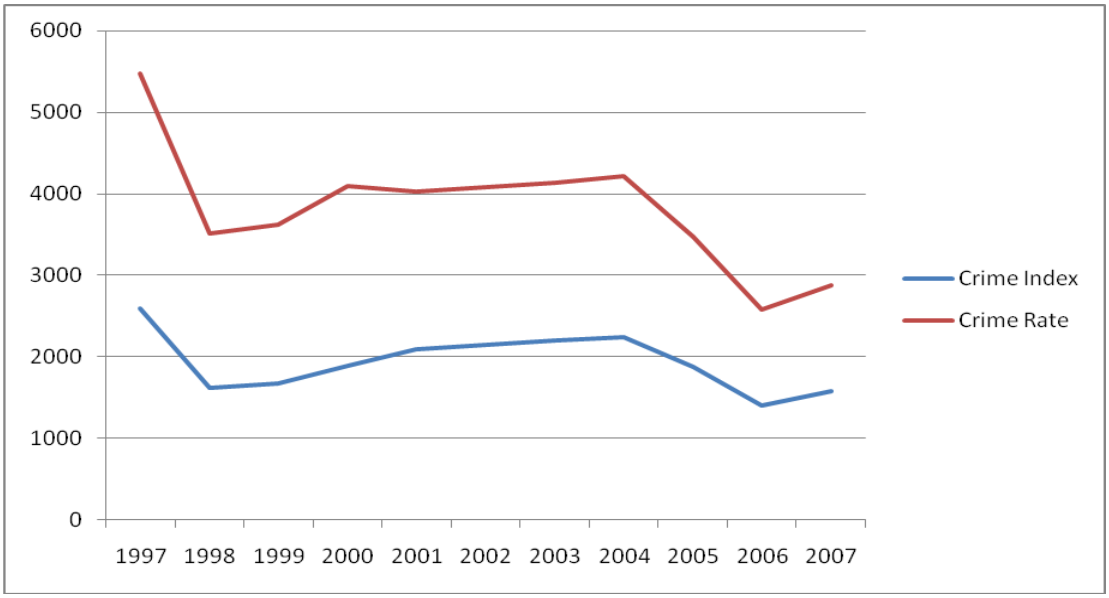


Figure 5-20: Seven most serious crimes in unincorporated Flathead County

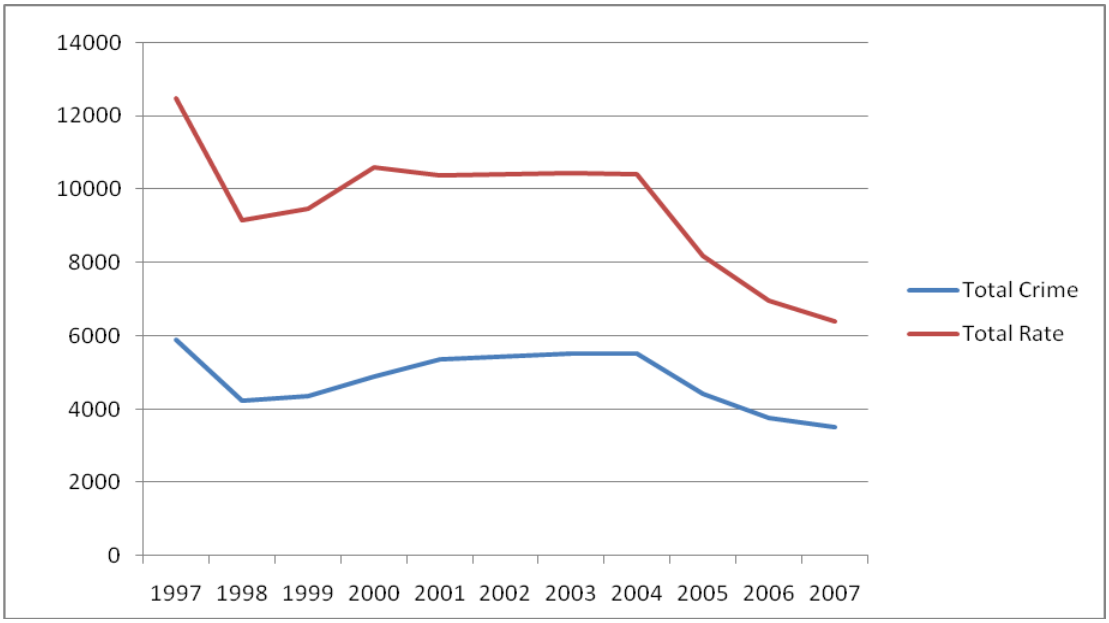


Figure 5-21: Total crime in unincorporated Flathead County

In 2007 the crime statistics varied greatly for the seven most populous counties (including the cities) in Montana (see Table 5-4). The average Crime Rate was 3946 and the average Total Rate was 8988. The Crime Rate and Total Rate during 2007 for all of Flathead County were both slightly higher than these averages. It should be noted that these data for Flathead County include the cities of Kalispell, Whitefish, and Columbia Falls. The 2007 Crime Rate and Total Rate for the unincorporated part of the county are 28% and 30%, respectively, less than the rates for the entire county. The same data for the other counties were not studied, but it should be assumed that similar decreases in crime between the cities and unincorporated areas occur in those counties also. Comparing crime statistics for different counties is very difficult and can be very misleading. Please refer to "Crime in the United States, 2007" section titled "Caution Against Ranking Variables Affecting Crime" from the U.S. Department of Justice – Federal Bureau of Investigation, released September 2008 before drawing specific conclusions. However, it may be safe to note that crime in Flathead County is not significantly more of a problem than it is in other similarly populated counties across Montana.

County	Cascade	Flathead	Gallatin	Lewis and Clark	Missoula	Silver Bow	Yellowstone
Major City	Great Falls	Kalispell	Bozeman	Helena	Missoula	Butte	Billings
Co. Population	79880	87511	83434	60204	102898	32789	140524
Crime Index	3707	3511	2737	1763	4073	1601	5494
Crime Rate	4641	4012	3280	2928	3958	4883	3909
Total Crime	9790	10479	7945	6245	12775	4831	14807
Total Rate	7820	9170	6629	3760	13145	1584	20807

Table 5-4: Crime Statistics (incidences) in the seven most populous counties in Montana

Although there are no compiled statistics specifically for the Lakeside Neighborhood, discussions with the Flathead County Sheriff's Department yielded some insight. The Patrol Lieutenant said his feeling was that the highest crime areas for the county were Evergreen and the Canyon areas. He said the Bigfork and Lakeside areas both had lower crime rates. He also said he expected crime rates to continue to stay under control and possibly decline in the future.

5.6.1.3 *Survey Results*

Survey respondents placed a very high level of importance on Safety and Security but only a slightly higher than medium level of satisfaction with its current condition, suggesting they would like to see future efforts to improve Safety and Security in Lakeside. Respondents were evenly split on whether they felt the current level of law enforcement presence was adequate or inadequate. Only a few respondents mentioned crime as a concern. Most concerns regarding safety and security were oriented to traffic and speed, especially though downtown, making turning onto Highway 93 difficult and crossing on foot even more difficult.

Free form comments from the surveys were divided into five categories. Most comments expressed a desire to see more law enforcement and one comment requested a decrease in the

current level of law enforcement in the Lakeside area. A significant number of comments requested an increase in traffic law enforcement or suggested it was time for Lakeside to either have its own police force or a county Sheriff's Office in Lakeside. A few comments suggested increased law enforcement on Flathead Lake.

5.6.2 Issues & Opportunities

1. ISSUE: Law enforcement resources are limited.

Currently the Lakeside Neighborhood shares law enforcement resources with the rest of Flathead County. Because crime is considered by the sheriff's office to be lower in Lakeside than other parts of the county, the neighborhood can expect to receive proportionally less law enforcement presence than those other locations. Improving local law enforcement solely through efforts to increase local control by either the existing Community Council or possibly a Village form of government in the future is doubtful based on the limits of the existing resources.

2. ISSUE: Increase in law enforcement services will depend on tax revenues.

The level of service is, of course, proportional to the funding they each receive. Without increases in tax revenue, and considering the continuous increases in costs, Lakeside can expect to see very little change from the current conditions, or possibly even a decline in service, in the short term. In the longer term it is conceivable that changes in technology, government priorities, management practices or other variables may provide a higher level of law enforcement service in the future; however, it should not be considered likely. Tax revenue increases are based on increasing tax rates and growth in tax base.

3. OPPORTUNITY: Citizen initiated programs to increase security exist that could be implemented in Lakeside.

Increasing law enforcement service levels is only one way to improve safety and security. The current levels of service would likely be very adequate if crime and traffic problems were reduced. The implementation of a plan to provide easily available, safe, responsible activities for residents, property owners, and visitors; and encouraging everyone to be vigilant through programs like Neighborhood Watch should improve safety and security in the Lakeside Neighborhood.

5.6.3 Goals & Policies

GOAL 9. Maintain and improve safety and security in the Community.

Policy 9.1. Work to create citizen programs throughout the community to improve safety.

5.6.4 Implementation Strategies

Community Council Actions:

The goal of improving safety and security for residents, property owners, and visitors of Lakeside is to be met through encouraging activities and implementing programs achievable within the Lakeside Community that do not depend on increasing County or State law enforcement presence.

As in most communities throughout America crime in Lakeside crosses all age, gender and wealth boundaries. The group of programs and activities presented here need to affect the entire community. Each one may focus on just one part of our community to be effective, but there needs to be a program for everyone.

1) The Lakeside Parks Advisory Committee should continue to work on local parks and path networks to provide safe, healthy recreation opportunities. A Parks Watch Program, possibly modeled after the Neighborhood Watch program, should be designed and implemented to enforce rules and prevent illegal activities at our local parks.

2) The Community Council should research the feasibility of organizing a Neighborhood Watch program. A special committee could be appointed to map individual neighborhoods, recruit and train Watch Captains, and review the program regularly.

3) The Community Council should begin a publicity campaign to educate the community on the relationship between crime and opportunity. Communities where unoccupied homes and parked cars are regularly kept locked have much lower incidence of burglary and theft.

Community Organization:

1) Local organizations like the Boys and Girls Club, West Shore Library, and PTA should design and implement after school programs for students attending Lakeside Elementary and Somers Middle School along with programs for high school students returning to Lakeside on the bus. These efforts should consider seasonal limits and opportunities by providing both outdoor and indoor activities to interest students in safe, healthy recreation.

2) Each member of the community must be involved and take responsibility for their and their neighbor's safety and security. Programs to enhance a sense of community, like the annual Lakeside Fair, can develop involvement, participation, and cooperation by both fulltime and part-time residents. Lakeside citizens must understand, whether through the Somers/Lakeside Volunteer Fire Department, Lakeside Quick Response Unit, future Neighborhood Watch, or other volunteer organizations, their safety and security depends on volunteers within their own community. People need to become involved.

5.7 Schools

This Chapter includes information on the Lakeside / Somers school district. Sources for the information include the Principal for the Lakeside and Somers schools and a School District Board member.

5.7.1 Existing conditions

The Somers-Lakeside School District (#29) is large. North and east boundaries of the school district are roughly along the Flathead River toward Kalispell; the southern boundary is the Lake County border; and the west boundary extends up into the hills. The Lakeside Neighborhood Plan area sits completely within the Somers-Lakeside School District. The School district is separated in two locations. The Lakeside campus is located on Adams Street in downtown Lakeside, sitting on 5.2 acres of land and housing approximately 398 students, grades K thru 5. The Somers campus is located on School Addition Road in Somers, sitting on 12.78 acres, housing approximately 194 students, and grades 6 thru 8.

The Lakeside Elementary building is over 10 years old, constructed in 1998, and has over 20 classrooms (figure 5-22 shows an aerial view of the school). The building is 47,060 square feet. The gymnasium can be and has been used by the public if arranged through the school and events such as the PTA swap, the Christmas Bazaar, and the Annual Lakeside Fair are held there annually. The Lakeside Elementary School campus comprises about 5.1 acres and is about1/10 mile west of Highway 93 in downtown Lakeside.

Figure 5-22: Aerial view of Lakeside Elementary School property on Adams St.

Early in 2008, the Committee interviewed a District Board member who indicated that the school is overcrowded and out of room. Hallways are being used for storage and the school is in need of more classrooms. The school has given up the Family Resource Center, two Title 1 rooms and the Art room and converted them to classrooms. Classes are being taught in the hall ways and not all children can attend music classes due to overcrowding. Enrollment has increased

15% since the school was built in 1998. Current projections (early 2007), indicate another 50 students by 2010. The school campus is surrounded by privately owned land. The school footprint is not large enough to add building space in Lakeside without taking away playground area or the soccer field. It is not feasible to build up, adding another floor. More land is needed.

The Lakeside Community has been very supportive of the school. A bond issue was included on the November 2007 General Election Ballot. Quotes from the brochure soliciting support for the Bond issue stated that during the last 10 years our enrollment has increased by 15%. In 1998 District #29 enrollment was 502 students. In 2006 enrollment was 586 students, an increase of 84 students. If the rate of growth over the past ten years continues, the District is projected to have an additional 50 students by 2010 and no classroom space to accommodate these children.

The Bond issue did not pass and the School District Board is revisiting the space and overcrowding issues. The most commonly expressed concern regarding the bond was that people did not see the need for a new building. Three publicized forums were provided but attendance for all three totaled no more than 40 persons. Another contributing factor to the bond failure was lack of parental turnout. Only 26% of the parents of enrolled students actually voted.

The most significant increase in enrollment has occurred in the primary grades where accreditation standards restrict classroom size to 20 students. The District has typically had 3 classrooms for each grade. However, the district started the 2007 school year with 4 kindergarten, 5 first grade, and 4 third grade classrooms. Lakeside now has no more classrooms available for continued growth. Without additional space at the Middle School, these larger classes will necessitate that class sizes would increase to 28-30 students in rooms built for no more than 25 children. Such crowded classrooms would inevitably have an adverse effect on the quality of our children's education.

As 2008 unfolded, the economy weakened. An interview in October 2008 with the Lakeside and Somers schools' Principal revealed there are 381 students currently at Lakeside Elementary and 190 at Somers Middle. In their 2007 planning process, an attempt was made to determine where students lived. However, so many of the phone numbers given as contact information were cell phones that physical residences could not be determined. Some indication can be gleaned from the statistic that the Lakeside Elementary school currently has two school buses that travel south of Somers and 4 school buses that cover the rest of the school district area. Loose extrapolation of those numbers means that 127 of the 381 students (33.3%) could be from within the Lakeside Community. As of the fall of 2008, there are no plans for Lakeside School expansion. The main goal now is to keep the building up to date and in good repair. Major renovations needed are a new look and painting.

Over a year was spent planning for the bond issue that subsequently failed. The Board will need to run a bond to relieve some overcrowding at both schools. However, the Board plans to do nothing until the economy improves. They may wait until the current Lakeside Elementary bond is paid in 2012. Since development and sale of new homes will likely dip along with the economy; the plan does not foresee a significant growth in enrollment immediately. Enrollments will likely increase as home construction and sales increase.

When asked what the potential impact might be of an elementary school in the proposed Siderius Commons development, the Principal indicated the Siderius family has proposed deeding between 4-12 acres to the school district for the purpose of a K-8 school in their development, which will have 590 single family units. If there were even 400 students coming to this school

from the subdivision, the school would not contribute any relief to the enrollment growth that we have experienced or will experience north of Highway 82. The district would have used all of its bonding capacity and still be in need of space. The gift of land is contingent upon the District's agreement to build a school on that site. It would also require a bond to pay for our "share" of infrastructure, such a roads and lights. At this time, with the economy in a downturn, district trustees cannot responsibly ask voters to approve a bond of any kind.

5.7.2 Issues & Opportunities

1. ISSUE: The Lakeside School is over-crowded; however, no effort for expansion can be planned in the near future.

5.7.3 Goals & Policies

This Plan has no influence over either growth in the schools or in the planning or implementation of any expansion projects. Rather than state Goals and Policies over which the Community has little control, the plan recommends that the Community rethink its stance on needed school expansion. If Lakeside wants its community to be a vibrant, family-oriented, diverse community as expressed in the 2008 Community Survey Results used to develop this Neighborhood Plan, they need to understand and consider School District needs, even if they don't currently have children in the system.

5.8 Lakeside Community Council

Section IV. C. of the 1994 Neighborhood Plan recommended formation of a Lakeside Community Council: "*That the Commissioners develop appropriate administrative procedures by formal resolution giving legal standing to a Lakeside Community Council as advisors to the Commission in matters relating to the Lakeside Neighborhood*." The Council serves to this day in an advisory capacity representing property owners within Lakeside Neighborhood boundaries.

5.8.1 Existing conditions

The Lakeside Community Council was formed in 1995 and has been active since that time. Applications for development and other matters are brought before the Council in public meetings and the Council makes recommendations for or against the proposal to the County Planning Board. Over the years, they have had mixed results. Council has no real authority and the County Planning Board and Commissioners can and do override Council's recommendations

According to the 1994 Plan, the Council should "*contain no less than 5 residents, elected with term limits*" and should "meet regularly in public forum". The Council is authorized to "*appoint appropriate subcommittees to study issues of community concern and make recommendations to Council as a whole*". Over the years, the Council has had at least 5 members, sometimes more. Terms are from 1 to 3 years, and terms are staggered so there is always some experienced members on the Council.

It is difficult to find people interested in serving. It is an elected position and potential candidates must follow the County process to be placed on the ballot. If only one person declares to run for an open seat, no election is held. If more than one person applies for a seat, the election takes place. Applicants must file with the County Elections Department by a certain date to be on the ballot for the election.

The Community Council has appointed various subcommittees over the years. The Parks Committee was formed to research and recommend improvements to existing parks and to identify new opportunities for parks. This committee is still in effect but now reports to the County Parks Department and gives frequent updates to the Community Council. The Council also appointed the Lakeside Neighborhood Plan Committee as a sub-committee authorized to revise the 1994 Plan and be directly responsible to the Council. Most recently, the Council has appointed a Town Center Planning Committee to create and implement a comprehensive development plan for the downtown area of Lakeside.

The Community Council meets at 7:00 pm on the last Tuesday of every month at the Sewer District building on Bierney Creek Road in Lakeside. Three (3) members constitute a quorum. If there are no agenda items, the meeting may be cancelled. Cancellations are usually done by phone or email. Though the meetings are public, there is very little publicizing of information to the Community about meeting schedules or agenda items or meeting results. Some minutes of Council meetings can be found in the West Shore Library in Lakeside but not all minutes are easily assessable in any given place.

The 1994 Plan included a list of issues to be addressed by the Council. Below is a status assessment of each of these items:

1. *"Park Improvements to Ben Williams Park and public access to Flathead Lake; new sites; plus parking problems & traffic congestion at existing locations. Seek assistance*

from Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks and the State Highway Department."

a. A subcommittee for Parks was established especially for Ben Williams Park improvements. This Committee continues to exist.

2. *"Highway and surface street problems, safety, signs, sidewalks, illumination and signal lights and crosswalks; new off-highway commercial and professional street frontage; street signs and house numbers; potential impact of highway widening."* This issue is not in the control of the Community Council or the Community for that matter. The Council acts as a sounding board. Highway officials were brought in to study speeds. There were no speed changes resulting, but the 45 mph speed limit signs were moved farther up the hills on both sides of town.

3. *"Development of a Lakeside Community theme with architectural committee and sign code (Suggested 'rustic' or 'nautical' themes)"* After the 1994 Plan, the Community never really supported a theme. In the 2008 Community survey, however, respondents were asked if there should be a downtown theme. The following chart shows that 66% agree that there should be a downtown theme, That 23% disagree and the average of all responses was 3.0 (agree) (see Figure 5-23).

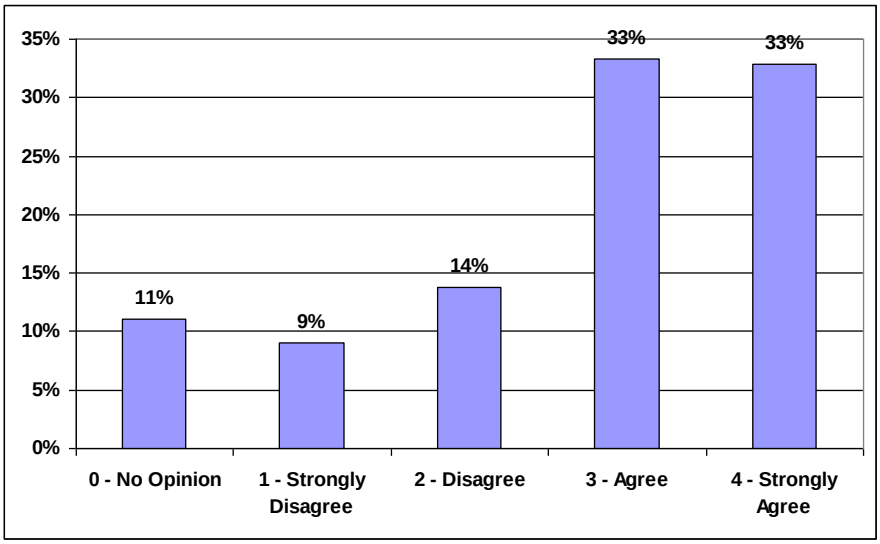


Figure 5-23: 2008 Lakeside Community Survey – Need for Downtown Theme

4. *"Coordination with all utility and service districts within Lakeside Neighborhood boundaries to accommodate orderly growth, with public education and support (water, sewer, solid waste, QRU and fire). Work to retain green box sites locally with appropriate limitations and rules, segregation for recycling."*

a. Council, again, has no real authority in these areas, but rather acts as a sounding board.

b. Coordination has been fairly low with QRU and Fire District having more contact than others.

5. *"Law Enforcement liaison, support and education (Suggestion has been made to establish a Neighborhood Watch Program)."* There has not been much coordination or

contact here between law enforcement agencies and the Council. The Neighborhood Watch program did not happen, and was not suggested at all in the 2008 Community Survey.

6. *"Community organization development: enhance Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Corporation, business expansion, coordination with existing service clubs."* Similar groups still exist today as existed in 1994 – the Lakeside Community Club, the West Cap (food bank), and the Sr. Citizen Group. The Somers-Lakeside Chamber of Commerce has become an active organization within the Community with monthly meetings and greatly improved community contacts, including a website. The Lakeside Community Development Foundation was created in 1997 to assist with fundraising for Ben Williams Park and the Waterfront Park swimming beach. As a 501 (c) 3 org, this non-profit organization can be a pass-through for tax deductible contributions. Their IRS designation states that this group was organized to enhance public spaces.

7. *"School District Liaison: education and support, coordination on ultimate disposition of Lakeside School facility and site; student safety and extra curricular youth activities."* The Lakeside Elementary School is still open and has grown to an overcrowded state, with the recent bond issue to relieve school district overcrowding failing to pass. There has been minimal coordination or communication between the Council and the School District.

8. *"Investigate and establish a Herding District."* Montana is a "free range" state and is likely to stay that way; no actions have occurred since 1995 and no request or concerns regarding the herding district have been received.

9. *"Investigate the possibility of obtaining foundation or government grants or donations to accomplish acquisition of suitable public lake access."* A Council member has indicated that the Council has no real authority here. A member of the Parks Committee indicated that most grant monies go to low income areas and that Lakeside is viewed as "affluent". Since 1994, funding for downtown lighting was investigated, but not achieved. The Parks Committee is now dealing with open space & lake access with public access.

10. *"Investigate the feasibility of an executive size golf course."* At the time of the 1994 plan, there was some land available that might have been suitable, but that is no longer the case. A golf course is planned in The Lakeside Club (aka Eagle's Crest) development. Eventually, this club will be private, but has to achieve a specified number of memberships before it can be private. In the interim, it is planned that this golf course will be open to the public. It is anticipated that it will take many years to achieve the number of memberships needed to make the club private.

Implementation of the 1994 Plan was to be accomplished through the development and implementation of a Land Use Development Code. This code was, in fact, developed and implemented: Zoning Regulations Section 3.42. The zoned area includes only a portion of the downtown area (see Chapter 6 on Land Use). Existing zoned areas at the time (Conrad Point, Peaceful Bay and Point Caroline) were grandfathered. Existing land uses were grandfathered. Density standards were set, but only in the zoned areas. Height limitations were set at 35 feet with standard county-established setbacks for fire protection, but only in the downtown zoned area.

5.8.2 Issues & Opportunities

1. ISSUE: The Community Council has no "clout".

In the community survey, respondents supported both planning and the Community Council as being needed by the Community. However, comments were made by respondents expressed frustration that recommendations by the Council are sometimes ignored by the County Planning Board or Commissioners. 91% of survey respondents agree that Neighborhood Planning is needed. 86% of survey respondents agree that the Community Council is needed. It is important to note, however, that comments from survey responses strongly indicate that a more effective and influential Council is needed.

Though the Council is responsible for recommending actions or positions to the County, County officials have no accountability to abide by them. There is no entity in the County with responsibility for monitoring and enforcing zoning regulations.

2. ISSUE: Contact and coordination between the Council and Community services is not sufficient.

The Council should always be up to date on major issues or actions and current status of services to the Community.

3. ISSUE AND OPPORTUNITY: Meetings are not well attended by the public.

In general, though all meetings are open to the public, communication with the public is minimal. Meetings are not well attended. Citizens usually show up because an agenda item may impact them personally or word of mouth has generated their interest. Usually, the meetings are attended and reported by a reporter from the West Shore News, but no other regular communications with the public are in place.

4. ISSUE: The process to fill a vacant seat is not generally understood by the public.

The Council should provide education and notice well in advance of a seat becoming vacant so the public has time to comply with the required County process. The Council needs to market itself to the community so more people might express interest in serving.

5. ISSUE: Records of meetings are not readily available.

While compiling this plan, Committee members wished to research some issues using Council meeting minutes. Some of these are filed in the Library but many are not. The Council needs to be more diligent in its maintenance of records and having these records available to the public.

5.8.3 Goals and Policies

GOAL 10. Improve the effectiveness of the Community Council.

Policy 10.1. The Community Council should be consistently knowledgeable of status, issues, and plans of Community services and districts.

Policy 10.2. Improve the Council's policies and procedures for holding public meetings.

Policy 10.3. Improve the presence and responsibility of the Council in the community.

5.8.4 Implementation Strategies

5.8.4.1 *Community Council Actions:*

1) The Community Council should establish frequent contact with organizations and enterprises providing services or impacting the Community. This includes, but is not limited to: QRU, Fire District, Water / Sewer District, School District, Law Enforcement agencies, and County and state offices and agencies. Community Council to appoint selected members to be responsible for various services or district. Each member could be responsible one or two services or districts. These appointed members could attend regularly scheduled meetings of the services or districts and record any items of interest or impact. At least once yearly per service/district, but more frequently if circumstances indicate, Council meeting agendas should include representatives of the various services or districts with updates to the Council on the status and issues and plans of the service or agency.

2) The Community Council should implement and use media such as posters, news media, Chamber of Commerce, etc. to communicate schedules and agendas.

3) The Community Council should develop an Internet Website complete with information about the Council, schedules & agendas, actions and decisions, membership, and general information on issues and items of interest to the community. Council should publish the existence of this website at least once per year, along with their meeting schedule for the year. The website should document actions by the Council and follow-up actions/decisions by the County.

4) The council should have an email address accessible to the general public.

5) The Community Council should promote and maintain a list of email addresses for Community residents and property owners who volunteer to be on the distribution list. This email address list could be used to alert the community to issues deemed important by the Community Council or meetings of the Council, Planning Board or Commissioners with items of interest or impact to the Community. The email address list could also be used to publish meeting agendas prior to each scheduled monthly meeting. Suggested name for this vehicle of communication is “The Lakeside Voice”. There should be an option on the Council Website where property owners or residents can sign up to participate (Note that for privacy reasons, this email list would never be shared, sold, or used for any reason other than those named above).

6) The Community Council should publicize issues and actions. The Council should make public and easily accessible: agendas, meeting minutes, the results of all their recommendations to the County, and follow up status on these items as they proceed through County processes. Community Council should notify the public of significant issues, presenting an objective picture of the pros & cons of that issue, and inviting the public to participate in Council meetings to consider issues resolutions or recommendations.

7) The Community Council should appoint and sponsor various subcommittees as needed to address follow-on activities as identified in this plan.

8) The Community Council should frequently examine its own policies, procedures, and actions striving for continuous improvement and efficiency in representing the Community

9) The Community Council should publish upcoming vacancies at least 3 months in advance of the deadline for a candidate to file for candidacy with the Department of Elections. When published, Council should also clearly convey the qualifications and the process to be followed to obtain a seat on the Council.

10) The Community Council should review the Planning Board's procedures for holding public meetings and consider adopting those or similar procedures.

5.9 Natural Resources

5.9.1 Existing Conditions

The Lakeside Planning area is characterized by high ridges to the west with drainages generally running to the east, down slope to Flathead Lake. The entire planning area is part of the Flathead Basin, and all of the drainages eventually terminate in Flathead Lake. There are two type IV ecoregions in the planning area: the Salish Mountains ecoregion in the higher elevations, and the Flathead Valley ecoregion along the shores of Flathead Lake. The Salish Mountains ecoregion is forested, averages 20 to 50 inches of precipitation per year, rarely exceeds 7,000 feet in elevation, and is underlain with Precambrian Belt rocks. The landscape was heavily influenced by glaciations, with some deposits of glacier till. Perennial streams are present. The Flathead Valley ecoregion is also heavily glaciated, and contains Flathead Lake. Glacial outwash, till, lake sediments and alluvium are common in the area. Temperatures can sometimes be moderated by Flathead Lake when compared to the surrounding area. Average precipitation rangers from 14 to 25 inches per year. Forested areas are typical of the Northern Rockies (US Environmental Protection Agency, 2002).

5.9.1.1 *Hydrology*

- **Streams:** There are three main drainages within the planning area; Bierney Creek, Stoner Creek, and Tacklin Creek.
    - Bierney Creek is head watered west of downtown Lakeside, and north of Baldy Mountain. The lower reaches of Bierney Creek have some channels and some locations put into culverts. It provides drainage from Adams Street to Bierney Creek Rd.
    - Stoner Creek is a perennial stream flowing into Flathead Lake at the south end of downtown Lakeside. Stoner Creek is fed by snow and rain runoff on the eastern slopes of Blacktail Mountain, which feeds Lost Lake which in turn feeds Stoner Creek. Several smaller streams and ground springs also run into Stoner Creek. The stream is home to brook trout and an occasional beaver pond. Access to the stream is limited as it mostly flows through private property.
    - Numerous springs flow into Flathead Lake from Caroline Point to Hughs Bay – all coming off the slopes to the west of Lakeside.
- **Lakes:** Flathead Lake is one of the 300 largest natural lakes in the world, and is the largest natural freshwater lake in the western United States. The Lake is regulated by Kerr Dam which maintains the level of the lake at 2,883 feet in the winter and at 2,893 feet at full pool around by June 15th. The maximum depth of the lake is 370 feet, and averages over 164 feet deep. The lake is 191 square miles and has a total shoreline of 187 miles. The water quality of the lake is described as oligomesotrophic (deficient in plant nutrients and moderate amount of dissolved nutrients) and is considered very pure. However, the water quality of Flathead Lake has been in decline over the past decade due to combined effects of increased pollution from human sources, erosion of shoreline, and introduction of non-native species.

  The lake serves as an economic engine for the region, and is incredibly important to

residents and visitors alike. It was ranked 3rd highest of 20 features of Lakeside in the 2008 Community Survey (See Figure 3.1 in sub-chapter 3.2).

- **Wetlands:** Wetlands are not as prevalent in the Lakeside planning area as they are in other locations of Flathead County, but that does not mean wetlands are non-existent (see Figure 5-24). According to the National Wetlands Inventory, the highest concentrations of wetlands are located in the Stoner Creek drainage. Other wetlands may be located in the planning area that is not listed on the National Wetlands Inventory. These wetlands may require a jurisdictional delineation sometime in the future.
- **Groundwater:** Between Bierney Creek Road and Blacktail Road to the South along Highway 93 the groundwater table is from 1' to 6' and the ground water sits on a clay basin with occasional springs and Bierney Creek and Stoner Creek running into Flathead Lake-this clay basin creates a very sensitive area concerning watershed and storm drainage. West of this area, land rises to hills then mountains, all ringing this clay basin like a horseshoe. The hills slope toward the flat clay basin in the commercial center of Lakeside. Depth to ground water in the hills can be from 10' to 50' and beyond and many of these hills are fractured bedrock with steep slopes with soils that will not support heavy density without having consequences to Flathead Lake and Lakeside.
- **Floodplain:** Without the presence of major streams or rivers, floodplain is limited throughout the planning area (see Figure 5-24). The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has created maps of floodplains in Flathead County used for administering the National Flood Insurance Program. Floodplains are usually associated with streams and rivers, but lakes also pose a potential for flooding, and the vast majority of floodplain in the planning area is located along the shores of Flathead Lake. The FEMA maps have identified land at or below 2893.9 feet (NAD 83) as the extent of the floodplain along Flathead Lake. Floodplains are also associated with the lower reaches of Bierney Creek, and Stoner Creek in Lakeside. Most types of developments are restricted or may require a permit if located within a floodplain. Floodplains and other types of flood hazards may be located in other locations in the planning area and may not be mapped. To view the official FEMA maps of the flood hazards in the Lakeside Planning, please visit the offices of Flathead County Planning and Zoning.

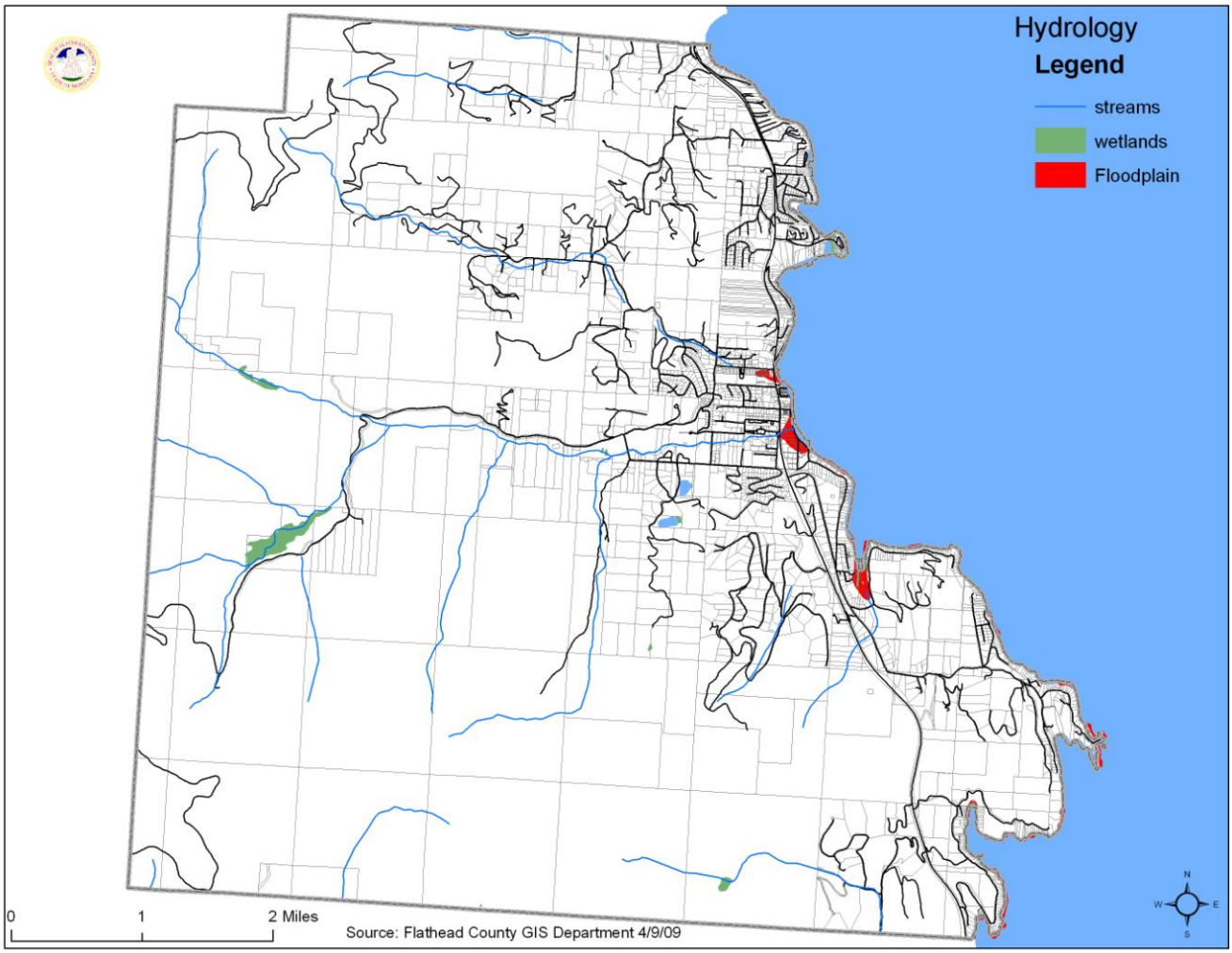


Figure 5-24: This map shows intermittent and perennial streams, wetlands identified by the National Wetland Inventory, and floodplains identified by FEMA.

5.9.1.2 *Geology/Soils*

About 600 million to 800 million years ago, sediments deposited and formed what is now called the Precambrian Belt Formation. These Precambrian Belt Formations provide the parent rock that is present within Lakeside Planning area. At some point in time, these sedimentary rocks were put under pressure, and were thrusted, bent, and fractured into the Salish Mountains. Since the formation of the mountains, the region experienced significant glaciations cutting off tops of mountains, depositing sediments, and creating Flathead Lake. Today the geology of Lakeside is characterized by the fractured bedrock, glacier till and moraines. Generally speaking, soils in the planning area are gravelly silt loams in the lower elevations and silt loams in the higher elevations. Soil characteristics can vary dramatically over small areas and site analysis can determine composition for specific sites.

5.9.1.3 *Vegetation*

Vegetation found in the Lakeside Neighborhood Plan area varies depending upon elevation and aspect. Vegetation in lower elevations is characteristic of mixed ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir, western larch forests found throughout western Montana. Upper elevations are characteristic of a mixed sub-alpine forest.

5.9.1.4 *Wildlife*

From data available on the Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks website (http://fwp.mt.gov/doingBusiness/reference/gisData/download.aspx#Wil), the general range and winter range for Elk, Mule Deer, Whitetail Deer, mountain lion, black bear and Moose was analyzed. The planning area is general winter range for all of the species. All of the species have the potential to have general winter range within the planning boundaries but on a more limited basis.

The potential for general winter range is the greatest for whitetail deer. General winter range for whitetail deer avoids the higher elevations of the planning area. The winter range for elk is in the central southern portion of the planning area. The general winter range for moose is greatest in the higher elevations of the planning area. The general winter range for Mule Deer is greatest in the southern portion of the planning area.

According to the Montana Natural Heritage Program website, 6 species of special concern may be found within the general planning area (Township 20 North and Ranges 20 and 21 West). The species identified are the Gray Wolf, Wolverines, Canada Lynx, Fisher, Black Tern, and Bald Eagle.

- **Gray Wolf:** The gray wolf does not have a particular habitat. It is more likely for wolves to follow native ungulates in its territories throughout the year. The entire planning area is considered to have potential general range and general winter range for a number of major ungulate species. There is the potential for the gray wolf in the planning area.
- **Wolverines:** Wolverines prefer alpine tundra, and boreal and mountain forest. In the Northern Rocky Mountain Region they are associated with fir, pine and larch, and in riparian regions. Wolverines appear to require large, isolated tracts of wilderness supporting a diverse prey base, rather than specific prey associations or topography. The planning area does not have large amounts of road-less areas nor is it in adjacent to any such areas. It is unlikely there are wolverines in the planning area, and if they are, their range is likely to be limited to the National Forests.
- **Canada Lynx:** Canada Lynx generally prefers lodge pole pine and mixed subalpine fir forest. They prefer elevations greater than 4,000 feet with moderately snowfall greater than 50 inches per year. There may be potential for Canada lynx in the planning area, but generally in the higher elevations.
- **Fisher:** Fishers prefer dense coniferous forests with a diverse structure of tree shapes, sizes, understory vegetation, snags, fallen limbs and limbs close to the ground. Optimal conditions are forest tracts greater than 245 acres with interconnected areas of suitable habitat. There is potential for fisher habitat in the planning area, but due to the exurban nature of lower elevations fragmenting suitable habitat, it is probably limited to higher elevations.

- **Black Tern:** Black Terns prefer wetland habitats. There is a limited amount of wetland habitat in the planning area.
- **Bald Eagle:** Bald Eagles can be found in forest areas along lakes and rivers. Nesting sites prefer a minimum distance from human activity. The shoreline of Flathead Lake is potential habitat for Bald Eagles.

5.9.1.5 *Agriculture and Timber Production*

Timber production has and will continue to be active in the neighborhood planning area. Because the area has been extensively logged, the infrastructure for timber activities is already in place. Plum Creek, a private corporation, and the US Forest Service own the majority large tract timber acreage in the area, but the cutting and selling of timber could occur anywhere in the planning area. While Plum Creek continues to sell logs off their property, the company does sell land for real estate development, creating the possibility of transition of some lands from timber production, to other uses. The Forest Service also still sells logs off of their lands, but not in the numbers they once did. It can be expected that the Forest Service will continue to sell logs within the planning boundary, as well as provide for recreational opportunities. Some scale agriculture activities are present within the planning boundaries but agriculture is no longer a predominate land use in the planning area.

5.9.2 ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITES

1. ISSUE: There are identified wetlands and floodplain within the planning area.

2. ISSUE: There is the potential for general winter range for elk, moose, mule deer, mountain lion, black bear and whitetail deer within the planning area.

3. ISSUE: There is the potential for habitat of 6 different sensitive species within the planning area.

5.9.3 GOALS AND POLICES

GOAL 11. Balance responsible development and the protection of natural resources within the Lakeside Neighborhood.

Policy 11.1. Avoid development in floodplains and wetlands.

Policy 11.2. Direct new growth to areas with a lower potential for impacts to wildlife and wildlife habitat.

5.9.4 IMPLEMENTATION:

Regulatory Recommendations

1) Ecologically sound buffers are recommended around all wetlands (see Flathead County Subdivision Regulations (FCSR) Section 4.7.11).
2) Ecologically sound buffers are recommended around streams (see FCSR Section 4.7.12)

5.10 Housing

Following advice by the Planning Department and Growth Policy, the Committee began its land use planning efforts with an analysis of existing conditions for housing within the Community. This analysis produced a basic understanding of the Community and many interesting statistics. However, in the opinion of the Committee, the issues uncovered were not deemed to be primary drivers of the plan. Information in this sub-chapter is, considered important as background information for the Community in understanding the Land Use Plan in Chapter 6.0

This Housing sub-chapter presents a discussion of current housing conditions in the Lakeside Neighborhood Area. Multiple sources were used to develop a picture of current housing, an anticipated growth rate, and anticipated increase in housing units. Issues identified in the information gathering process and in the Flathead Growth Policy are described as they relate to the future plan for the Lakeside Neighborhood.

From the 1994 Lakeside Neighborhood Plan:

"For homes, most available waterfront and view properties have been developed and re-developed, driving real estate prices to unprecedented levels. Few multiple or moderate income homes have appeared. The greatest increase in housing starts came from four major subdivisions in or near Lakeside. The increase in lakefront development has mainly occurred within the boundary of the sewer district established in 1987. In light of all these changes, the value of property has spiraled upwards since 1991."

Information for this sub-chapter was gathered:

- From the Flathead County Growth Policy
- from the Community Survey
- through an informal interview process. This process sought the views of real estate agents, the banking industry, developers and employers who are active in the Lakeside area. This process will be referred to as the Housing Survey.
- from the Montana Department of Commerce web site
- from the Montana State Land database
- from the NMAR MLS web site
- from the Flathead County GIS

5.10.1 Existing Conditions

The following data points were collected to try to determine the number of housing units in Lakeside (see Table 5-5):

- In the 2000 census, the number of housing units in the Lakeside census area was 956. A census update from the Montana Department of Commerce states that the Flathead County growth rate was 16.6% over the period from 2000 to 2007. A growth rate specific to Lakeside is not available. Applying the county growth rate of 16.6% to 956 (the number of housing units in Lakeside in the 2000 census) would estimate 1114 units in Lakeside in 2007.

- In 2008, the Lakeside Post Office says that the 59922 zip code has between 1200-1300 addresses receiving mail.

- The Lakeside/Somers Sewer District has 855 accounts as of June 2008 providing service to 978 "equivalent dwelling units". The area covered by these numbers is not exactly the same as the Lakeside Neighborhood Plan area.
- The Flathead County Health Department administers septic system applications. They quote 611 current septic permits in the Lakeside area. The area covered by these numbers is not exactly the same as the Lakeside Neighborhood Plan area.
- Flathead Electric has 2150 meters served by the Lakeside substation. The area covered by this number may not be exactly the same as the Lakeside Neighborhood Plan area.
- The Montana State Land database was difficult to analyze because of the way parcels are represented. Specifically, parcels in subdivisions are often represented with multiple records, because the road easements are recorded in separate records with the same parcel number. Taking this into account, the database yields an estimate of 1200-1300 parcels with residential dwellings.

Source	**Number of units**
2000 census with 16.6% growth	1114
2008 Lakeside Post Office	1200-1300
Sewer + septic (not exact area)	1589
Flathead Electric hookups (not exact area)	2150
Montana Land Database	1200-1300

Table 5-5: Summary of Estimated Number of Housing Units in Lakeside

Based on this available data, the Committee came to a consensus that a reasonable estimate for housing units in Lakeside in 2008 would be 1,250.

5.10.1.1 *Current Property Values*

The following summary of real estate sales and current MLS listings is included to provide an idea of current property values. Note that these tables reflect all of Flathead County, not just Lakeside (Tables 5-6 for residential sales, and 5-7 for land sales).

Time Period	Volume	% Change	Median Price	% Change	Average Price	% Change
2005	1789		$220,000		$309,000	
2006	1870	4.5%	$245,000	11.4%	$356,000	15.3%
2007	1357	-27.4%	$250,000	2.0%	$361,798	1.4%
2008	984	-27.5%	$239,000	-4.4%	$327,000	-9.4%

Table 5-6: Residential Sales – Flathead County; quoted with permission from Jim Kelley, Kelley Appraisal

Time Period	Volume	% Change	Median Price	% Change	Average Price	% Change
2005	1089		$90,000		$155,526	
2006	782	-28.2%	$115,000	27.8%	$174,330	12.1%
2007	465	-40.5%	$119,500	3.9%	$204,368	17.2%
2008	310	-33.3%	$120,000	0.4%	$163,956	-19.8%

Table 5-7: Land Sales – Flathead County; quoted with permission from Jim Kelley, Kelley Appraisal

Tables 5-8 and 5-9summarize properties listed for sale in the Lakeside area on the NMAR MLS web site on the dates specified in September, October and December, 2008, indicating changes in the number of properties from one month to the next. (Note that "listing" does not necessarily mean "sold").

Price range	Number of properties 9/23/08	Number of properties 10/29/08	Number of properties 12/17/08
Less than $200,000	6	6	5
$200,000 to $500,000	43	41	38
$500,000 to $1,000,000	29	31	29
Over $1,000,000	26	24	21
Total	104	102	93

Table 5-8: Residential Listings – Lakeside

Price range	Number of properties 9/23/08	Number of properties 10/29/08	Number of properties 12/17/08
Less than $75,000	4	3	1
$75,000 to $200,000	57	54	55
$200,000 to $500,000	62	42	55
$500,000 to $1,000,000	18	16	15
Over $1,000,000	12	11	11
Total	153	126	137

Table 5-9: Land Listings – Lakeside

5.10.1.2 *Growth Rate*

From the 1994 Lakeside Neighborhood Plan:
"Development since 1991 has sharply increased (approximately three times the County-wide rate of 4% during the past three years based on housing starts and utilities)."

In the 2008 Lakeside Survey, when asked their perception of the current Lakeside area growth rate, local and non-local respondents had slightly different views as shown in this chart (see Figure 5-25).

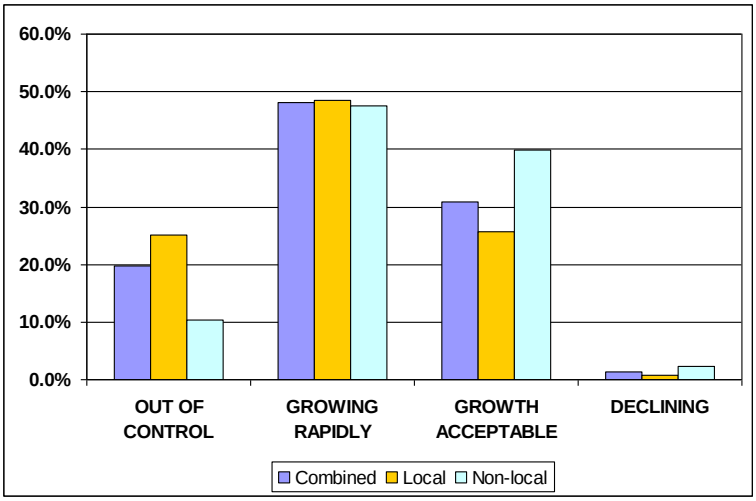


Figure 5-25: 2008 Lakeside Community Survey – Perception of Growth Rate

No definitive source was found to define a current annual growth rate for Lakeside. Specific numbers are available for Lakeside from the 2000 Census but later estimates are only given for Flathead County or for the incorporated cities. Various sources of data were considered by the Committee to estimate a current growth rate range for Lakeside (see Table 5-10):

Source	**Annual Growth Rate**
2008 Neighborhood Survey	5.0% resident or property owner < 1 yr.
2007 Mt Dept. of Commerce	2.4% Flathead County
2007 Mt Crime Board	2.2% Flathead County
Lakeside/Somers Sewer District*	4.4%
Flathead County Septic*	3.6%
Flathead Electric*	3-4%
Lakeside Housing Professional 1	2.0% projected "Dropping"
Lakeside Housing Professional 2	2-7% projected 4%
Lakeside Housing Professional 3	10% projected 10%
Lakeside Housing Professional 4	2-7% projected "unknown"
Lakeside Housing Professional 5	3% projected 4%
Lakeside Housing Professional 6	4.0% projected 2-3%

Table 5-10: Growth Rate Data Summary
** the area covered may not be the same as the Lakeside Neighborhood Plan area*

The annual growth from the above data ranges from 2.2% to 10% with data gathered through October 2008. The Lakeside Neighborhood Plan Committee's evaluation is that Lakeside's annual growth from 1994 through 3rd quarter 2008 had been a little faster than that of the county, averaging in the range of 3 to 5%. Growth has dropped beginning in 4th quarter 2008.

5.10.1.3 *Anticipated Growth Rate*

Looking at 2009 and forward, for purposes of estimating the need for housing, the Lakeside Neighborhood Plan Committee selected a 3-4% estimated growth rate based on the sources and rates in Table 5-10 and based on economic conditions to-date in 2009. The uncertainty of future economic conditions make predictability difficult.

5.10.1.4 *Anticipated Housing Unit Growth*

The number of housing units anticipated and the number of new housing units expected based on a 3-4% growth can be calculated by multiplying the current number of units by this anticipated growth rate (see Table 5-11).

Table 5.11 assumes the base number of housing units in 2008 to be 1,250.

Total Housing Units Anticipated												
Growth Rate %	1250 Housing Units Compounding Annually											
	2009	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**
3%	1288	1326	1366	1407	1449	1493	1537	1583	1631	1680	1730	1781
3.5%	1294	1339	1386	1434	1485	1537	1590	1646	1704	1763	1825	1889
4%	1300	1352	1406	1462	1521	1582	1645	1711	1779	1850	1924	2001
Total New Housing Units Anticipated												
Growth Rate %	New Housing Units											
	2009	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**
3%	38	76	116	157	199	243	287	333	381	430	480	531
3.5%	44	89	136	184	235	287	340	396	454	513	575	639
4%	50	102	156	212	271	332	395	461	529	600	674	751

Table 5-11 Anticipated housing units versus new housing units based on estimated growth rate of 3-4%

Based on an estimate of 1250 housing units in 2008, with an anticipated annual growth rate between 3-4%, the anticipated total housing units would be 1537-1645 units by 2015 and 1781-2001 by 2020. In other words it is anticipated 287-395 housing units would be added by 2015 or 531-751 by the year 2020.

5.10.1.5 *Population Projections to 2020*

Using the same three rates of growth for population. (3.0, 3.5, 4.0%) and applying the national average of 2.5 persons per household, population can be projected.

- Base 2008 population: 1250 housing units x 2.5 = 3,125 in 2008
- 3% growth: 1781 housing units x 2.5 = 4,452 in 2020
- 3.5% growth: 1889 housing units x 2.5 = 4,722 in 2020
- 4% growth: 2001 housing units x 2.5 = 5,002 in 2020

Based on the survey results of 62% of households being full time residences and 32% parttime or absentee property owners, the year 2020 population can be projected to be:

- 3% growth:
  - 2,760 full time residents and 1,692 part time or absentee owners
  - 1,104 year round homes and 677 seasonal homes
- 3.5% growth:
  - 2,928 full time residents and 1,794 part time or absentee owners
  - 1,171 year round homes and 718 seasonal homes
- 4% growth: 3,101 full time residents and 1,901 part time or absentee owners
  - 3,101 full time residents and 1,901 part time or absentee owners
  - 1,241 year round homes and 760 seasonal homes

It must be noted that these projections should be interpreted as being on the high side and that the maximum population and housing units could be less. Real estate professionals in the first half of 2009 feel that even a 3% growth estimate may be high based on economic conditions. In addition, demographic data and data from the community survey seem to indicate less than the 2.5 national average persons per household in Lakeside.

Regardless, it is likely that some growth is likely to occur and could have impacts on roads & highways, park usage, emergency services, sewer and water services, law enforcement and schools.

5.10.1.6 *Vacant Land*

A subset of data from the Montana Land Database was analyzed for the following view of land that is currently identified as vacant in the Lakeside area (see Table 5-12). It should be noted that the Forest service land is not coded as vacant and is not included in this discussion.

Vacant Land Use	Total Acres
Agriculture/Timber	6120
Residential	4397
Charity	88

Flathead County	27
Service/Utility	20
Commercial	4
Total	10656

Table 5-12 Acres of vacant land

The 6120 acres coded as Vacant Agricultural/Timber are summarized by parcel size in the following table (see Table 5-13).

Parcel Size (Acres)	**Total Acres**
< .999	5.42
1 – 2.499	10.28
2.5 – 4.999	18.41
5 – 9.999	18.97
10 – 19.99	200.75
20-39.999	522.31
40 & up	5343.50

Table 5-13: Parcel sizes of vacant Agricultural/Timber

The 4397 acres coded as Vacant Residential represents approximately 1100 parcels summarized by parcel size in the following table (see Table 5-14). It should also be noted that not all of this land would be suitable to and available for residential development.

Parcel Size (Acres)	**Total Acres**
< .499	87.21
.5 - .999	130.89
1 – 2.499	241.77
2.5 – 4.999	538.93
5 – 9.999	733.68
10 – 19.99	977.65
20-39.999	1307.22
40 & up	379.85

Table 5-14: Parcel Sizes

5.10.1.7 *New Major Subdivisions with Preliminary Approval*

New major subdivisions that have received preliminary but not final County approval, have not yet been entered as individual parcels in the County and State Databases and therefore are not reflected in vacant land statistics above, but are shown below (see Table 5-15).

Subdivision	Total Number of lots	Lot Size
Bear Mountain	26 single family	3.4 – 9 acres
Spurwing Phase 2	13 single family	.25-.28 acres
Spurwing Phase 3	25 single family	.25-.8 acres
Spurwing Creekside Phase 1 Phase 2 Phase 3	35 single family 12 townhome	 Phase 1: .29 - .54 acres Phase 2: .30 - .40 acres Phase 3: .28 - .34 acres
The Lakeside Club (Eagle's Crest) IV-IX	739 single family 86 condos	Avg 1 unit per 1.8 acres
Eagle's Crest Heights	115 single family	Avg 1 unit per 3.40 acres

Table 5-15: 1051 units proposed in these preliminary subdivisions as of October, 2008: 953 single family; 12 townhomes; 86 condos

Actual growth depends primarily on the market and could be higher or lower. There are currently 1100 vacant residential parcels (not all suitable to or available for residential development) and 1051 new lots proposed (see Table 5-16). There does not appear to be a problem in accommodating the anticipated volume of growth. The challenge will be to create the appropriate types of housing in the appropriate locations

Summary of market conditions	
Lots Currently for sale Nov. 08	126
Homes Currently for sale Nov. 08	102
Anticipated Growth	271 units in 5 years or 600 units in 10 years
Vacant Residential Parcels	1100
Proposed new subdivision lots	1051 total: 953 single family 12 townhomes 86 condo 1015 total

Table 5-16: summary of existing conditions for housing.

5.10.1.8 *Market Predictions from Representatives of the Real Estate Industry*

In the experience of the participants in the Housing Survey, the current buyers of property in Lakeside are seldom fulltime residents of Lakeside or Flathead County or even Montana; they

are from out of state and Canada. These buyers are attracted to Lakeside by the natural beauty, small town nature, and potential for becoming a first class retirement community.

Current buyers are mostly retirees looking for a permanent home or future retirees buying second homes that they will eventually live in full time. Some buyers are looking for uncrowded vacation property or property to hold for investment. Most of the current buyers of property in Lakeside are looking for single-family homes starting at $300,000. A couple years ago there was a peak in large acreage purchases intended for development. That market seems to have faded.

Participants in the Housing Survey provided their views of housing price ranges, which have been summarized as follows:

- Affordable housing: less than $250,000
- Mid Range housing: $250,000 to $750,000
- High End housing: above $750,000

Affordable housing seems to be the most discussed of these three. In the 2008 community survey the Lakeside Community expressed a desire for affordable single-family housing.

From the Flathead County Growth Policy:

> *Goal.17 "Encourage affordable homeownership in Flathead County."*
>
> *Chapter 3, Part 3: "A standard definition of "affordable housing" is yearly housing payments that cost no more than 30% of a household's gross annual income."*
>
> *"Table 3.3 shows that a disparity exists between median incomes and median home prices in Flathead County."*
>
> *Table 3.3 Median Income Needed vs Actual Median Income: For the year 2003, the median income needed to purchase the median home was $45,569 while the actual median income was $34,360.*

The finance industry tends to define affordable housing as "housing that can be financed by the average wage earners in the area". The Montana Department of Commerce reports in the Weekly Wage Sheet for September 1, 2008 that the average hourly wage for all industries in Flathead County is $15.08 / hour. The average yearly wage is $31,356.

In the current financing environment, an annual income of $36,000, with no additional debt, is required to finance $200,000 with $40,000 as a down payment. $36,000 annual income is the equivalent of approximately $18 per hour. That is higher than the normal wage in Lakeside and in the Flathead Valley. Therefore, by this definition, affordable housing in Lakeside would have to be less than $200,000, or more in the range of $150,000. The conventional finance industry prefers a ratio of 2 to 1 in the value of improvements versus land value. For a total cost of $150,000, affordable building lots would have to cost less than $50,000.

The Flathead Building Association tends to talk of affordable housing as "workforce" housing, or in other words housing the area's workforce of teachers, policemen, and firemen can afford. Again the "workforce" (affordable) range is less than $200,000.

For planning purposes the Lakeside Neighborhood Plan Committee is using $150,000 to $180,000 as the current cost of an affordable home including the lot. $50,000 - $60,000 will be used as the current cost of an affordable building lot without the house.

The 2008 Community Survey said that affordable housing is needed in Lakeside and some comments indicated that young families and hourly workers have difficulty finding affordable housing. The Housing Survey contacted most of the major employers in the Lakeside area to determine if there is a need for affordable housing. They were asked how many times in the past 5 years their employees have had trouble finding housing. No employer reported trouble for their employees in finding affordable housing. Most responded that their employees already live in Lakeside and own their homes. There are some workers who work seasonally or for short periods and have no desire to purchase homes. No employer reported a lack of rental availability.

5.10.1.9 *The Challenge of Affordable Housing*

The trend reported in the 1994 Neighborhood Plan has continued to push land costs in Lakeside to record heights. The current value of land in the Lakeside area and the ever increasing costs of building makes affordable housing in the area a difficult challenge. In September, 2008, there were 6 residential properties for sale in Lakeside for less than $200,000 and 2 lots for sale for $50,000 or less (MLS). From the previous discussion of the definition of "affordable" housing, the working definition of affordable in Lakeside is currently $150,000 – $180,000. That would typically break down to $50,000 for the land and $100,000 for building the home. None of the participants in the Housing survey felt that a traditional single family home could be built today for $100,000. The common range was more like $200,000 to $300,000.

The affordable range might be met:

- With higher density developments offering townhomes or condos. . Based on free form comments from the survey, objections to this type of housing are likely due to recent condo developments, which blocked lake access and views.
- With mobile home or manufactured home approach. There are currently 67 acres in Lakeside with mobile homes, according to the Montana State land database.
-

A "Land Trust" educational approach might be a more acceptable alternative to affordable housing concerns for Lakeside.

5.10.2 Issues & Opportunities

1. ISSUE: The survey indicates that community does not perceive a high need for additional housing. However growth will likely occur.

Based on the 2008 Lakeside Survey, the respondents do not feel additional housing is an important issue. Over 50% of respondents viewed the need for additional housing as low importance. Almost 70% of respondents were satisfied with exiting housing. There is moderate support for additional single family, affordable housing, and for facilities for the aging; senior housing and assisted living.

2. ISSUE: Affordable housing cannot be addressed on a neighborhood scale, and should be addressed at the County Level. The type and amount of housing is likely to be determined by the market.

5.10.3 Goals & Policies

This Plan supports and includes by reference the Flathead County Growth Policy Goal 16 and any other goals regarding safe housing that is available, accessible, and affordable for all sectors of the population.

GOAL 12. Accommodate growth in Lakeside as the market changes.

Policy 12.1. Provide for a range of housing types in the Lakeside Community

5.10.4 Implementation Strategies

5.10.4.1 *Regulatory Recommendations:*

1) In reality, the housing and real estate markets (supply) and buyers desires and economic status (demand) will dominate and shape housing in Lakeside. Implementation of this plan should identify land uses that provide a range of housing types from single family to multi-family, and a range of densities from suburban to rural.

Chapter 6 Land Use

6.1 Existing Conditions

The existing conditions discussed in Chapter 5 all have some relation to the existing land uses within the Lakeside Planning Boundaries. The existing conditions within those discussions in concert with existing land uses establish a baseline of community characteristics when this planning document was written. The goals establish a picture of how the community wants to develop and polices establish the path for future decision making to paint that desired picture. The baseline serves as point of reference to review the progress towards the community's goals. This chapter of the plan focuses on the existing conditions of land use within the planning boundaries and presents issues and opportunities the community is facing with land use.

6.1.1 Ownership and Use of Property

Of the approximately 24,060 acres within the Lakeside Neighborhood Plan planning area, approximately 29% (6880 acres) is managed by state or federal government. Approximately 71% (17,180 acres) of the land in the Lakeside Neighborhood is privately owned. Approximately 62% (10,655 acres) of the 17,180 acres of private land is vacant. The following data was summarized from the Flathead County GIS to describe basic land ownership in the Lakeside area (see Table 6-1).

	Acreage (estimated)	**Percent of total area**
Private	17,180	71.4%
Forest Service	6240	25.9%
Montana Trust Lands	640	2.7%
Total	24060	

Table 6-1: Land Ownership in the Lakeside Area

Property Tax data from the Montana State Land database was summarized by its Land Use code into a spreadsheet to produce the following description of current land use in the Lakeside area. This information paints a picture of land use in the planning area based on how the property is taxed. These statistics represent all private property in the planning area including corporate timber holdings (see Table 6-2).

Use	Acreage	Percent of total area
Vacant	10655	44.3%
Agriculture (includes US Forest Service)	8981	37.3%
Residential with Dwelling	3006	12.5%
Residential Dwelling Unknown	1216	5.0%
Residential with Mobile Home	67	0.3%
Commercial	53	0.2%
Charity/Church	56	0.2%
Government non Forestry	19	0.1%
School	5	0.0%
Service/Utility	1	0.0%
Total	24060	

Table 6-2: Current Land Use in the Lakeside Area

The following two maps show land ownership in the planning area, and categorize parcel size (see Figures 6-1 and 6-2). Note: These maps are generated from data in the County GIS system and the data is as accurate as that in the GIS data base.

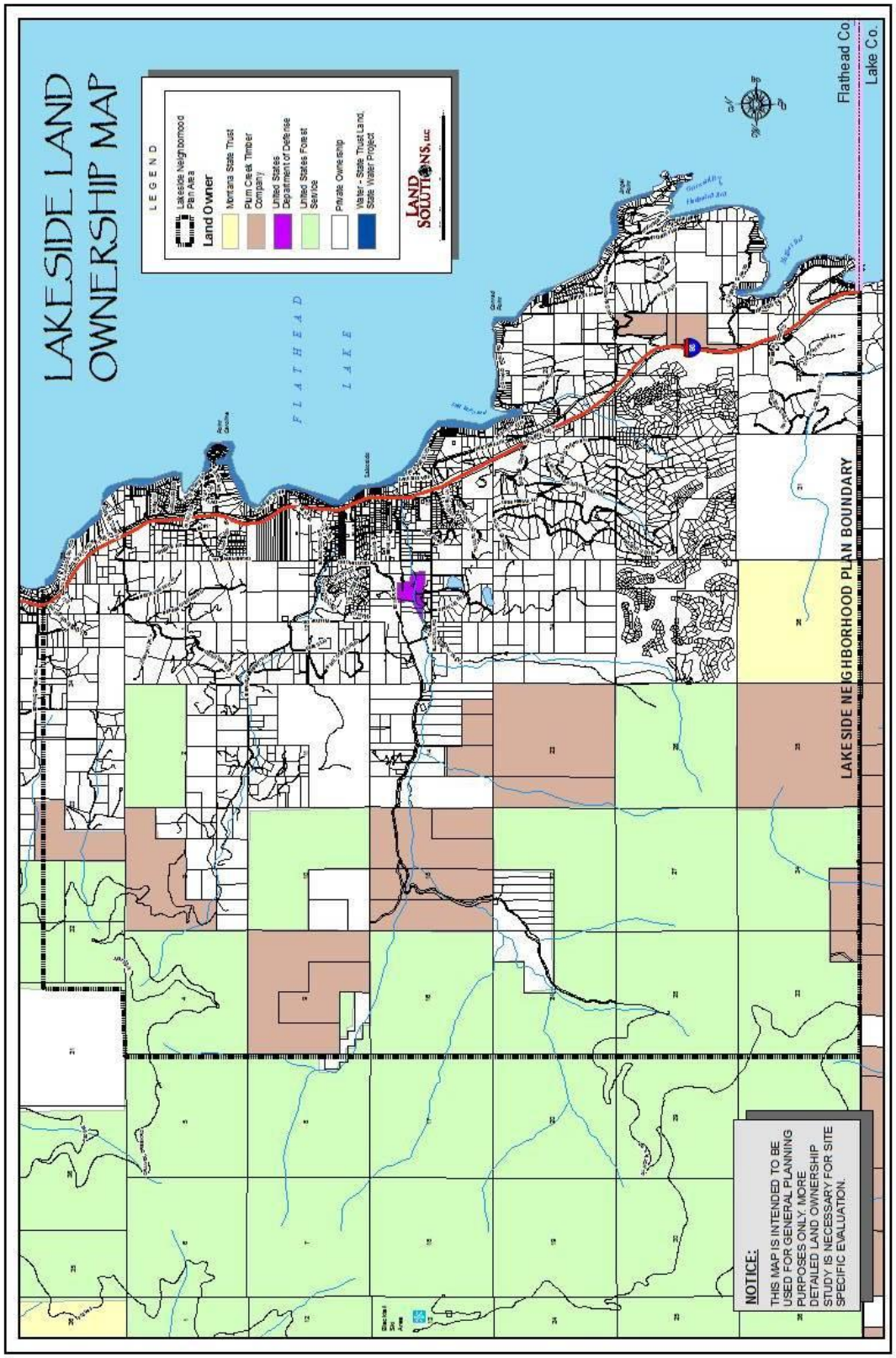


Figure 6-1: Land Ownership in Lakeside Community

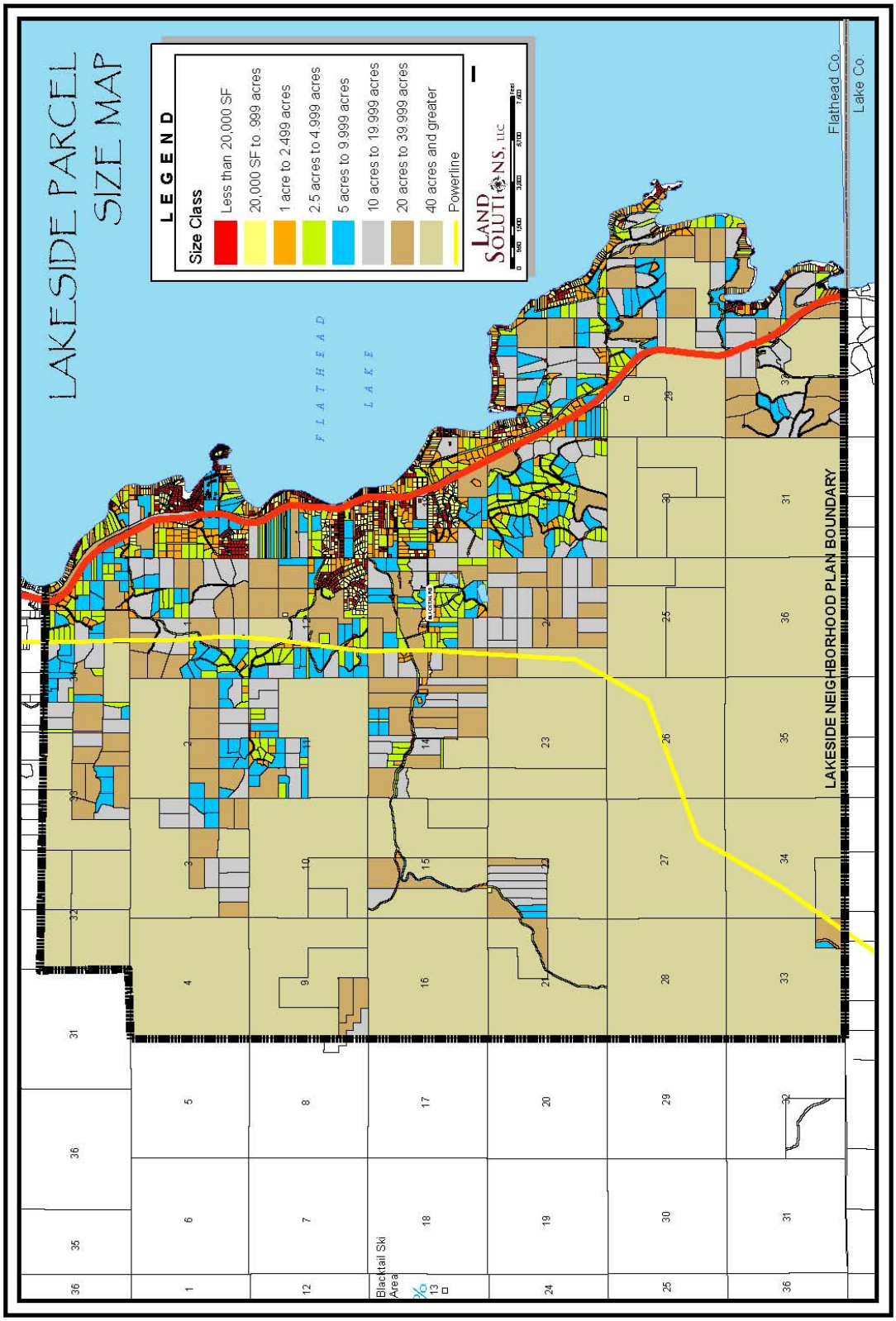


Figure 6-2: Current Parcel sizes in Lakeside.

As of February, 2009, the following Zoning Districts (Table 6.3), have been approved in the Lakeside Neighborhood area (see Table 6-3). See Chapter 2.0 for a map of these zoned districts.

Name	Classification	Acres	Year Approved
Caroline Point	R-2	30	1987
Conrad Point	R-1, R-2, Sag-10	280	1990
Peaceful Bay II	R-1, R-2	60	1992
Cherry Hills	R-4	7	1993
Lakeside	Various	352	2000
Spring Creek	R-1	128.5	2007
Fish Hatchery	R-1	132	2008

Table 6-3: Zoning districts as of February 2009.

Within the neighborhood plan boundaries, there are a number of land owner that have a significant role in land use. A brief discussion of these owners and how they manage their lands is provided below.

6.1.2 Forest Service Land Status

According to the County GIS, 6240 acres or 25.9% of the land in the Lakeside Neighborhood area is part of the Flathead National Forest west of Lakeside. It is part of the Swan Lake Ranger District and is referred to as the Island Unit. It is managed according to a Forest Management Plan. The last approved plan was completed in 1986. The most recent effort to update the plan was challenged in court and delayed. A new plan should be released in the next couple years. This district is managed mainly for cost effective timber production with roads, but is also considered a good area to be developed for mixed-use recreation.

The forest is generally healthy. There are some incidences of beetle infestation but not enough to be of concern yet. Mistletoe however is a problem that creates a fire threat in some areas. There are areas of dense growth with mistletoe that are targeted for logging in the next few years. There haven't been any major logging sales recently. Several small areas in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) have been thinned. One thinning project on the southeast edge of the Neighborhood area is still active. The Forest Service monitors residential development and tries to stay current with fuel reduction thinning in areas adjacent to the WUI.

Because of the mistletoe problem, the fire potential in the Island Unit is significant, especially for crown fires. The prevailing winds are from the west, which would blow fires toward Lakeside; however, fires tend to spread up hill, which could counteract the wind effect. There are lightening strikes in the area every year. Fire fighting responsibility is shared with other agencies. The Forest Service encourages adoption of the Fire-wise program.

There are preliminary plans for three timber sales in the 3-7 year future that could impact the Lakeside area depending on the route used by the logging trucks. Each sale is planned in the 8,000,000-12,000,000 board foot range. At a 5000 board feet average per truckload, there could be approximately two thousand truckloads per sale routed through Cramer Creek Road/Spring

Creek Road or Blacktail Road. (2,000 truck trips per sale = 6,000 potential truck trips over the 3-7 year period estimated for the three timber sales in preliminary planning)

The Forest Service has a concern responding to developers who request easements through National Forest land in order to meet county access requirements. National policy permits such easements only when there is no other feasible option and even then, will allow only one easement. There have recently been easement requests around the Island Unit.

There are healthy wildlife populations in the Island Unit including the normal Montana mix of deer, elk, moose, bear, mountain lion, and an occasional wolf or lynx. The only endangered species in the area is Lynx. The conservation plan for lynx does place some limitations on pre-commercial thinning of smaller trees within lynx habitat.

The Forest Service is actively promoting plans for mixed use trail system expansion in the Island Unit. Refer to Parks sub-chapter 5.3 and Appendix G.

6.1.3 Plum Creek Status

Since the 1994 Lakeside Neighborhood Plan, Plum Creek has sold over 2250 acres of land in the Lakeside Neighborhood, including the land that is being developed into one of the largest subdivisions in Flathead County. Additional areas have been offered for sale. The shift in western Montana from a resource to a recreation-based economy has resulted in land values of three to five times per acre the value of saw logs. Despite the shift, Plum Creek remains committed to the wood products business in Montana and protecting free public access to its land.

Approximately 3,893 acres of land in the Lakeside Neighborhood Plan area is owned by Plum Creek Timber Company. The parcels are located primarily west of Highway 93 and are adjacent to other private lands, State of Montana lands and U.S. Forest Service lands. Plum Creek Timber Company continues to manage their lands for timber production and other resource activities and occasionally sells property to adjacent landowners and other interested buyers. The company does not have any plans for development in the Lakeside area and there are no lands in the area for sale at this time.

The public has enjoyed the benefit of an open lands policy which allows the use of Plum Creek lands for outdoor recreation activities including hiking, biking, fishing, hunting, snow-shoeing, cross country skiing and snowmobiling. Public access across Plum Creek lands may change over time as the company sells land in the area. Plum Creek is willing to discuss granting permanent easements across company lands to user groups and public agencies as part of a neighborhood trail system. The long-term maintenance and the associated liability of easement rights of way continue to be a concern for Plum Creek Timber Company.

In the development of this plan, company representatives have requested that most Plum Creek land in the Lakeside Neighborhood be designated with a mixture of land use densities to reflect future opportunities for both residential and forestry uses. Plum Creek lands are highly desirable for large scale, high end development. Even though there are no current plans for development or sales in the Lakeside Neighborhood, it is reasonable to expect that as the economy improves, there will be sales of Plum Creek land.

6.1.4 DNRC – Montana School Trust Land Status

The land designated Section 36 on the southern border of the Lakeside Neighborhood is part of the Montana Trust Lands, and is managed by the Kalispell Unit of the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC).

Currently, over 5 million acres are designated as Trust Lands in the State of Montana. In 1889, these lands were designated for a trust to be used for the benefit of the school systems and other institutions. The mission of Montana DNRC is to help insure that Montana's land and water resources provide benefits for present and future generations. The mission of the Trust Lands Division of DNRC is to manage the State of Montana's Trust Land resources to produce revenues for the trust beneficiaries while considering environmental factors and protecting the future income-generating capacity of the land.

Montana's Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) manages about 5.2 million acres of state school trust land (state land), forests and agricultural, grazing, residential, and commercial properties that earn revenue to help fund public schools, universities and more. DNRC strives constantly to manage lands more effectively, to improve their value, increase their potential for earning income, and reduce financial risks to the trusts. Land transactions (sales, purchases, or exchanges) help meet these goals. DNRC seeks the right mix of land assets to manage, selectively repositioning trust lands. DNRC sells or exchanges lands that are isolated or ineffective to manage and using those proceeds, acquires replacement trust lands with higher long-term income potential.

While recreation activity can occur on certain State Trust Lands, the Trust Lands' primary purpose is to produce revenue for the school system and other institutions while preserving long-term value. School Trust Land is sometimes exchanged, often leased, and occasionally sold (generally through the "land-banking" process, which allows for another parcel to be purchased with the sale proceeds). One example of a "working" tract of Trust Land would be the Lowes/Costco leased commercial site north of Kalispell. DNRC also leases and licenses land for residential, agricultural, grazing, mineral use, and other purposes. Additionally, Trust Lands may generate revenues through forest management activities (timber sales), wind generation, and licensing uses in "navigable waters" (e.g., certain portions of Flathead Lake are designated navigable waters). DNRC has at times partnered in the actual development of School Trust Land. School Trust Lands are often open for public recreation with the purchase of a recreation license from the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks or where fishing and hunting licenses are sold.

The current use of Lakeside's Section 36 is "forest management." A timber harvest has occurred in the last ten years; it is likely there will be future timber harvest on the property. Currently, there are no specific plans for this section of land, though that could change at any time DNRC management deems it appropriate.

DNRC presently considers Lakeside's Section 36 "rural" land because it is more than a mile away from public utilities (though with the extension of public utilities, that status may change). The DNRC carefully analyzes its rural land development as there is a statewide aggregate limitation on rural development. When development of the Lakeside Club Phases 5-9 (Eagle's Crest) is completed, public sewer may be brought to the border of Section 36 and it may no longer be designated "rural" by DNRC.

DNRC generally favors participation in neighborhood zoning projects and will usually opt to zone Trust Lands. While DNRC may not choose to develop a particular property immediately,

DNRC's general philosophy on zoning is to zone its Trust Lands consistently with neighboring privately owned parcels .(i.e., DNRC will not accept a more restrictive zoning than nearby fee-simple parcels in the same neighborhood). DNRC looks forward to the opportunity to participate as a landowner in the Lakeside Neighborhood Planning process.

6.1.5 YWAM Status

The Youth With A Mission (YWAM) campus occupies a large parcel along Blacktail road. The primary mission of the group is Christian training, but they also contribute many services and volunteer support to the Lakeside Community. The Lakeside campus is the second largest in the international organization.

Youth With A Mission is a mixture of people from all over the world and from numerous different Christian denominations. The focus of the organization is evangelism, mercy ministry, training and discipleship. The Lakeside location for YWAM was established in 1985 on the grounds of the former Lakeside Air Force Base.

The staff averages 130 people who have been in this location from 2 to 20 years. The number of students averages 100-150 per quarter and stay in this location 3 to 9 months. There are an average of 50-60 children who attend public school or the Christian school or are home schooled.

The YWAM campus is made up of approximately 22 acres on the north side of Blacktail Road and 14 acres on the south side of Blacktail Road, just west of the Lakeside town center. There are 27 homes plus dorms and community buildings. Some of the buildings such as the auditorium are available for public use. YWAM is currently in the planning stages of significant upgrades to their facility including additional cabins, a larger auditorium, and more parking. They are also considering developing some of the area on the south side of Blacktail Road into a sports complex that could possibly be open to the public. See Sub-chapter 5.3 which discusses parks and open space in the community.

6.1.6 Blacktail Mountain Ski Area Status

The Blacktail Mountain Ski Area opened in the winter of 1998-1999 and, although outside the Lakeside Neighborhood boundaries, it is now an important and valued feature of the Community. It is a family oriented winter recreation area 14 miles from the Lakeside town center at the west end of Blacktail Road.

The Blacktail Mountain Ski Area is located on over 1000 acres of Flathead National Forest land. It is an "upside down resort" in that the road accesses the area at the top of the runs, which is an elevation of 6780'. Three chair lifts support a network of trails offering 1440 feet of vertical elevation with the longest trail being 1.75 miles. The average annual snowfall is 250 inches. Lift capacity is currently 3900 people / hour.

The forest service also offers cross-country ski trails on Blacktail Mountain that are maintained by the North Shore Nordic Club using volunteers and local fundraising. Several loop trails provide the opportunity for many hours of cross-country skiing.

There are no major development plans for the area in the near future. They intend to remain a traditional family oriented area. There may be some enhancement of lifts and trails. There could be a small scale housing facility/hostel at some future point but there are no plans at this time. The ski area is located in the U.S. Forest Service Island District. As a result, ski area management does not foresee any form of residential development around the ski area.

Ski area management has concerns about the fire potential presented by the current status of the surrounding forest. Some fire reduction thinning has been done around the nearby radar installation. The Ski area has a fire plan that includes their own water supply, sprinklers, and use of the snow making guns.

6.1.7 Lakeside Club (aka Eagle's Crest) Status

Eagle's Crest and Lakeside Club is a comprehensively designed, master planned residential, mixed-use and recreational community located on over 2,200 acres in the southern portion of the Neighborhood Plan area. It is a multi-phased development that is scheduled to be platted and built out over the next 30 plus years.

The project consists of primarily single-family residential lots but also includes neighborhood commercial, mixed-use spaces, condominium units, an 18-hole golf course, an aircraft runway, extensive wildlife habitat and corridor areas, a recreational trail system and a traditional neighborhood park. The total Eagle's Crest and Lakeside Club development will eventually constitute a maximum of 1,026 total dwelling or commercial units in all phases for a maximum density not to exceed one unit for every 2 acres.

Access to the property is obtained at two locations from U.S. Highway 93 and all roads are paved. Portions of the property are served by public water and sewer services with fire flows and hydrants installed for fire protection.

Neighborhood commercial services included with the project will be geared toward the future residents and property owners in an effort to provide a community setting and reduce the number of vehicle trips necessary to provide for daily needs. Although the market will ultimately dictate the types of services provided, the developers anticipate a neighborhood convenience store, one or more coffee shops/bakeries, a UPS/Kinko's style shipping and copy center, a neighborhood medical facility, a pub/restaurant, golf related commercial services, spa and fitness center, flying related commercial services, a day care center, property management, and interior design and related services.

Note that there is pending litigation against the county regarding the approved preliminary plat for Eagle's Crest Phases V – IX.

6.2 Issues and Opportunities

1. ISSUE AND OPPORTUNITY: Support of the Rural Small Town Character:

From the Flathead County Growth Policy – Chapter 1 Part 1.4: "Maintain the Identity of Rural Communities-Preserving the rural lifestyle is a primary goal identified by many Flathead County residents. The ability to live "the simple life" and own land in a safe, quiet, and environmentally pristine neighborhood away from cities is a characteristic many residents value."

The basic nature of the Lakeside Neighborhood is rural, low density, small town, and single family with spectacular views, ample and mostly forested open space, and a natural environment that is shared with a healthy and varied wildlife population. This land use plan seeks to maintain the rural small town character of the Lakeside Neighborhood.

As embodied in the Vision statement, the traditional small town family orientation of Lakeside is cherished. Developers should be encouraged to design features that make the community feel included and welcome rather than deliberately excluded. "Everyone - property owners, business owners, developers and others - shouldbe encouraged to contribute directly to the welfare of all Lakeside residents and property owners with such things as trails and paths, parks, road connectivity and public facilities. "Everyone - property owners, business owners, developers and others - should support the Lakeside Vision of a rural, family-oriented small town

Clustered development groups smaller residential lots along a limited road system, while dedicating substantial amounts of the total development acreage to common open space.

There are many reasons why clustered development designs are being adopted across the nation. In the Lakeside Neighborhood, the primary advantages are accommodation of challenging terrain and preservation of open space which supports the rural character, wildlife, and recreation opportunities.

2. ISSUE AND OPPORTUNITY: Protection of Lake and Mountain Views:

The area is dominated and defined by unique and historic views of Flathead Lake and the surrounding mountains. Spectacular views and rural character define the basic character of the Lakeside Community. And they are one of the key marketing features of many residential parcels. This land use plan seeks to protect the lake and mountain views that are so important to the Lakeside Neighborhood.

Placed between the lake and the mountains, little flatland is available for development within the Lakeside Community. Hillside development is already common because of the views of the lake and the surrounding mountains it often offers. As the community continues to grow and flat land diminishes, hillside development will become more of a necessity than a luxury. Hillside development raises a number of concerns including soil stability, erosion, the increased expense of extending infrastructure, challenging access issues, impacts to aesthetics and visual quality, fire hazard, and impacts to wildlife. California's continuing fire, erosion, and landslide issues with hillside development should provide a "how not to" example for this area.

There are ways to mitigate the aesthetic impacts of ridgeline development. If rooftops are below the crest of the ridge, they don't break up the natural ridgeline and better blend into their surroundings. This can be done by moving the building site so the top of the roof is not higher in elevation than the ridge. Another method is to step the roofline of the house to follow the natural

grade of the hillside. Another method is to setback the building site away from the ridge so the house is not visible from below. In addition to these methods, proper landscaping mimicking natural patterns can effectively break up rooflines and walls visible from a distance.

3. ISSUE AND OPPORTUNITY: Outdoor Lighting and the Impact on Views.

Outdoor lighting when used excessively negatively impacts the nighttime visual environment and small town atmosphere of the Lakeside Community. Polices and Land Use designations within the plan encourage Dark Skies Principles.

4. ISSUE AND OPPORTUNITY: Growth and Development:

This plan acknowledges that growth is needed for a healthy community and economy. However, growth without planning can lead to indiscriminate and incompatible growth that adversely impacts the small town and rural character cherished by residents and property owners.

5. ISSUE AND OPPORTUNITY: Sewer System:

While continued dependence on individual septic systems for new development is discouraged, the Lakeside/Somers sewer system does not currently reach many areas of the neighborhood. Any major expansion to support the undeveloped areas will need to be financed by the development or by grants or other sources. The community is committed to the idea that new growth should pay for itself and not place a financial burden on current residents or property owners. It should be emphasized that sewer access is only one of the issues to be considered in justifying higher densities in a specific area. This land use plan encourages new development to include public or centralized private sewer systems.

6. ISSUE AND OPPORTUNITY: Terrain Challenges:

Terrain issues are addressed in County regulations and subdividers are required to comply with the regulations. Terrain is emphasized here because much of the Lakeside community contains challenging terrain such as steep slopes interspersed with rock outcrops, valleys, and draws.

7. ISSUE AND OPPORTUNITY: Protecting Flathead Lake:

Flathead Lake is integral to the culture and mindset of the local population. It is a natural treasure for all visitors, residents and property owners of the Flathead Valley and the State of Montana. Economists at the University of Montana have estimated the current value of the lake to the overall economy at $6 to $10 billion. Water quality in Flathead Lake, and the environment that has long supported it, is the golden goose that drives the Flathead Basin's economy.

While Flathead Lake remains a relatively clean lake; various measurements of its quality are declining. Decline in water quality mainly is caused by nutrient pollution in runoff from populated areas and deposition of wind-carried smoke and dust particles on the lake surface. Greater emphasis is needed on:

- installing high quality household sewage treatment systems in rural and ex-urban areas of the Kalispell Valley,
- treating street and parking lot runoff in constructed or natural wetlands and
- maintaining wide riparian forests along our rivers and streams and the lake shoreline.

Although the quality of the water in Flathead Lake is a priority, the shoreline environment, aquatic environment, and the scenic quality are all parts of Flathead Lake that need protection. Education, regulation and enforcement will be required in the future to protect the lake

environment from non-native invasive plant and fish species. Support of the existing Shoreline Protection Regulations and future regulations that reasonably limit shoreline development will help protect the shoreline environment and scenic quality of Flathead Lake. Development along the lake must carefully consider impacts that may, over time, severely compromise the value of Flathead Lake for future generations.

8. ISSUE AND OPPORTUNITY: Paved and Unpaved Roads

Dust control on unpaved roads is an important issue throughout the valley. It is an important issue for Lakeside not only for the health of those living or visiting here, but also because dust is a primary component of lake pollution. As discussed in previous parts of the plan, Flathead County is currently not in a position to pave roads. All internal subdivision roads are required to be paved, and new subdivisions may have to contribute to paving of county roads depending upon the details of the specific project. Facilitating development on unpaved roads will contribute to the issues with dust, and is it unlikely the county can be relied upon to address these issues in the immediate future.

9. ISSUE AND OPPORTUNITY: Wildfire Risk

The location of the Lakeside Neighborhood along with the terrain, forest conditions, and access issues creates a significant potential for wildfires that create risk to life and property. Mitigation actions can reduce the wildfire risk. This issue concerns the whole neighborhood not just new development. Mitigation of the wildfire danger needs to be a high priority with a community wide approach.

The federal Healthy Forests Restoration Act requires communities to develop a Community Wildfire Protection Plan. Flathead County developed and adopted a plan in 2005. This plan identified a Wildland Urban Interface zone (WUI) where structures and other human development intermingle with undeveloped wildland or forest fuels (see Figure 6-3 on next page). The plan identified much of the developed part of the Lakeside Neighborhood at risk for wildland fire and as an Extreme County Priority Area for fuels reduction.

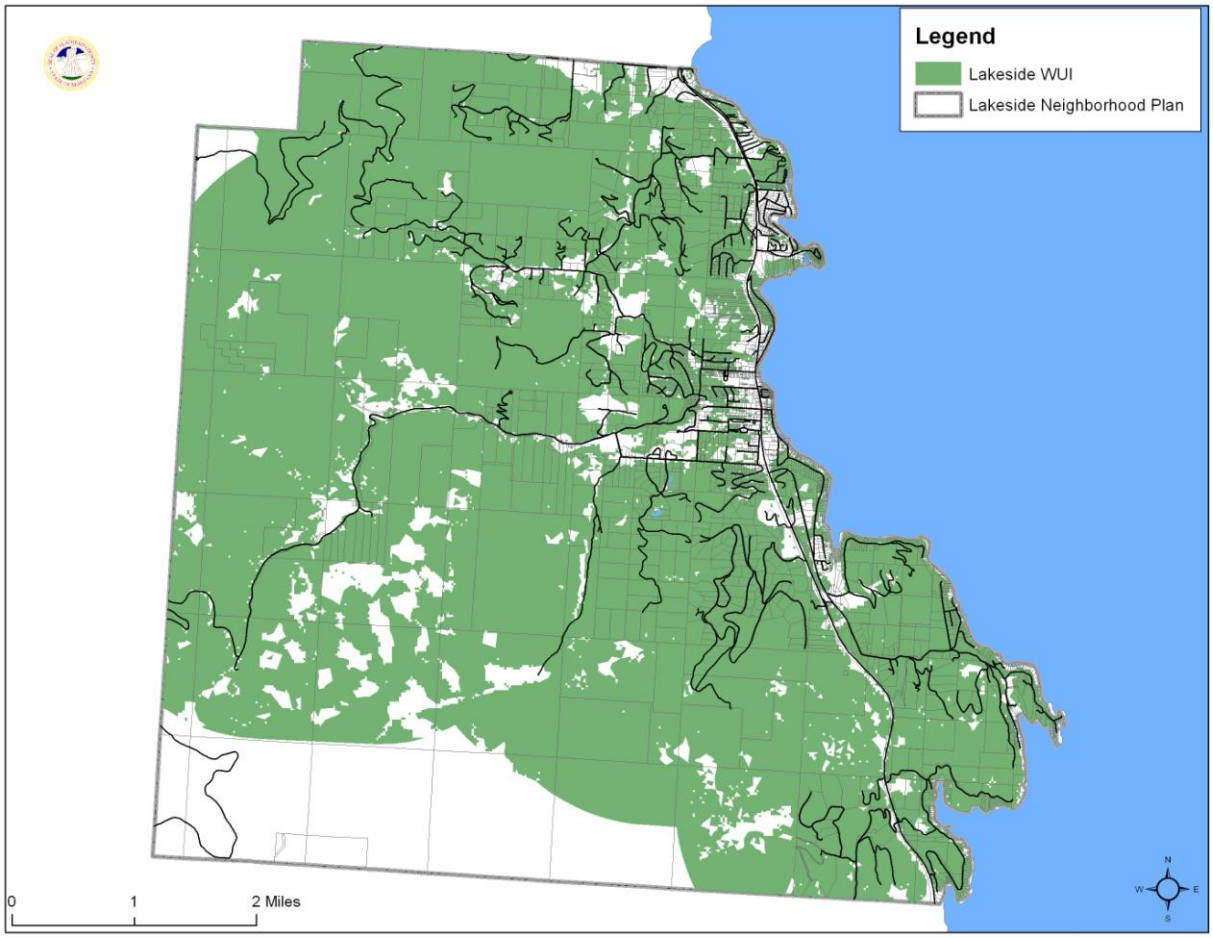


Figure 6-3: The Wildland Urban Interface in the Lakeside Neighborhood Planning Area.

The risk level varies from low to high with two areas identified as current priorities for fuel reduction/mitigation planning. These two areas are: (1) most of Angel Point east of Highway 93 and (2) the developed area on the south side of Blacktail Road. Areas considered high priority for fuel reduction/mitigation planning will change as risk reduction work is completed and as new developments create growth in the WUI zone. Refer to the Flathead County Community Wildfire Fuels Reduction / Mitigation Plan, March 2005, for more information.

Several areas in the WUI on National Forest land (Island District) have been thinned. One thinning project on the southeast edge is still active. The Forest Service monitors residential development and tries to stay current with fuel reduction thinning in areas adjacent to the WUI. Because of the mistletoe problem, the fire potential in the Island District is significant, especially for crown fires. The prevailing winds are from the west, which would blow fires toward Lakeside; however, fires tend to spread up hill, which could counteract the wind effect. There are lightening strikes in the area every year. Fire fighting responsibility is shared with other agencies. The Forest Service encourages adoption of the Fire-wise program.

The Blacktail Ski Area management has concerns about the fire potential presented by the current status of the surrounding forest. Some fuels reduction thinning has been done around the nearby radar installation. The Ski Area has a fire plan that includes their own water supply, sprinklers, and use of the snow making guns.

The following is a list of factors that contribute to the threat to life and property from wildland fires:

- **Location:** Prevailing winds put the Lakeside area at risk from wildfires that may start in the recreation and timber production areas west of town. Both recreation and timber production can increase risk of man caused fires. The high elevations of Lion Mountain, Blacktail Mountain, Kerr Mountain, and ridgelines west of town, increase the risk of lightning caused fires. Highway 93 also creates a risk in the Lakeside area from transportation machinery and fires started by motor vehicle accidents. The fact that fire tends to spread uphill may counteract the prevailing winds but cannot be counted on to protect the neighborhood.
- **Terrain:** Steep slopes and canyons create local conditions that can enhance fire activity. Rugged terrain and limited motorized access can make evacuation and fire fighting difficult, inefficient, and costly.
- **Fuels:** All of the undeveloped area is forested, much of it quite dense and full of surface, ladder and crown fuels. Drought and mistletoe infestations have created areas with a high percentage of highly flammable dead or diseased timber. These conditions also exist in much of the developed residential areas.
- **Residential Development:** In residential areas lives and structures would be at risk in a wildfire. Unless effectively mitigated, higher density developments with more lives and higher structure values create a higher risk of large losses. Many existing structures in the area were not designed or constructed with materials that reduce fire risk and few homeowners have applied Firewise landscaping to reduce risk or to protect their structures in case of a fire. Water for firefighting is not accessible in many locations. Residential life in forested areas can also increase risk of a fire start. Protecting residences surrounded by remote forest makes overall fire control more difficult and costly.

Wildfires and risk of loss can be mitigated through programs promoting public awareness, forest thinning, fire resistant landscaping and building techniques, etc. The Fire-wise program offers such guidance for communities, development, and individuals. These efforts must be community wide to result in more than just a small risk reduction for individual property owners. The Community Council should take the lead in educating and encouraging participation by the community in these programs.

1. **Fire-wise Program:** The National Fire-wise program is considered an ideal set of resources for communities, developers, builders, and homeowners interested in protecting their property from potential wildland fire events. It should be promoted and adopted community-wide. More information is available at www.firewise.org.
2. **NFPA 1144 Home Evaluations:** The National Fire Protection Association has developed a program that allows fire protection specialists to conduct an evaluation of risk specifically related to individual structures on particular properties. Communities that have a majority of properties evaluated will provide their fire protection service important information that can be used to protect properties in the event of a wildfire.
3. **Hazardous Fuel Reduction Projects:** Flathead County residents or property owners currently have the opportunity to access financial help to reduce hazardous fuels on

private land. The main resources are the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC); and the Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) program through the National Resources and Conservation Service. Although no grant money is available directly through Flathead County, information and guidance on fuel reduction work is offered by the Emergency Services Office.

10. ISSUE AND OPPORTUNITY: Road System

The existing road system has developed without planning. It is limited in the remote areas and lacks connectivity throughout the area. This makes general access and especially emergency response difficult.

11. ISSUE AND OPPORTUNITY: Highway 93

Highway 93 is the only realistic access into and out of the area. Unless properly mitigated, any development that significantly increases traffic on the highway or aggravates access problems has a negative impact on the whole area. Local traffic also uses Hwy 93 extensively due to lack of road connectivity within the planning area – especially in downtown Lakeside. Some reduction in Hwy 93 traffic could be achieved by having more local business located off Hwy 93 with local road connectivity in the downtown area. This plan focuses future commercial development away from Highway 93. Creation of a road connectivity plan has been recommended as part of a Lakeside Town Center Development Plan.

12. ISSUE AND OPPORTUNITY: Protection of Wildlife Habitat:

The Flathead County Growth Policy states this issue well in Chapter 1 Part 1.6: *"Air and water quality were mentioned frequently as well as co-habitation of people and wildlife being qualities that make Flathead County unique and desirable. Many residents expressed a desire to protect the lakes, rivers, ponds, groundwater and air for future generations. Residents also enjoy frequent interaction with and access to wildlife as a defining characteristic of Flathead County."* Most of the Lakeside area is wildlife habitat, offering frequent interaction opportunities with the critters that also call this area home. This "defining characteristic of Flathead County" should be protected with development approaches that mitigate negative impact on the habitat required for healthy wildlife populations.

13. ISSUE AND OPPORTUNITY: Commercial Development and the Lakeside Town Center Development Plan.

The town center of Lakeside is a mix of commercial and residential use. Although there are some successful businesses, it has been difficult to be successful in Lakeside for many reasons (see sub-chapter 5.1). If future development in the town center area can correct some of the problems, the opportunities for business success will improve, property values will increase and Lakeside will become a more attractive area accommodating both businesses and residential living.

The Lakeside Town Center is currently defined by the Lakeside Zoning District. The zoning district is divided into three sub-districts. For the purpose of this discussion the downtown area will be the properties in the two sub-districts that allow commercial business as permitted uses with the addition of a few adjacent properties that are currently being used commercially. The downtown area is described in the zoning regulations as properties within 500 feet of US Highway 93 (starting line is the middle of Highway 93), between Bierney Creek Road and Ben

Williams Lane. This area is approximately 80 acres, currently about 60% residential, 35% commercial, and 5% vacant land.

Survey results reported in multiple sections in this Plan define considerations for the Town Center Planning Committee:

- Traffic in the downtown area and difficulty of getting on and off Highway 93, especially with the seasonal increase in traffic.
- Letting commercial use expand off Highway 93 in the Town Center and improving connectivity of roads in the Town Center to reduce the need for local use of Highway 93. Creative approaches are needed to encourage existing property owners and developers to contribute to achieving the road connectivity plan.
- Protecting the small town atmosphere.
- Bike/walk paths
- Parking, sidewalks, landscaping – in general, an accessible, safe, attractive Town Center.
- Ideas are needed to make downtown businesses more successful. Empty business buildings need to be filled.

14. ISSUE AND OPPORTUNITY: The Highway 93 Canyon Effect

Strips of commercial development with typically large buildings, signs, and parking lots seriously detract from the rural landscape, detract from the views, and substantially change the basic rural nature of the neighborhood. Much of the Highway 93 corridor both north and south of the town center runs through primarily residential neighborhoods. Highway 93 both north and south of the town center has many hills, curves, and offers limited site distance for ingress and egress. The proliferation of commercial uses outside of the town center along Highway 93 may alter the rural residential character, may have negative effects on residential property values and may adversely impact safety on Highway 93.

Commercial development has occurred at the intersection of Deer Creek Road and Highway 93 and parcels just north are advertised as "residential or commercial". While this commercial development is allowed in the unzoned areas of Lakeside, proliferation of commercial use along the Highway 93 corridor is not desirable especially with the current vacancies in the Town Center and the goal of improving the vitality of the Lakeside community's core.

15. ISSUE AND OPPORTUNITY: Need for an Entity to Facilitate Grants and other Land Opportunities.

Because Lakeside is not a legally incorporated area, the community cannot currently accept or manage land title or money. It is becoming increasingly common for development plans to include easements and contributions to the community as an integral part of the plan or as a mitigation factor. Because Lakeside is not a legal entity, such contributions currently go to the County for management where they are mingled with other County funds with only small percentages used for the direct benefit of the Lakeside Community.

The Lakeside Neighborhood and the Community Council should consider creating a Lakeside Land Trust as a non-profit legal entity that could accept and manage such things as easements, property title, and funds that are generated for the benefit of the community or by grant opportunities.

The purpose of the Lakeside Land Trust would be to manage such contributions for the direct benefit of the Lakeside Community. An existing organization called the Lakeside Community Development Foundation has performed some of this function in the past and may be able to expand their charter to include this concept. The Community Council should investigate the possibility, and if feasible, implement the creation of the trust or expansion of the Lakeside Community Development Foundation as soon as possible.

16. ISSUE AND OPPORTUNITY: Unzoned Land is Unprotected from Incompatible Development.

In the development of this Plan, numerous public comments have voiced a frustration that the Lakeside Community's interests are not being given the desired priority when land use decisions are made at the County level. In recent years the County has approved development plans that are not considered compatible with the Neighborhood vision. If the Lakeside Community wants to change this situation and have more influence on future land use in the Neighborhood, the difficult issue of zoning will have to be confronted.

In the current Flathead County approach to land use decisions, neighborhood plans are important and influential, but not regulatory. When the County Planning Department and Planning Board make recommendations, and Commissioners consider land use decisions, they are not required to follow the guidelines of a neighborhood plan. Zoning districts are the neighborhood specific regulatory tool used in conjunction with other County Regulations. Typically, the County does not initiate zoning districts but has been supportive of locally sponsored zoning districts. Most land use actions in unzoned areas do not require public input and are implemented regardless of impact to the community or neighboring properties. Only major subdivision applications (subdividing property into multiple parcels), require public input in unzoned areas.

Zoning assures public input in most land use decisions. The majority of the Lakeside Community is unzoned. For all of the above reasons, this plan recommends a community-wide zoning effort for Lakeside.

It should be noted that current County regulations for implementing Zoning districts require prior notification to the address of record for all affected land owners, opportunities for comment, and the final support of a majority of affected land owners. Zoning cannot be implemented without this process and the process must be followed rigorously.

In recent Flathead County and Lakeside specific situations, where development proposals are questioned or opposed, the lack of specific neighborhood regulation through zoned districts led to very difficult, time-consuming, and expensive review processes for the developers, the neighborhood, the Planning Department, the Planning Board, and the Commissioners. Several of these situations have resulted in lawsuits. In the end, this level of conflict and cost is bad for everyone.

Developers could save time and money and have more predictability if zoning were in place. Flathead County policies allow for streamlined development proposal review when the location has both an accepted Neighborhood Plan and Zoning throughout the entire planning area.

Since the 1994 plan, the Lakeside Zoning District (Town Center) and 2(two) new R-1 zoning districts have been implemented: Spring Creek, and the Fish Hatchery. Both R-1 zoning projects were initiated and led by landowners in the district. They required many hours of volunteered time and considerable expense for lawyers and planning consultants.

The following results from the 2008 Lakeside Neighborhood Survey address zoning. Possible answers were 0= no opinion; 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree; of 3=agree and 4 =strongly agree.

A. Respondents were asked if density standards should be implemented.
   a. 84% agreed or strongly agreed that density standards should be implemented.
   b. 8% disagreed or strongly disagreed
   c. the average response was 3.4.
B. Survey respondents were asked if zoning should be considered.
   a. 79% agreed or strongly agreed that zoning should be considered.
   b. 13% disagreed or strongly disagreed
   c. the average response was 3.3.
C. Survey respondents were asked if lakefront development restrictions should be implemented.
   a. 82% agreed or strongly agreed that lakefront restrictions should be implemented.
   b. 12% disagreed or strongly disagreed
   c. the average response was 3.3.

As the survey response shows, community support for implementation of density restrictions and lakeshore development restrictions is high. The mechanism in the Growth Policy for such implementation and enforcement is zoning**.** Community support for the benefits of zoning is also high.

Development issues (as detailed in this document) are not going to go away. The Lakeside area offers a unique and highly desirable location. Implementation of zoning now, rather than later, offers the best chance to head off the issues that threaten the Lakeside Vision and to lessen the continuing contentious development review process.

17. ISSUE AND OPPORTUNITY: Remote Parcel Zoning.

County zoning does not apply to Federal agencies such as the Forest Service, however if their land was ever sold or traded, it would then apply to the new owner in a manner consistent with surrounding parcels.

Remote land is critical to the Lakeside Neighborhood in many ways including:

- It is an area with dense forest coverage and steep terrain creating a significant fire potential. A fire started at any point in this area is an extreme danger to the whole west side of Flathead Lake. With limited access to the remote areas and only Highway 93 into and out of the area, the potential wildfire threat to public safety is significant.
- It is a major element of the watershed directly draining into the developed areas of Lakeside and, maybe more importantly, directly into Flathead Lake.
- The Forest Service lands have always been available to the public for recreation, hiking, skiing, hunting etc. As such, it is substantial part of the character of Lakeside that residents, property owners and visitors treasure. It is the major part of the open space that defines the character of the Neighborhood.

The time is right for the Community Council to facilitate a zoning district covering the Remote land before it is offered for sale. If the Community Council initiates a project to zone the entire Neighborhood in one project, the Remote land would be a part of that project.

6.3 Land Use Goals and Polices

GOAL 13. Maintain the small town feeling, family friendly atmosphere, views of mountains & Flathead Lake, and the scenic, rural character of the Lakeside Neighborhood.

Policy 13.1. Encourage preservation of open space wherever feasible.

Policy 13.2. Encourage development designs that blend into and support the small town feeling and family friendly atmosphere.

Policy 13.3. Higher densities are encouraged around the town center and public services.

Policy 13.4. Lower densities are encouraged away from the town center and inaccessible to public services

Policy 13.5. Encourage strict enforcement of all State and County regulations.

Policy 13.6. Develop a safe and friendly trail/path network throughout the Neighborhood.

Policy 13.7. Enforce sign regulations.

Policy 13.8. Protect the scenic rural character and encourage protection of lake, mountain and forest views with appropriate building sizes, placement of structures, setbacks, and limitations on walls and fencing. See Figure 6.6 for a rendering of spacing between buildings to preserve views.

Policy 13.9. Discourage location of buildings on skylines.

Policy 13.10. Encourage dark skies principles.

GOAL 14. Create a town center that is attractive and accessible in order to encourage a community focal point and a variety of commercial activities serving the Lakeside Neighborhood.

Policy 14.1. Encourage effective mitigation of all direct access to Highway 93.

Policy 14.2. Encourage new development to use feeder roads rather than accessing Highway 93 directly.

Policy 14.3. Encourage development designs that contribute to the road and trail/path networks.

Policy 14.4. Prioritize creation of a new Development plan for the Town Center

Policy 14.5. Encourage implementation of the new Development plan for the Town Center.

Policy 14.6. Improve parking in the Town Center.

Policy 14.7. Improve pedestrian access and cross walks in Town Center.

Policy 14.8. Encourage and support general commercial activities in the Town Center.

Policy 14.9. Discourage general commercial development outside the Town Center especially along Highway 93

Policy 14.10. Monitor the local economy and identify issues for the next plan review.

Policy 14.11. Encourage small neighborhood commercial sites outside the Town Center as long as they are located away from the Highway 93 corridor, are compatible with a rural setting in scale, and design, and do not conflict with a neighboring land use.

Policy 14.12. Existing uses should be allowed to continue with grandfathered rights.

GOAL 15. Reduction of wildfire risk through a community wide process.

Policy 15.1. Pursue a Community-wide Fire-wise program including all landowners, community services, local real estate agents, developers and builders.

Policy 15.2. Encourage implementation of the NFPA 1144 home evaluation program, which is a voluntary program for evaluation of structural fire risk.

Policy 15.3. Encourage use of Hazardous Fuel Reduction project funding programs.

Policy 15.4. Encourage aggressive wildfire mitigation plans in development design.

GOAL 16. Protect the water quality of Flathead Lake

Policy 16.1. Encourage low impact development along the waterfront.

Policy 16.2. Discourage PUD's on the waterfront.

Policy 16.3. Encourage strict enforcement of all State and County Shoreline regulations and comply with the Federal Clean Water Act and the Montana Constitution.

Policy 16.4. Encourage paved roads in order to control dust pollution

Policy 16.5. Discourage dependence on septic systems in proximity to Flathead Lake.

Policy 16.6. Encourage connection to the public sewer system.

Policy 16.7. Encourage strict enforcement of all State regulations for control of storm runoff and TDMLs.

Policy 16.8. Encourage the use of natural buffer zones to mitigate development impact.

Policy 16.9. Discourage landscaping that requires treatments which pollute the lake.

GOAL 17. Support a variety of recreational opportunities for residents, property owners and visitors including emphasis on increasing public lake access, paths, and trails.

Policy 17.1. Defend all existing public access to Flathead Lake.

Policy 17.2. Support proposals that increase or improve public access to Flathead Lake.

Policy 17.3. Develop a safe trail/path network throughout the Neighborhood.

Policy 17.4. Encourage development designs that contribute to the road and trail/path networks.

Policy 17.5. Encourage development plans that contribute to public recreation opportunities.

Policy 17.6. Support multi-use plans for the Island Unit of the Swan Lake District, Flathead National Forest.

Policy 17.7. Encourage parks, trails, and public gathering places.

GOAL 18. Maintain habitat for healthy wildlife populations.

Policy 18.1. Encourage maximum open space and natural buffers in development design.

Policy 18.2. Encourage protection of natural wildlife movement patterns.

Policy 18.3. Encourage maintenance of natural vegetation.

Policy 18.4. Encourage principles of "Building with Wildlife" distributed by Flathead County Planning Department.

GOAL 19. Improve community involvement in the development review and approval process so that it more effectively addresses the concerns of the Lakeside Community.

Policy 19.1. Consider creation of a Lakeside Land Trust

Policy 19.2. Promote understanding of the issues, guidelines, goals and policies in the Neighborhood Plan.

Policy 19.3. Emphasize the community vision in land use decisions.

Policy 19.4. Consider support of the County concept of streamlined development review as it is further defined for areas with Neighborhood Plans and Zoning

GOAL 20. Implement neighborhood-wide zoning.

Policy 20.1. Implement or facilitate implementation of zoning. Implement this zoning in a coordinated Neighborhood wide project or, if that is not achieved, support individual zoning projects as areas express interest.

GOAL 21. Encourage ongoing effective interaction between the Community, through the Community Council, and major land owners and government agencies regarding status and plans affecting the Lakeside Neighborhood.

Policy 21.1. Promote understanding of the issues, guidelines, goals and policies in the Neighborhood Plan.

Policy 21.2. Encourage involvement of major landowners and managers in Neighborhood Land Use decisions.

Policy 21.3. Encourage regular input from major landowners and managers on the status of and plans for their land.

Policy 21.4. Educate the community about the value of cooperation and understanding in land use decisions.

Policy 21.5. Ensure large landowners receive the same communications other residents of Lakeside receive.

6.4 Future Land Use

This portion of the plan considers all of the existing conditions, issues and opportunities, goals and polices, and the communities Vision Statement, and puts them into the context of future land uses. The future land uses are expressed in the form of text describing each land use in detail, a future land use map, and a summary chart of the six land use designations. This sub-chapter presents what the Lakeside Community would like to be in the future.

The descriptions of the future land uses and the future land use map are not zoning, nor are they regulatory. They are for guidance only. The guidance is for land use managers and community leaders to assist in decision making as to what land uses and intensities are appropriate based upon a public planning process (i.e. the process used in revising this neighborhood plan). The future land use designations and map are not set in stone, and are intended to be revised as community conditions and values change. If the community chooses to pursue regulations or amend regulations or create additional zoning districts to implement this plan, all regulatory decisions must be based upon the future land use descriptions and the future land use map. In fact, the County mandates that zoning must comply with Neighborhood Plans, if they exist.

Recommended densities in the following discussion of land use designations are presented as "average dwelling units per acre" rather than as the minimum lot size terminology used in County Zoning Regulations. This was a considered decision intended to emphasize the Neighborhood's desire to encourage clustered development design and promote maximum open space.

Figure 6.4 below is a map of the recommended Land Uses in the Lakeside Community. Following the map are detailed descriptions of each of the six recommended Land Use Designations.

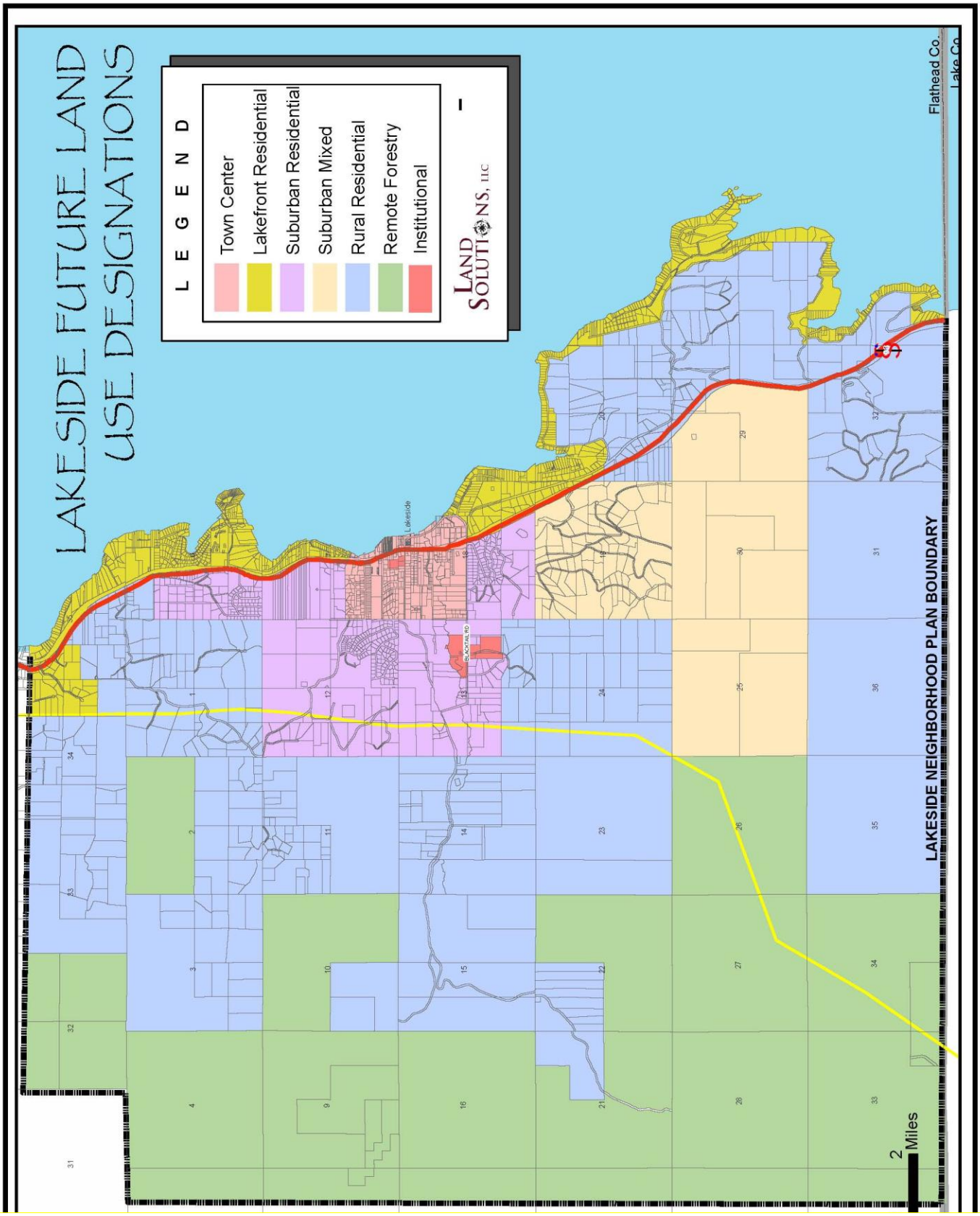


Figure 6-4: Future Land Use Map

6.4.1 Future Land Use Designations

Seven land use designations are defined in this plan. Below are detailed descriptions and guidelines for each designation.

6.4.1.1 *Town Center Designation*

Intent

This designation promotes orderly development of the Lakeside Town Center with a mix of general commercial and single or multiple family residential development. This designation is intended to be replaced with the final adoption and implementation of the Lakeside Town Center Development Plan, recommended within this neighborhood plan.

Location (refer to Figure 6-4 Future Land Use Map)

The area in this designation is defined by the existing Lakeside Zoning District. More specifically, it is found north of Ben Williams Lane, east of Stoner Creek Road and Clothier Lane, and South of Saskatoon Drive to the shores of Flathead Lake.

Recommended Uses

1. Single family residential
2. Multi-family residential
3. Passive and active recreation
4. Public service facilities
5. Commercial
6. Mixed commercial/residential

Recommended Densities

1. Single family residential - average 4 units per acre
2. Commercial – average 4 units per acre
3. Multi-family – average 7 units per acre

Development Guidelines

1. Development should facilitate pedestrian traffic with walkways, crosswalks, and buffers separating pedestrians from roads and highways.
2. Development should provide ample parking to encourage safe and convenient public access to the Town Center.
3. No development should eliminate or reduce a public access or easement to Flathead Lake for private purposes.
4. Development on Highway 93 should:
    a. use natural and non-polluting landscaping techniques to give the appearance of a narrower road corridor
    b. mitigate all access to Highway 93
    c. limit new access directly onto Highway 93
    d. provide pedestrian separation from the roadway with sidewalks, curbs and gutters.

5. Parking areas should be adequate in size for the use, paved and landscaped (natural and non-polluting) with a professionally engineered runoff control plan.
6. Ecologically sound setbacks and buffer zones from Flathead Lake, Stoner Creek and Bierney Creek should be strictly enforced.
7. Planned Unit Developments may be acceptable, if zoned, at twice the density of the underlying zoning.

6.4.1.2 *Lakefront Residential Designation*

Intent

Special consideration is encouraged for development in this designation in order to protect the Highway 93 corridor, Flathead Lake water quality and the historic land use pattern of the lake shore.

This land use designation is intended to promote the traditional development pattern of single-family structures and summer cabins along the water front while protecting lake water quality. Higher density development in a PUD in zoned areas may be achieved on non-water front properties when zoned and when it is in character with the surrounding land use, protects the views of surrounding mountains and Flathead Lake, water quality, and the natural environment.

In order to protect the water quality of Flathead Lake, higher densities are only recommended in areas with sewer system availability and paved roads, and densities are maximized at two units per acre to limit environmental and community impact.

Location (refer to Figure 6-4 Future Land Use Map)

Following the shore of Flathead Lake, north and south of the Town Center.

Recommended Uses

1. Single family residential
2. Passive and active recreation

Recommended Densities

There are several existing zoning districts in this area. Their density standards are, in general, compatible with this designation.

Density ranges from an average of 1 unit per 2.5 acres to 2 units per 1 acre.

1. Base underlying density is an average of 1 unit per 2.5 acres.
2. An average of 1 unit per 1 acre is achievable in areas with public or private sewer systems and a paved road network.
3. An average of 2 units per 1 acre is achievable on water front lots in areas with public or private sewer systems and a paved road network.

Development Guidelines

1. Ecologically sound setbacks and buffers from Flathead Lake should be required and/or enforced.
2. No development should eliminate or reduce a public access to Flathead Lake for private purposes.
3. County regulations for development along Flathead Lake shore line should be aggressively enforced, especially limitations on docks and boat slips and sources of pollution.
4. In zoned areas, PUDs should not achieve densities higher than 2 units per 1 acre on the water front.

6.4.1.3 *Suburban Residential Designation*

Intent

This designation recognizes the need within the Neighborhood area for suburban style development close to public services and facilities. It provides for connectivity between developments and arterial and collector roads, and serves as a buffer between the commercial and multi-family uses of the Town Center and the single family Rural Residential and Suburban Mixed Designations.

This designation provides for higher densities, when feasible. Development is intended to utilize and/or expand existing infrastructure and occur in an orderly outward expansion from the Town Center. A small town atmosphere of community orientated single-family homes of varying values is desirable. Development is encouraged to blend into and compliment the greater community.

Location (refer to Figure 6-4 Future Land Use Map)

Generally west of and surrounding the Lakeside Town Center up to the Rural Residential designation

Recommended Uses

1. Single family residential
2. Multi-family residential possible in a PUD if area is zoned
3. Passive and active recreation
4. Public service facilities
5. Small scale agriculture and livestock

Recommended Densities:

Density ranges from an average of 1 unit per 2.5 acres to 4 units per 1 acre.

1. An average of 1 dwelling unit per 2.5 acres is the base underlining density. The intent is to maintain lot sizes large enough to facilitate future growth when infrastructure becomes available.
2. An average density of 1 unit per 1 acre is achievable in areas with a paved road network.
3. An average density of 2 to 4 units per 1 acre is achievable in areas where public or private sewer systems are available, a paved road network is available, and few limiting factors are present. Access from an arterial or collector road should be available. This density is recommended to be closer to the Town Center but away from Highway 93.
4. Multi-family development could be considered with a PUD in zoned areas, located closer to the Town Center, but away from Highway 93.

Development Guidelines

1. Development with two to four dwelling units per acre or greater should:
    a. include appropriate infrastructure such as sidewalks, curb and gutter, and street lights at intersections

b. locate buildings following the prevailing pattern of adjacent building setbacks.

2. Planned Unit Developments may be acceptable, if zoned, at twice the density of the underlying zoning.

6.4.1.4 *Suburban Mixed Designation*

Intent

This designation is a variation of Suburban Residential that accommodates the unique set of characteristics given preliminary County approval in this area.

Location (refer to Figure 6-4 Future Land Use Map)

Sections 19, 25, 30, and part of 29, generally south of the town center and west of Highway 93

Recommended Uses

1. Single family residential
2. Multi-family residential.
3. Passive and active recreation
4. Public service facilities

Recommended Densities:

Density ranges from an average of 1 unit per 5 acres to 1 unit per 2 acres.

1. An average of 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres is the base underlining density.
2. An average density of 1 unit per 2 acres is achievable in areas with a paved road network and clustered design is encouraged to mitigate terrain challenges and preserve open space.

Development Guidelines

1. Neighborhood Commercial development is acceptable in this designation on paved roads.
2. Multifamily limited to a maximum of 10% of the total units in the designation

6.4.1.5 *Rural Residential Designation*

Intent

This designation is intended to preserve the historical pattern of low density, single family residences in the area between the Suburban Residential and the Remote Forest parcels. It supports mixed single family residential, small scale agricultural, and small ranch activity.

This area is currently heavily forested, has a limited road system, and few areas with sewer and water systems reasonably available. Terrain challenges increase as the location moves up slope from the Town Center. A rural small town atmosphere of single-family homes of varying values is desirable. Development is encouraged to be inclusive; to merge into and compliment the greater community.

Location (refer to Figure 6-4 Future Land Use Map)

Generally north, south, and west of the Suburban Residential designation and out to the Remote Forest designation. The pattern generally follows the major arterials; Spring Creek Road, Blacktail Road and Bierney Creek Road.

Recommended Uses

1. Single Family Residential
2. Passive and active recreation
3. Small scale agriculture and livestock
4. Forestry

Recommended Densities:

Density ranges from an average of 1 unit per 10 acres to 1 unit per 5 acre

1. An average of 1 unit per 10 acres is the base underlining density.
2. An average of 1 unit per 5 acres is achievable in areas with a paved road network.

Development Guidelines

1. The use of clustering techniques is encouraged to maximize open space, accommodate terrain challenges, and minimize impact on wildlife habit.
2. Planned Unit Developments may be acceptable, if zoned, at twice the density of the underlying zoning.

6.4.1.6 *Remote Forest Designation*

Intent

The area in this designation consists of large undeveloped parcels managed primarily for forestry by the US Forest Service. There are a few private parcels embedded in the Forest service lands. The area is characterized by steep, heavily forested terrain with few roads and no services. The intent of this designation is to preserve the remote undeveloped nature of the area. An Overall Development Plan (ODP) aimed at low density, recreational uses could be considered. Such an ODP should feature major areas in preserved open space and enhancement of the road and path network.

Location (refer to Figure 6-4 Future Land Use Map)

This area extends from the Rural Residential designation upslope to the western boundary of the Lakeside Neighborhood.

Recommended Uses

1. Forestry
2. Active Recreation
3. Single Family Residential

Recommended Densities:

Density ranges from an average of 1 unit per 20 acres to 1 unit per 10 acres.

1. An average of 1 unit per 20 acres is the base underlining density.
2. An average density of 1 unit per 10 acres could be achievable through the County ODP process.

Development Guidelines:

Development in this area is not anticipated or encouraged, but if it is considered:

1. The use of clustering techniques is encouraged to maximize open space, accommodate terrain challenges, and minimize impact on wildlife habitat.

6.4.1.7 *Institutional Designation*

Intent

This designation provides for public and private institutions such as schools and universities.

Location (refer to Figure 6-4 Future Land Use Map)

Lakeside Elementary School, YWAM campus

Recommended Uses

1. 7.17.040 zoning regulations under section 3.30 "Public" lists the definition 3.30.010, permitted uses 3.30.020, conditional uses 3.30 030. and Bulk and Dimensional Requirements 3.30.040.

Recommended Densities:

Densities are not considered in units per acre for this designation. The intensity of use should not have detrimental effect on adjoining properties.

Development Guidelines:

1. New facilities should provide connectivity with the surrounding community.
2. 7.17.040 zoning regulations under section 3.30 "Public" lists the definition 3.30.010, permitted uses 3.30.020, conditional uses 3.30 030. and Bulk and Dimensional Requirements 3.30.040.

6.4.2 Summary Comparison of Land Use Designations

Figure 6.5 below is a summary comparison of 6 of the 7 future land use designations. The 7th use, "Institutional", does not lend itself for comparison by density and is omitted from this chart. The chart is intended only for a convenient, high level comparison and should only be used for reference. All interpretations of land use must rely on the detailed descriptions of each land use designation.

Future Land Use Designation Summary

TOWN CENTER	LAKEFRONT RESIDENTIAL	SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL	SUBURBAN MIXED	RURAL RESIDENTIAL	REMOTE FOREST
USE	**USE**	**USE**	**USE**	**USE**	**USE**
SINGLE FAMILY MULTI FAMILY PASSIVE AND ACTIVE RECREATION PUBLIC SERVICE FACILITIES COMMERCIAL MIXED COMMMERCIAL RESIDNETIAL	SINGLE FAMILY PASSIVE AND ACTIVE RECREATION	SINGLE FAMILY MULTI FAMILY * PASSIVE AND ACTIVE RECREATION PUBLIC FACILITIES AGRICULTURE	SINGLE FAMILY MULTI FAMILY** PASSIVE AND ACTIVE RECREATION PUBLIC FACILITIES	SINGLE FAMILY PASSIVE AND ACTIVE RECREATION AGRICULTURE FORESTRY	FORESTRY ACTIVE RECREATION SINGLE FAMILY
DENSITY	**DENSITY**	**DENSITY**	**DENSITY**	**DENSITY**	**DENSITY**
SINGLE FAMILY AVERAGE 4 UNITS/ACRE **MULTI FAMILY** AVERAGE 7 UNITS/ACRE **COMMERCIAL** AVERAGE 4 UNITS/ACRE	**BASE DENSITY** 1 UNIT/2.5 ACRES **WITH SEWER AND PAVED ROADS** 1 UNIT/1 ACRES **WATER FRONT LOTS WITH SEWER AND PAVED ROADS** 2 UNITS/ACRE	**BASE DENSITY** 1 UNIT/2.5 ACRES **WITH PAVED ROADS** 1 UNIT/1 ACRES **WITH SEWER AND PAVED ROADS** 2 TO 4	**BASE DENSITY** 1 UNIT/5 ACRES **WITH PAVED ROADS** 1 UNIT/2 ACRES	**BASE DENSITY** 1 UNIT/10 ACRES **WITH PAVED ROADS** 1 UNIT/5 ACRES	**BASE DENSITY** 1 UNIT/20 ACRES **WITH ODP** 1 UNIT/10 ACRES

Summary only – refer to designation descriptions for complete details.
All densities are stated as the average units per acre with clustering and maximum open space encouraged.
ODP refers to the County's Overall Development Plan process
* Multi-family development could be considered with a PUD in zoned areas, located closer to the Town Center but away from Highway 93.
** The number of multi-family units in the Suburban Mixed designation is limited to a maximum of 10% of the total units in the designation.

Figure 6-5: Summary of the Land Use Designations

6.5 Implementation

6.5.1 Community Council Action:

1) On an ongoing basis:
   - A) Educate the general public that Lakeside has a current Neighborhood Land Use Plan in effect.
   - B) Distribute the plan to all interested parties and make it freely available to all current and potential land owners.
   - C) Be ready and available to advise on implementation of the Plan.
2) Support the Town Center Planning Committee in:
   - A) Creating a Town Center Development Plan
   - B) Implementing the Town Center Development Plan
3) Implement neighborhood-wide zoning or facilitate zoning by individual groups.
4) Lead a community-wide effort to implement the National Fire-wise program.
5) Lead a community-wide effort to implement the National Fire Protection Association 1144 Home Evaluation program.
6) Lead a community-wide effort to implement Hazardous Fuel Reduction Projects.
7) Consider creation of a Lakeside Land Trust; explore the potential of the existing Lakeside Development Foundation for this purpose.
8) Maintain an ongoing information exchange with major landowners, land managers, developers, organizations, and service providers for the Lakeside area.
9) Provide a forum to those property owners expressing a desire to amend the plan to reflect the overall desires of the Community.
10) Consider initiating an analysis of the feasibility of road inter-connectivity outside the Town Center.

6.5.2 Regulatory Recommendations

Implementing the Plan through Zoning

1) This plan recommends that the entire Lakeside Neighborhood be zoned with an appropriately varied density and use pattern, in one comprehensive project, initiated and coordinated by the Community Council. As daunting as such a project sounds, it offers significant benefits:
   - A) A single coordinated effort could do a better job of implementing the intentions of the Neighborhood Plan's Land Use Plan and could produce a better zoning pattern across the whole area.
   - B) A single project, with a coordinated set of meetings, could make better use of everyone's time and limit the overall time spent on this contentious issue.
   - C) A single project could pool the expertise of individuals spread through the Lakeside Neighborhood.

2) If zoning the Neighborhood is not approached as one project, there are areas with high priority issues that should be addressed. Zoning of the following areas should be facilitated by the Community Council as soon as possible:

   A) The unzoned areas along the lakeshore

   B) The Remote parcels as explained in sub-chapter 6.2.

   C) The Deer Creek road area where a group of land owners has organized and has expressed interest in zoning options

   D) Other neighborhoods as land owners express interest

Planned Unit Developments

3) From the Flathead County Zoning Regulations: SECTION 3.31 PUD PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT

   3.31.010 Definition.

   "*An overlay district to encourage a more efficient use of land and public services by providing a classification which may provide flexibility of architectural design and mixing of land uses while preserving and enhancing the integrity and environmental values of an area. The underlying zoning designation shall establish the uses and density allowable in the PUD area."*

   County regulations allow Planned Unit Developments to achieve increased density up to twice the underlying density in any zoned area but only in zoned areas. The following guidelines reflect the desires of the Lakeside Community specifically in regards to evaluation of Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) in the zoned areas of the Lakeside Neighborhood. Some items in this list are stated in the County regulations and guidelines but are also stated here to emphasize their importance to the Lakeside Neighborhood.

   1. PUDs should only be achievable when they "preserve and enhance the integrity and environmental values" of the Lakeside Neighborhood as stated in the County Zoning Regulations quoted above. The trade for increased densities should be development designs that also benefit the community. Issues important to Lakeside have been defined throughout this Land Use Plan and should be applied to evaluation of PUD proposals.

   2. In order to protect water quality in Flathead Lake and historical character, the higher densities achievable with PUDs are not recommended on water front locations, even if zoned. The maximum of 2 units per acre should be enforced.

   3. In zoned areas, PUDs should only be achievable when the road access to the development and all roads within the development are paved. Costs of road upgrade are to be paid by the development following County regulations.

   4. Location of general commercial development is a major concern to the Lakeside Neighborhood and is addressed in detail throughout this plan. In order to support this plan, commercial uses within a PUD should only be those specifically allowed in the underlying zoned designation, i.e., if a zoned area does not allow general commercial, a PUD for general commercial use should not be approved.

5. PUD design should establish effective buffers from adjacent residential uses with natural, non-polluting landscaping and increased setbacks.

Subdivision Regulations

4) .The Community Council should make recommendations for approval, conditional approval, or denial that are based upon the Flathead County Subdivision regulations. The recommendations of the Community Council for subdivision proposals should strictly enforce all design criteria within the regulations.

6.5.3 Community Actions

The following guidelines are simply industry accepted suggestions of how to minimize development impact. They are intended to assist and educate the community; they are not intended to be regulations. If an individual planning a project wishes to voluntarily consider the community character, mitigate impacts to views, or mitigate the effects of outdoor lighting, these guidelines can serve as a point of reference on how to accomplish his or her individual goals.

1) Community Character Guidelines:

The community character can be supported in development design by following these guidelines:

A. Mass and scale: It is desirable that the size of structures blend into the existing town character. It is especially important that the size of structures minimize disruption of mountain and lake views for neighboring property and from public roads. With regard to condominiums or townhouses, the survey respondents clearly indicated that large, tall multi-unit developments that blocks access to and views of the lake and views of the mountains, are not consistent with the community vision. Figure 6-6 illustrates how buildings can be spaced to protect access and views. Multi-unit projects away from the lakefront that do not block views or lake access and which blend into the surrounding natural landscape are more tolerated by the community according to community input received during the creation of this plan.

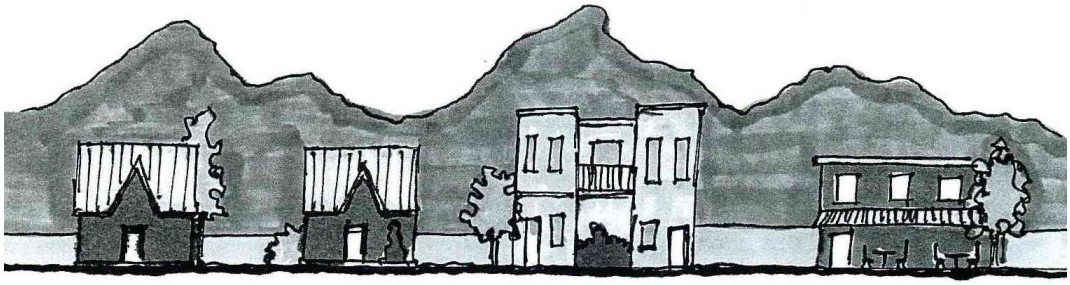


Figure 6-6: Spacing of development to protect views.

B. Setbacks and fencing: Well designed setbacks can minimize the impact of structures, maintain views, and can, with appropriate vegetation, and help mitigate environmental impacts. Walls and fencing that disrupt traditional lake and mountain views are discouraged.

C. Exterior building materials: Including "design standards" may generate more opposition and future confusion than they are worth. The correlation between "acceptable" design and commercial or residential attractiveness is hard to measure. The use of natural appearing building materials for building exteriors is desirable to blend into the forest and country setting of Lakeside. The appearance of wood, stone, and natural colors are encouraged. The focus for future building guidance should be on proportion and scale rather than style, especially in the town center; e.g., height limits, setbacks, view corridors for large buildings/projects, placement of off-street parking at back or side of commercial structures, limited curb cuts, and some percentage of landscaping.

D. Vegetative buffers: Lakeside is set in a naturally forested area. It is desirable to maintain as much natural vegetation as possible in a manner compatible with Fire-wise principles. Such buffers are visually appealing and contribute to a healthy environment. The use of naturally occurring species is preferred to traditional landscaping requiring significant fertilization in order to minimize potential pollution from chemical runoff.

E. Open space: Maximizing open space in development design provides several benefits to the Neighborhood:

a. It facilitates clustered designs to deal with challenging terrain.

b. It helps to maintain the rural character.

c. It accommodates wildlife.

d. It facilitates the development of public recreation such as trails and parks.

2) Hillside Development Guidelines

A. Place structures so they keep the intended view, yet are not silhouetted against the sky

a. Homes need to be setback a far enough distance from cliffs or hilltops so that the structure does not appear to be perched on the edge.

b. A mountain or other landform should act as the backdrop to the home. This is highly preferable to having the building project into a blue sky background like the parapet along the top of a castle. If the house does break the plane of the natural backdrop, it should be designed to mimic the natural lines of the hillsides.

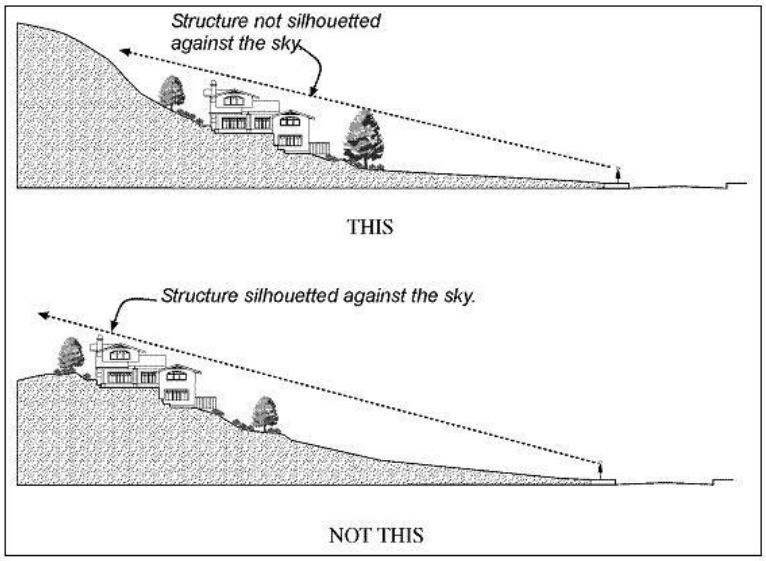


Figure 6.7: Hillside development guideline related to hill top placement.

B. Single story elements, setbacks, overhangs, roof pitches, and landscaping should be used to minimize impact of exterior wall surfaces.

C. Roofs should be fragmented to avoid a monotonous appearance while following the angle of the slope,

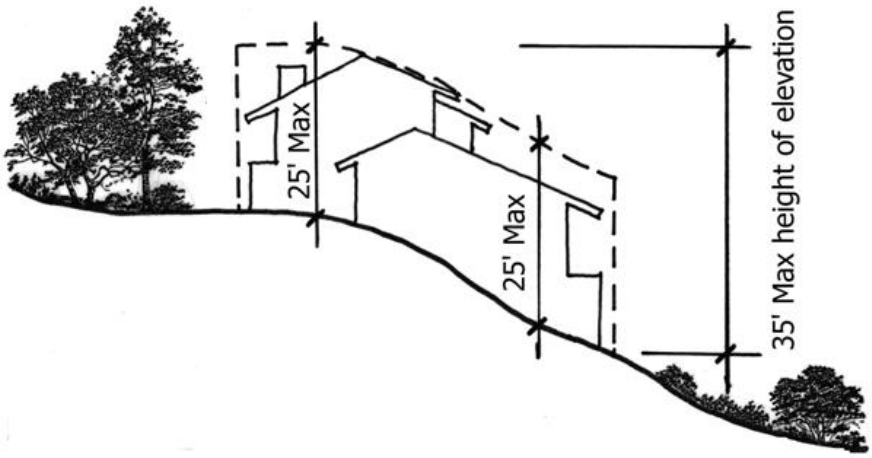


Figure 6.8: Hillside development guideline related to roof lines.

D. Design buildings to be perpendicular to the contour of the slope, not parallel

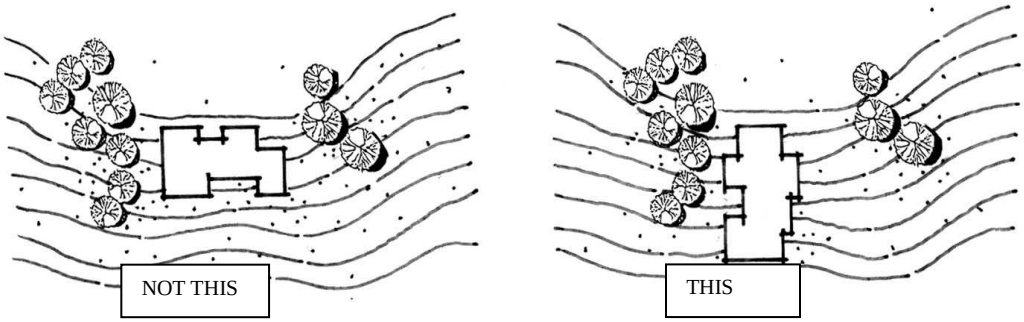


Figure6.9: Hillside development guidelines related to contour of slope.

3) Outdoor Lighting Guidelines

A. Considerations when planning an outdoor lighting project

1. The idea that more outdoor lighting results in better safety and security is a myth. Good security lighting only needs the right amount of light, in the right place, at the right time.
2. Use the lowest wattage of lamp possible. Consider compact florescent lamps rather than incandescent. You will use less energy and they have longer lifetime saving money.
3. Whenever possible, turn off the lights. Utilize timers or motion detectors that turn off lights when businesses close or when traffic is minimal.

B. Guidelines to help make your project Dark Skies friendly:

1. All lights should be shielded and directed in such a way as to direct all light toward the intended area and away from reflective surfaces, and does not leave the perimeter of the site.
2. Avoid lighting that is higher than the building area they illuminate, and no taller than 30 feet.
3. Light fixtures and lamps should be shielded in a manner that light the light emitting surface is not visible and to direct light away from all adjacent property.
4. Light fixtures should be placed so no light emitting surface is visible from any residential area or public roadway, walkway, trail or public area.
5. Pole lighting should have full cut-off fixtures that do not allow light to shine above a 70 degree angle measured from a vertical line from the center of the lamp.
6. Avoid roof illumination,
7. Lighting on a building should be shielded and directed toward the building.
8. Canopy lighting such as service stations lighting, should be recessed and shielded to ensure no glare is visible form public right of way or adjacent properties.
9. Use low voltage landscape lighting and direct lighting towards the object or

building to be lighted, and ensure lighting does not leave the perimeter of the site.

10. Mercury vapor lights are discouraged because of poor color spectrum, light intensity and inefficient energy use.
11. Low pressure or high pressure sodium lights and metal halide lights are better choices than florescent lights.
12. Floodlights should have external shielding.
13. Signs that have exterior lighting should be lit from above the sign and the light shielded and directed towards the surface of the sign.

Chapter 7 Monitoring of the Plan and the Goals / Policies

Monitoring and tracking the implementation of the Neighborhood Plan and monitoring and tracking of the achievement of Goals and Policies for the Lakeside Community is the responsibility of the elected Lakeside Community Council.

This Plan recommends that the Council publish, via website and via news media, status and progress of implementation strategies at least annually.

Chapter 8 Revision and Amendment Procedures

8.1 Revision Process

The Lakeside Neighborhood Plan should regularly undergo a full review by the Lakeside Community Council at a minimum of once every 5 years. This review should be conducted during an open public meeting, and should involve public input. The review process should evaluate the vision statement, issues and opportunities, and goals and polices to determine if they are still applicable to the community. The Council should also review the implementation strategies and determine if they are being utilized to achieve the goals of the plan. Based upon this review, the Council should make one of the following determinations:

1. The plan is still applicable and is functioning properly. The plan does not need revising at this time and the revision process will not be initiated.
2. Portions of the plan are in need of revision. The Council should identify those portions of the plan that are in need of revision, and initiate the revision process and revise the portions of the plan that have been identified.
3. The plan is in need of a general revision, and the Council should initiate the revision process.

In the event the Council determines a partial or complete revision is necessary, the following process shall apply:

1. The Community Council or a sub-committee of the Council shall be responsible for the revision.
2. The Community Council or appointed sub-committee shall hold at least one public workshop covering concepts and solutions being considered for incorporation into the plan. Other workshops may be held or a community survey may be conducted, but are not required. Workshops and surveys collect current valuable data to assure that any Plan revisions reflect and address the current concerns, issues and opportunities within the community.
3. Once the draft is created, the document shall be available for public comment. Versions shall be available online and in hard copy with the Flathead County Planning and Zoning Office. The public will have a comment period to read and comment as established by the Commissioners.
4. The Community Council shall hold a public hearing regarding the draft, and either approve the draft to be submitted to the County for consideration, make amendments and approve the draft to be submitted to the County for Consideration, or determine further review of the draft is necessary.
5. If the decision is to submit the draft to the County, the Council shall submit an application for a Neighborhood Plan Amendment.
6. Once submitted to the Planning and Zoning office. The process is as follows.
    a. The Flathead County Planning Board shall hold a public hearing on the plan and review and revise the draft plan as the Board deems appropriate. The Board may conduct a public workshop prior to the public hearing.

b. A final, revised version of the plan will be forwarded to the Flathead County Commissioners for their consideration. After the commissioners pass a resolution of intent to adopt, the public will have a comment period to read and comment as established by the commissioners.

The Flathead County Planning and Zoning Department, the Flathead County Planning Board or the Flathead County Commissioners may initiate a revision to the Lakeside Neighborhood Plan. This revision process will follow steps 2 through 5 of Part 4: Existing Plans, in Chapter 10 of the Flathead County Growth Policy (Resolution No. 2015A).

8.2 Map and Text Amendments

From time to time, it may be appropriate to amend the text and/or maps contained within the Lakeside Neighborhood Plan. Amendments shall be processed in the following manner:

1. A reasonable effort shall be made by the applicant to communicate the nature and purpose of the amendment request to the Lakeside Community Council. Early communication increases the likelihood that all interested parties can consider and respond to each other's needs and constraints. This communication also increases the likelihood that an applicant can respect the integrity and intent of the plan while accomplishing the purpose of the amendment(s). However, the consent of the Council is not required prior to proceeding to Step 2 of this process.
2. The applicant shall submit an Application for Neighborhood Plan Amendment to the Flathead County Planning and Zoning Office (FCPZ). The application for amendment shall address the following criteria (adapted directly from Chapter 9 of the Flathead County Growth Policy):
    1. Does the amendment affect overall compliance of the Lakeside Neighborhood Plan with 76-1-601, MCA?
    2. Is the amendment based on existing characteristics and/or projected trends that are substantially different from those presented in the most recent update?
    3. Does the amendment create inconsistencies within the document?
    4. Does the amendment further protect and comply with the seven elements of the public's vision for the future of Flathead County (found in Chapter 1 of the Flathead County Growth Policy) and the vision statement of the Lakeside Neighborhood Plan?
    5. Has the proposed amendment undergone a sufficient process of public participation and review?
3. FCPZ shall notify the Community Council that an application for amendment has been submitted and communicate the nature of the requested amendment. FCPZ will review the requested amendment for compliance with the criteria above and prepare a report to the Flathead County Planning Board.
4. FCPZ will present the application to Lakeside Community Council prior to the Planning Board public hearing and seek a recommendation from the Council to the Planning Board on the proposed amendment(s).

5. FCPZ will present the application, report and the Council's recommendation to the Planning Board and the Planning Board will hold a public hearing in conformance with 76-1-602, MCA and the Board's own bylaws regarding public hearings.
6. The Planning Board will forward, by resolution, a recommendation on the proposed amendment(s) to the Flathead County Commissioners.

Chapter 9 Coordination Statement

This Plan acknowledges Federal and State land ownership within the Community boundaries. From the Flathead County Growth Policy, this plan adopts Goal 50 and its policies and the statement in Part 3 of Chapter 11 Statement of Coordination with regard to Federal and State Jurisdictions.

Appendices

The Appendices below provide supporting documentation or reference documents in support of the Plan.

A. 1994 Plan

1994 Lakeside Neighborhood Plan: To view, download or print a copy of the 1994 Neighborhood Plan, go to website http://lakesideplan2008.com/ and click on the document name "1994 Neighborhood Plan". Printed copies can be obtained from County Records Department.

B. Authorization and Process Review Letter

During the process to develop the Plan, the Flathead County Planning and Zoning Department has remained active in giving advice and reviewing the Committee's process. The letter below supports and validates the revision process used by the Committee.

(Please note: There is a typo in this letter; the letter was written in 2009, not 2008.)

1035 First Ave West
Kalispell, MT 59901
OFFICE: 406.751.8200
FAX: 406.751.8210
EMAIL: planningweb@flathead.mt.gov
WEB: flathead.mt.gov/planning_zoning

February 4, 2008

Lakeside Neighborhood Plan Committee
PO Box 157
Lakeside, MT 59922

Dear Barb,

I wanted to take a minute and thank you and the committee members for all your hard work with the revision and update of the Lakeside Neighborhood Plan. Neighborhood plans are part of the Flathead County Growth Policy and explicitly provided for in Chapter 10. Part 4 of Chapter 10 deals with existing neighborhood plans. Obviously, the Lakeside Neighborhood Plan is an existing plan that is about 14 years old and in need of revision. The planning area hasn't changed, but dynamic community growth and demographic change over time certainly have occurred in the community. A fresh look to provide policy guidance on how the Lakeside area grows and develops in the future is appropriate. In addition, the Plan needed revision to comply with the Flathead County Growth Policy. These reasons are why the County requested the Lakeside Community Council review and revise the plan and why the Lakeside Neighborhood Plan Committee was formed.

The Growth Policy stresses public participation in reviewing and revising existing neighborhood plans. The process involves, at a minimum, five steps:

1. Guidance from the Planning Board and Commissioners
   The Commission and Planning Board have identified the desire to update Lakeside Neighborhood Plan. The plan revision is one work activity identified in the Planning and Zoning Office 2009 Annual Work Plan, which is approved by the Commission. The Planning Board has been involved through staff's work task scheduling.

2. Public Workshops
   Interactive public workshops allow opportunities for land owners and residents who live within the plan area to provide input into the revised draft plan.

3. Comment on Draft
   Once the draft plan is ready it will be posted on the Planning and Zoning Office web site. This will be done prior to the community council public meeting to give the public sufficient time to review the document.

4. Planning Board Review and Revision
   When the draft plan is ready the planning board will hold a public hearing and consider action. Often the planning board will also hold a public workshop to solicit additional public input.

5. Final Review and Comment
   All final growth policy related plans go to the commission for final action. The commission may hold an additional public hearing but is not required to under state law.

I have followed the progress of the plan revision and need to commend the committee regarding public input and participation process to date. Although the survey wasn't required it provided excellent information for use in the plan and for validation of goals and policies. There has been ample opportunity for public participation so far in the process. Your committee meetings are open to the public. The community outreach workshops provided even more public participation. In my opinion the planning process the Committee is following exceeds the requirements specified in the growth policy for existing neighborhood plan revisions. To continue the process when the draft plan is ready it will need to go to the Lakeside Community Council for consideration and a recommendation. Staff will then submit it and the Council's recommendation to the planning board for their review and action.

The review and revision process is consistent with the Growth Policy. At this point the committee is developing a draft plan with community input to be provided to the Lakeside Community Council. There will be numerous opportunities for public review and input throughout the approval process (both at the council, planning board and county commission levels). The statutory requirements begin at the time staff receives the draft plan and begins the procedure to incorporate it into the growth policy. Any threats or inferences that the process is flawed or illegal prior to staff receiving it are groundless.

Andrew will be spending more time working with you in the near future. I personally look forward to the updated Lakeside Neighborhood Plan.

Sincerely

Jeff Harris
Planning Director

Cc
Dale Lauman
Lakeside Community Council
Andrew Hagemeier

FLATHEAD COUNTY PLANNING AND ZONING
OFFICE 406.751.8200 FAX 406.751.8210
1035 First Ave West Kalispell, MT 59901
EMAIL: planningweb@flathead.mt.gov WEB flathead.mt.gov/planning_zoning

C. Community Survey

Specific areas of the survey results are quoted in the various sections of this Plan in support of specific topics within the Plan. Below are links to PDF documents related to the survey documents and results.

C.1 Survey Questionnaire

To view, download or print the 2008 Community Survey Questionnaire, go to website http://lakesideplan2008.com/ and click on the document name "2008 Community Survey".

C.2 Summary of Survey Results

To view, download or print a summary of all results from the 2008 Community Survey, go to website http://lakesideplan2008.com/ and click on the document name "2008 Community Survey Results".

D. Public Community Workshops

- 05/05/2008: Project Overview; Results for first mailing of Community Survey
- 06/23/2008: Results of second mailing of Community Survey and combined results from both mailings; Project Plan & Schedule of Events
- 07/07/2008: Public Input to Plan, Issues, Opportunities, Goals, Policies
- 07/14/2008: Public Input to Plan, Issues, Opportunities, Goals, Policies
- 07/19/2008: Booth at Annual Lakeside Fair accepting Public Input to Plan, Issues, Opportunities, Goals, Policies
- 07/14/2009: Public hearing by Lakeside Community Council; receive verbal comments on revised draft resulting from the first comment period (May 1 – June 19, 2009)
- 07/18/2009: Booth at Annual Lakeside Fair with and Land Use Map, accepting public comment and input
- Meeting minutes from these workshops and all of the Committee meetings and work sessions can be obtained via request to Flathead County Planning and Zoning Office.

E. Census Data - 2000

The latest census data available is from the 2000 United States Census. Zip code 59922 is defined as a Census Demographic Profile (CDP) used in the 2000 Census providing data for settled concentrations of population that are identifiable by name, but are not incorporated. There are currently seven (7) CDP in the Flathead Valley: Bigfork, Evergreen, Lakeside, Somers, Hungary Horse, Martin City, and Coram. Census data used in this document can be found at the following link.

http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/QTTable?_bm=y&-geo_id=86000US59922&-qr_name=DEC_2000_SF1_U_DP1&-ds_name=DEC_2000_SF1_U&-_lang=en&-_sse=on

DP-1. Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: 2000

Data Set: Census 2000 Summary File 1 (SF 1) 100-Percent Data

Geographic Area: **59922**
5-Digit ZCTA

NOTE: For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, definitions, and count corrections see http://factfinder.census.gov/home/en/datanotes/expsf1u.htm.

Subject	Number	Percent
Total population	**1,955**	**100**
SEX AND AGE		
Male	963	49.3
Female	992	50.7
Under 5 years	119	6.1
5 to 9 years	121	6.2
10 to 14 years	130	6.6
15 to 19 years	98	5
20 to 24 years	42	2.1

25 to 34 years	182	9.3
35 to 44 years	281	14.4
45 to 54 years	336	17.2
55 to 59 years	143	7.3
60 to 64 years	140	7.2
65 to 74 years	211	10.8
75 to 84 years	132	6.8
85 years and over	20	1
Median age (years)	45.1	(X)
18 years and over	1,519	77.7
Male	731	37.4
Female	788	40.3
21 years and over	1,476	75.5
62 years and over	445	22.8
65 years and over	363	18.6
Male	180	9.2
Female	183	9.4

Age Group	2000 Census Percent of Population	2008 Lakeside Community Survey Percent of Population	Increase or Decrease
<5	6.1	2.0	-3.9
5-24	19.9	18.0	-1.9
25-34	9.3	5.0	-4.3
35-44	14.4	9.0	-3.6
45-54	17.2	19.0	+1.8
55-64	14.5	26.0	+11.5
65-74	10.8	17.0	+6.2
75+	7.8	5.0	-2.8

Table 2: Cumulative Estimates of Population Change for Counties of Montana and County Rankings: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2007

Geographic Area	Population Estimates	Change, 2000 to 2007	State Ranking of Counties	
			Population Estimates	Change, 2000 to 2007

	July 1, 2007	April 1, 2000 Estimates Base	Number	Percent	July 1, 2007	April 1, 2000 Estimates Base	Number	Percent
Montana	**957,861**	**902,195**	**55,666**	**6.2**	**(X)**	**(X)**	**(X)**	**(X)**
Flathead County	86,844	74,471	12,373	16.6	4	4	2	2

Note: The April 1, 2000 estimates base reflects changes to the Census 2000 population resulting from legal boundary updates as of January 1 of the estimates year, other geographic program changes, and Count Question Resolution actions. All geographic boundaries for the 2007 population estimates series are defined as of January 1, 2007. Dash (-) represents zero or rounds to zero. (X) Not applicable.

Suggested Citation:

Table 2: Cumulative Estimates of Population Change for Counties of Montana and County Rankings: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2007 (CO-EST2007-02-30)

Source: Population Division, U.S. Census Bureau

Release Date: March 20, 2008

A variety of Internet sites are available to research a host of statistics about Flathead County. Some of these can focus in on Lakeside, but most cannot.

- http://flathead.mt.gov/about_flathead_county/index.php is the Flathead County site, which has a menu choice: "Flathead County Census".
- http://www.ceic.mt.gov/Census2000.asp is the Census and Economic Information Center
- This PDF contains a wealth of census data specific to Lakeside CDP (boundaries roughly the same as our community boundaries) - some data probably duplicate of other sites.
- http://www.ceic.mt.gov/C2000/SF32000/SF3places/sfpData/1603041950.pdf is a PDF file of census data specific to Lakeside.
- http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?_lang=en is the American Fact Finder website

F. Historical Background of Lakeside

The following historical background includes information from the 1994 Lakeside Neighborhood Plan and Stoner Creek and Beyond written by Sylvia Murphy in 1983.

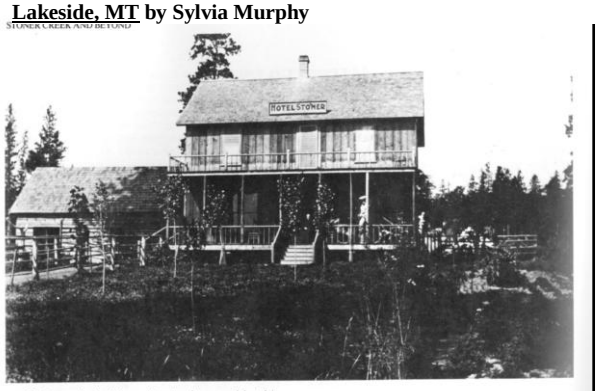
Photo of The Crescent powered by a 19-ft stern wheel, was built in 1891, taken from Somers, MT The Company Town edited by Henry Elwood

Lakeside was named because it is situated on the west shore and north end of Flathead Lake. Prior to western European settlement the indigenous tribes known as the Salish, Pend d'Oreille and Kootenai people, occupied the Flathead Valley. Various cultural, archaeological, and historic resource inventories show that the indigenous tribes used portions of Lakeside for hunting grounds, camps, ceremonial grounds, and other uses which perpetuated their way of life until the Hellgate Treaty of 1855 established the Flathead Reservation.

During the mid to late-1800s, the new settlers to the Flathead Valley used boats and steam ships to traverse Flathead Lake. Boats leaving Somers stopped at Lakeside, then known as, Stoner's Landing on their way south to Polson. Shore landings were also made on request at Angel Point.

The community that is now Lakeside was named Stoner's Landing, after John J. Stoner. Stoner and his wife Sarah had moved to Kalispell in 1892 where they operated a boarding house and blacksmith shop. The Stoners eventually purchased 25 acres on the west shore of Flathead Lake where they built and operated a combination home and hotel known as Hotel Stoner. Hotel Stoner was located at the point where Stoner Creek drains into Flathead Lake. Sarah Stoner's fine cooking became so well known that families came from Kalispell, traveling by train to Somers and then by boat to Hotel Stoner, for a Sunday dinner.

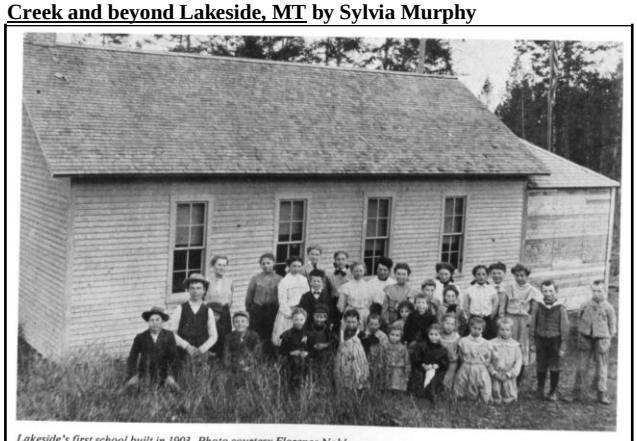
Photo of Hotel Stoner taken from Stoner Creek and beyond Lakeside, MT by Sylvia Murphy



J.J. Stoner built this combination home and hotel in the late 1890's. U. of Montana Library photo.

Eventually, Stoner's Landing was later renamed Chautauqua. Chautauqua became a place of residence for a large population of young people belonging to the Epworth Methodist Church. These residents were influenced by the teachings of the Chautauqua Literary Society of New York. Chautauqua was the name for an adult education movement focused on expanding the general knowledge base to communities across the United States on current events, culture, religious expression, and entertainment. The Chautauqua movement was highly popular in rural America during the late-1800s until the mid-1920s and towns with the Chautauqua name exist today throughout the United States. The only formal Chautauqua town meeting in Lakeside was convened in September 1897. The meeting focused on the many needs of the community and the lack of funds for community buildings, roads, or a survey to plat lots for lease or sale. Shortly thereafter, the Chautauqua community

Photo of Lakeside's first school built in 1903 taken from Stoner Creek and beyond Lakeside, MT by Sylvia Murphy

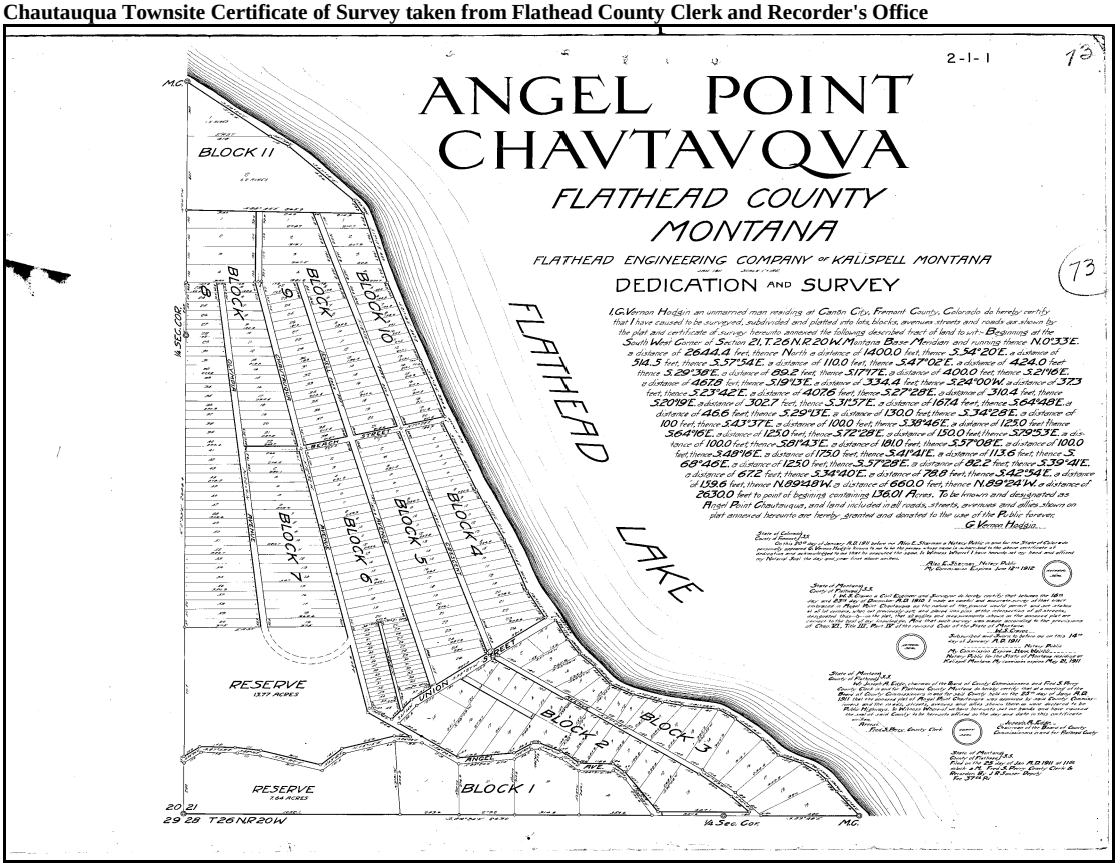


Lakeside's first school built in 1903. Photo courtesy Florence Noble.

disbanded with the closing of the post office in 1905, and residents left for other parts of the country.

It is of interest to note that on January 20, 1911 a Certificate of Survey was approved to create the town of Angel Point Chautauqua. The survey divided 136 acres of land along the Flathead Lake shore into 10 blocks with streets, avenues, and individual lots for sale or lease. The old Angel Point Chautauqua town site encompasses the lands along what is today known as Angel Point Road, Whipps Lane, Thompson Road, and Tamarack Terrace.

Chautauqua Townsite Certificate of Survey taken from Flathead County Clerk and Recorder's Office



After the Chautauqua community disbanded, the town was later called Lacon. Local residents preferred the name Lakeside, however, an official name change could not be granted because a small town in Roosevelt County was already called Lakeside. When that town abandoned the name in 1920, the residents of Lacon successfully petitioned a name change to Lakeside.

Landmarks which have become important in Lakeside include Flathead Lake, Angel Point, Caroline Point, Conrad Point, Peaceful Bay, Hockaday Bay, Hughes Bay, Blacktail Mountain, Bear Mountain, Ben Williams Park and the Lakeside Chapel. The Lakeside Chapel is a historic structure built in 1949 and has been remodeled and expanded over the years. The chapel has

always fulfilled the spiritual needs of residents and served as an important place for community gatherings and social clubs in Lakeside.

In 1957, the 29th Air Division of the U.S. Air Force built a radar base in Lakeside. The base itself was located on Blacktail Road and contained a small post exchange, a commissary, 27 single family residential homes, an officers' complex, dorms, and administration buildings. The radar tower was located 13 miles up on top of Blacktail Mountain on lands leased from the U.S. Forest Service. At its peak, the base consisted of 13 officers, 135 enlisted men and 28 civilian employees. The airmen and their families considered Lakeside a choice assignment and enjoyed Flathead Lake and the friendliness of the local community. The housing complex included a population of 228 residents and 40 children. This facility was sold in the late 1980s and is currently owned and operated by Youth with a Mission as a training facility for short term Christian missionary work.

History shows that Lakeside has long been a resort community with progressive values and a utopian landscape composed of historic structures, scenic views, diverse wildlife and an abundance of recreational amenities.

G. Mixed Use Trail System in the Island District of the Flathead National Forest

The Forest Service considers the Island District a good area for a variety of recreational uses which includes both motorized and non-motorized recreation. There is already a network of existing logging roads. Considerations of motorized use is not as limited in this area as it is in other areas of the Flathead National Forest because it is not in designated grizzly bear habitat where expansion of motorized uses is normally prohibited on the Flathead National Forest in order to preserve grizzly bear habitat security.

The Blacktail Mountain Ski Area and the cross country skiing trail system are already established. There used to be a trail system in the area but maintenance was dropped in the 60's.

Due to the limited OHV and ATV trail opportunities that exist on the elsewhere on the Flathead National Forest, the Swan Lake Ranger District has plans to consider increasing motorized trail opportunities in the area through what they call the Blacktail Motorized Trail Expansion Project. The Blacktail Motorized Trail project would analyze adding some motorized ATV and OHV routes to the existing motorized trail system in the area. The existing Wild Bill OHV trail is within the Island Unit and offers about 12 miles of trail for OHV type vehicles. The Forest Service is considering using some existing logging roads that are currently closed, combined with the construction of some short trail links to create a loop trail route to add to the existing Wild Bill trail system. In addition, the Forest service is proposing to use some existing closed logging roads with constructed links to create a limited amount of ATV trails. The tentative proposal disclosed by the Forest Service in 2007 included possible designation of about 40 miles of motorized trail. That proposal suggested using about 35 miles of existing logging roads with about 5 miles of constructed linkages between roads. Any actual trail designation will come through the environmental analysis process which will include opportunity for public input. The Forest Service hopes to conduct their analysis and solicit input during the spring or early summer of 2009.

The environmental analysis for the motorized trails would reflect that there is also public interest in construction of non-motorized trails in the area. Ongoing work for a possible trail has been occurring related to the Foys to Blacktail project being developed by a local group in coordination with the County, private land owners, and the Forest Service. That trail would likely cross several land ownerships, including the National Forest.

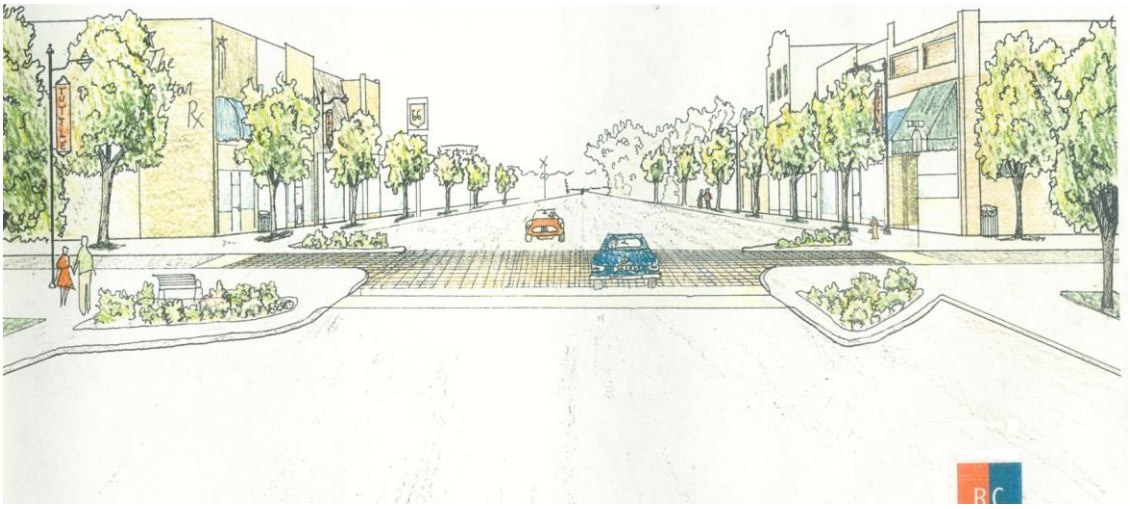
More recently there has been public interest expressed to the Forest Service in a hiking trail on National Forest land from the Lakeside area to link into the top of Blacktail Mountain. If the concepts become more developed and appear feasible to the Forest Service, environmental analysis for them would likely be done separately from the proposed motorized trail analysis described above, but the possibility of trail expansion for either motorized or non-motorized uses would be considered by the Forest Service and reflected in any analysis they might develop. The Forest Service does not currently have funding to construct additional trails of either type and need would community partnerships to develop and maintain either type of trail if such trails were found to be feasible.

Ongoing non-motorized activities are common in the area and include hiking, skiing, hunting, berry picking and biking and are expected to continue and potentially increase with more development.

The Swan Lake District has heard that there may also be some local interest in implementing a bike trail connection from the Kila to Lakeside. Less detail has been discussed with the Forest Service on this bike trail.

The District Ranger said that the Swan Lake District is willing to consider trail expansion or other recreational opportunities that are consistent with their forest plan, but cannot make any promises relative to actual approval of or construction of such projects. Funding, availability of opportunity elsewhere, and environmental affects all come into play. To the extent that the Neighborhood Plan develops ideas or local community has ideas, the Swan Lake Ranger District is willing to entertain them. Actual implementation or detailed planning of any given project, however, would be dependent on the factors discussed above.

H. Renderings of Attractive Downtown Areas



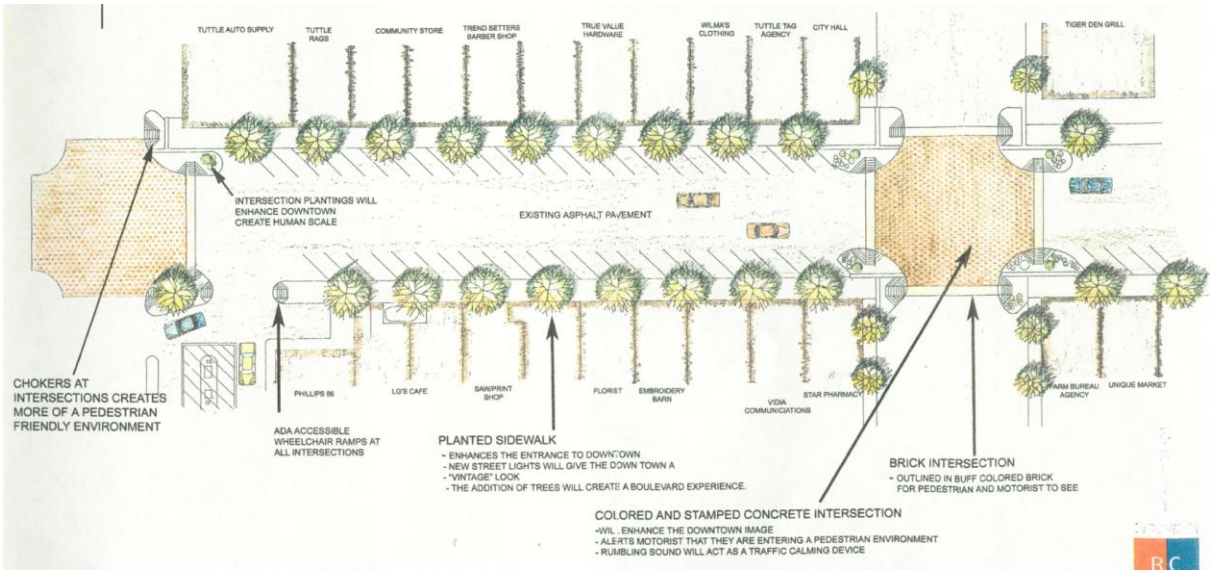


FIGURE 13